

2020 Annual Report

What We Have To Give



NATIONAL ADVOCACY.
COMMUNITY ACTION.



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Message From The President And Executive Director

Well, 2020 was certainly quite a year. For most of us as we look back, it seems unimaginable even. At the time of writing (spring 2021), the fight for Indigenous justice and against anti-Black racism continues and we are still not clear of the pandemic. Vaccinations are rolling out and we continue working under modified conditions.

It has been said that the true test of leadership is how well one functions in a crisis. In early 2020, as the pandemic response was growing, YWCA Halifax realized the question we needed to ask was less of "What do we need?" but rather, "What can we give?"

YWCA Halifax was already a strong organization with a dedicated team and a tremendous community of supporters; we have a long history of endurance, having lived through and responded to world wars, previous pandemics, and the uncertainty of the past 150 years. Through this pandemic we found revitalized opportunities to provide new programs, develop new partnerships, and inform progressive policies from the national level to our own organization.

We have long dreamed of providing programming at a regional level in partnership with YWCA Moncton and YWCA St. John's. With new funding from the federal government, we started the \$1M Launch Atlantic program to support diverse young women as they move into employment. With COVID-19 supports we expanded our December 6th microloan program for women leaving violence to increase financial support and included a non-repayable portion. In July, we opened the first publicly-funded safe house for victims and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

With successive waves of COVID-19 related funding, YWCA Halifax continued to secure resources to support participants and community partners. By the end of 2020, we had accessed more than 20 new grants totalling over \$450,000 in resources for participants and partners. We sought and secured new partnerships, including with the East Preston Family Resource Centre, the Uniacke Square Parent Resource Centre, the North Preston Daycare, the Mulgrave Park Caring and Learning Centre, and the Chebucto Family Resource Centre (to name but a few). In many cases, initial meetings lead to new partnerships resulting in co-submitted applications for hopefully soon-to-be announced collaborative partnerships.

We still know that these responses are interim, and even when done collaboratively, are not enough. A fundamental part of the YWCA movement is as much about providing

relevant and effective social services, as it is to be a strong voice on issues affecting our communities.

YWCA Halifax engaged fully: we participated in national conversations (including with the federal Liberal caucus on the importance of affordable, quality, universal childcare); we met with Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland on human rights protections for women losing employment due to caregiving responsibilities; we worked with the Reaching Home Community Advisory Board to dedicate resources for the development of an African Nova Scotian housing strategy; we launched an intensive campaign for the inclusion of young women in the federal Youth Employment Skills Strategy (a case made obvious by the impact of the pandemic on women); and we met with federal and provincial ministers and senior civil servants on the issue of intimate partner violence and its disproportionate impact on women. Together with Laurel Broten and Karen Oldfield, both leaders from Halifax's corporate sector, we launched a campaign to support the work of YWCA Halifax in meeting diverse women's needs for economic empowerment.

It turns out we had a lot to give.

In all of this, we also continued the important work of improving our own organization and the projects and services we offer. We launched internal committees on African Nova Scotian and 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion. We developed new partnerships to provide more affordable housing. We began discussions to meet childcare needs in other HRM communities and we took strides through our remarkable Shift Change project to address women's representation in the trades. We are excited about the good work ahead.

With all of this activity we would be remiss if we did not say thank you: to our supporters, volunteers, Board, and staff. Thank you for your leadership, your ongoing support, your dedication and your commitment. There is so much good work from the last year, but we will leave it at this: While 2020 was an unusual year in so many regards, there was nothing unusual about the exceptional nature of the YWCA Halifax community. For this, we are deeply thankful. Your support means everything.

Sincerely,
Meghan Cadue, President and
Miia Suokonautio, Executive Director

Board Of Directors

2020-2021

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Mission

We build economic security, promote wellness and create opportunities for women, girls, Two Spirit and gender diverse people by providing a strong voice and integrated services.

Vision

We envision a world where women and girls, Two Spirit and gender diverse people are empowered in a safe and equitable society.

Values

- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Respect
- Equity
- Security
- Freedom of Choice
- Responsiveness
- Collaboration

Partnerships:

Coming Together To Meet Community Need

One of the amazing outcomes of COVID-19 was that in responding to our community's needs, we were also able to form new partnerships that we hope will last a very long time.

YWCA Halifax secured more than \$150,000 in grocery gift cards from Community Food Centres Canada.

In addition to supporting YWCA participants, we partnered with local organizations to get support for those most in-need.

On the recommendation of one of our staff, we reached out to the East Preston Family Resource Centre and the North Preston Childcare Centre. While we shared the cards and a laugh at how unusual circumstances brought us together, we subsequently continued conversations on potential shared projects. We've since submitted a funding proposal for an exciting new project that would see us working together for several years.

YWCA Halifax continued to convene the Trafficking and Exploitation Services System (TESS) community of practice across the province. Many of our TESS colleagues support some of the most marginalized and vulnerable youth across the Nova Scotia. With unused expense lines and with the permission of our funder, the Canadian Women's Foundation, we repurposed resources to provide \$10,000 in direct support to youth across the province. Thanks to our TESS colleagues for ensuring these resources were streamed to where they were needed most.



Unexpected gifts: Through generosity, non-profits in Halifax weather difficult year

Policy Implications:

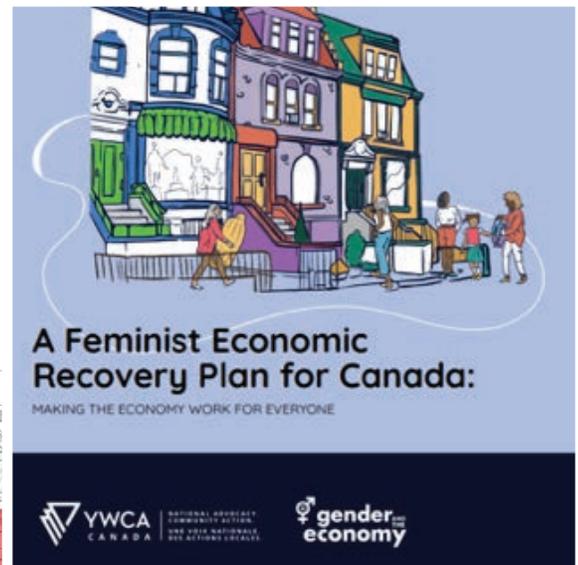
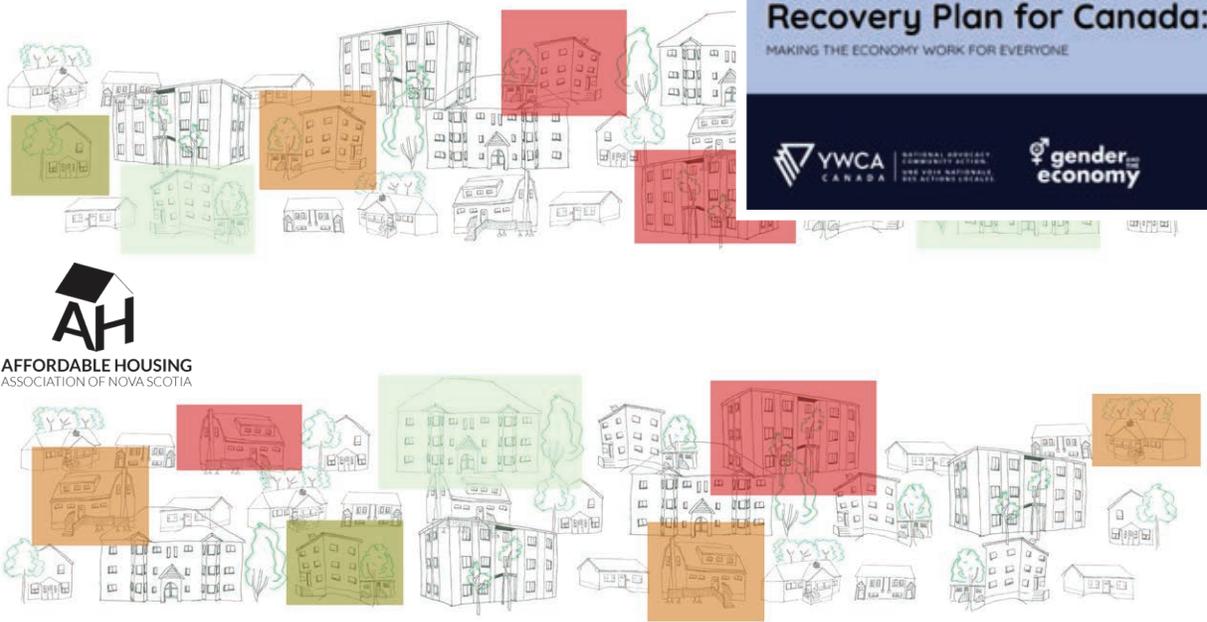
Advocating For Better Outcomes Everywhere

The Halifax By-Name List for individuals and families experiencing homelessness has found that nearly 20% of those who have been homeless for more than six months identify as people of African descent. Still, there is no African Nova Scotian housing strategy in our city and few dedicated resources to meet the needs of African Nova Scotians in culturally responsive ways.

YWCA Halifax, as a member of the Reaching Home Community Advisory Board (CAB) for Halifax, helped champion a small subcommittee that brought to the CAB a recommendation to set aside funds for the development of an African Nova Scotian housing strategy. The recommendation received unanimous support and in early 2021 a call for proposals was

issued. Our hope is that the forthcoming strategy will inform investments at all orders of government as well as service providers, like YWCA Halifax, how to best meet the needs of African Nova Scotians.

For Nova Scotians, COVID-19 provided a glimpse into publicly funded universal child care. While centres were closed, the NS Department of Education, unlike many other provinces, continued to support child care centres by offsetting lost parent fees. YWCA Halifax brought the story of the Nova Scotia government to our colleagues at the national level who continued to advocate for a feminist recovery to the pandemic and a feminist budget. Since then, the 2021 federal budget has made the largest commitment to child care in Canadian history!



Child-care providers hope COVID-19 leads to universal access in Nova Scotia

Philanthropy:

With The Help Of Our Supporters, We Will Build Back Better

Philanthropy and fundraising provide important avenues for community members to support the mission of YWCA Halifax. We are honoured by the many donors who believe in the work of the YWCA and, even more, the potential of the diverse women, girls and families we serve.

So of course the inability to hold in-person events and to meet with donors and volunteers was a heartbreak for us and made fundraising tricky. Yet as one door closed, it seemed a new one would open.

Among our tremendous champions were Laurel Broten (President and CEO of NS Business Inc.) and Karen Oldfield (past President and CEO of the Port Authority) who launched a “40 in 40” campaign. They sought to raise \$40,000 in 40 days to support YWCA Halifax’s work in building a she-covery to the pandemic. They highlighted our work on childcare, women’s participation in the workforce, addressing intimate partner violence, and providing safe affordable housing for women. Thank you to all who supported the campaign.

Please take a minute to review the donor pages of this report. The confidence of our donors is our courage.



Laurel Broten, President & Chief Executive Officer, Nova Scotia Business Inc.



Karen Oldfield, past President and CEO of the Port Authority

How you can help

Many people long to “get back to normal,” but the pandemic has made clear that the old normal didn’t work for everyone. Your donations can help ensure that together we build back better.

Donate today! ywcahalifax.com

Rana's Story

People around the world have experienced hardship and uncertainty as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. While many in Nova Scotia struggled last year, the pandemic highlighted inequities in our province and had a particular impact on newcomer women. The health, education, employment, and financial security of already vulnerable immigrant women were stymied as was the beginning of their integration.

While many community programs shut down or stopped offering in-person supports, the YWCA's Experts by Experience Program developed a virtual network where the needs of newcomer women could be met.

Rana is a newcomer woman who immigrated to Nova Scotia with her family last year. Unfamiliar with her new country and with limited local support available, she was panic-stricken as she tried to navigate services and understand her new environment. Because of language and cultural barriers and a lack of social and community supports, Rana and her family felt lost. In addition, the lockdown meant that Rana was unable to attend programs or in person sessions. Rana and her family struggled to find a long-term rental apartment, to obtain health cards, apply for schools for their three children, to understand the transportation system, and where and how to get groceries, among multiple other key parts of moving to a new community.

Rana heard about the YWCA's program through a mutual acquaintance of one of our staff. She reached out and since then has been participating in all the workshops we've offered and continued to engage in one-on-one telephone and online support.

A smart and resourceful woman, Rana reached out when she knew she needed help. Whether it was housing, healthcare, or education, the YWCA team was honoured to support Rana and her family with what they needed most, when they needed it.

A year after immigrating to Nova Scotia, Rana's English is coming along and she has been an active member in her community. Presently, she's thinking about how she can start her own business. She's also interested in supporting other newcomer women navigate the settlement process and using the wisdom she's earned.



"I am so grateful that I came across this amazing program! It literally rescued me! I felt lost and confused, I could say only hi and bye. I felt relieved when I found you available and supportive and helping not only me but all my family. Now, a year after immigration, I feel that I myself am able to support newcomer women. Your program gave me power and hope. Thank you."

YWCA Halifax In The News 2020



Unexpected gifts: Through generosity, non-profits in Halifax weather difficult year



Halifax urged to address north end gentrification as municipal election nears



Free virtual tax clinic set up to help newcomers file taxes



COMMENTARY: Make comprehensive social housing strategy a ballot-box



Affordable housing advocates call on HRM to create social housing strategy



Government of Canada COVID-19 measures delivering support for young people this fall



Nova Scotia spending millions more to combat human trafficking



Nova Scotia opens new safe house for survivors of human trafficking



The economy won't heal till women are back at work



Child-care providers hope COVID-19 leads to universal access in Nova Scotia



Early Learning And Childcare

We are advancing women's economic security by delivering quality accessible developmental early learning and care. Our 2020 programs included our purpose-built early learning and childcare centre in the heart of Spryfield, licensed family home daycares, a school-based before and after school program, and ongoing parent support.

Spryfield Early Learning Centre

For nearly ten years, our Spryfield Centre has, and continues to serve as a community hub and is an important resource for young families.

The Public Health mandated full and partial closures of our centres were a challenge for families, teachers, and the YWCA. More than anything, we needed to take things one day at a time, adjusting course as regulations evolved.

Families who were unable to access childcare were superstars. They reached out for help when they needed and were compassionate supporters of our staff. They also juggled their own work and childcare responsibilities with patience and endurance.

Thanks to the Nova Scotia's Operational Cost Grant, lost parent fees were offset by the Province and consequently no teachers lost employment. Instead, instructors offered online learning, prepared education packages, and participated in professional development to be ready when the Centre eventually reopened.

In 2020, the YWCA Spryfield Centre continues to serve 85 families and 95 children as part of our YWCA family.

Our staff take the time to talk to each caregiver when they arrive to drop off and pick up their children. The Preschool room has added a communications whiteboard outside their classroom where notes are captured about what children will need, anything special the class will be doing, or what caregivers should know. The three younger rooms use logbooks that caregivers read each day.

Family Home Daycare (FHDC)

The Family Home Daycare program is licensed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and contracts the YWCA team to approve, monitor, and support family home daycares throughout HRM.

The FHDC program's objective is to support independent operators to provide quality childcare from infancy to school age in a private home setting.

During 2020 closures, the FHDC team had weekly online meetings with operators and took advantage of the time for professional development. YWCA staff and operators also used the time to revisit spaces used in homes for childcare and to prepare for reopening, ensuring all providers were familiar with COVID-19 protocols and supporting operators to be mentally ready.

YWCA Halifax was also pleased to be able to support providers by advocating for their needs and working with the Province to offset lost parent fees. Through a combination of donations and purchases, we provided operators with boxes of masks, hand sanitizer, gloves, and cleaning forms.



Before and After School Program

With the roll-out of the new provincial pre-primary program, YWCA Halifax began a before and after school program for pre-primary and junior elementary students at Rockingstone Heights School in Spryfield. Although enrollment was low in the first year, we were encouraged to see a three-fold increase for September 2020 when we entered our second school year. Our hope remains to continue to offer before and after school care at Rockingstone and expand to other locations as possible.



2020 Stats

- FHDC: 32 home daycare providers
- Spryfield: 85 families served over the past year and 95 children (including the children who left for school in September and all that joined after)

Employment Programs

Supporting Women On Their Path To Employment And Economic Stability

YWCA Halifax offers gender-based employment programs in the province. Considering the disproportionate effects of COVID-19 on women and their families, it is more important than ever to continue this work.

Step Ahead

Step Ahead is a 19-week employment program for women connected to Income Assistance who want to enter or re-enter the workforce.

Eligible participants are women 19 or older, currently receiving income assistance and are willing and able to return to work.

LAUNCH

LAUNCH is a 19-week employment program for young women under 30 years old experiencing multiple barriers to employment. LAUNCH includes a paid seven-week virtual employment skills development group program and a 12 weeks of paid work experience in a participant's field of interest.

LAUNCH Atlantic

Building on YWCA Halifax's longstanding and successful LAUNCH program, in 2020 we secured \$1M from Employment and Social Development Canada's (ESDC) Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) to support diverse young women in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland to move into the workforce. Our first intake, which had only 22 spots in three provinces, had over 120 expressions of interest.

"If you believe it will work out, you'll see opportunities. If you believe it won't, you'll see obstacles."



Participants

- LAUNCH Atlantic: 63 (all three sites)

Funders:

- LAUNCH Atlantic 2020-2021: Funded as part of Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan by Employment and Social Development Canada: Youth Employment and Skills Strategy
- LAUNCH 2017-2020: Employment and Social Development Canada: Youth Employment Strategy

Housing Programs

Supportive Housing for Young Mothers (SHYM)

SHYM provides supportive housing, parenting support, and life skills development for at-risk young single mothers ages 16 to 24. SHYM is open to young mothers in their third trimester of pregnancy or who are independently parenting their child or children and are in need of supportive housing.

“Thank you for never giving up on me and for giving me the safe space I needed to regain my life. I could not have done this without the support of WISH.”

Women in Supportive Housing (WISH)

WISH provides safe, secure, supported housing to single women. The women at WISH are 19 and older, have lived experience of homelessness, and have barriers to stable housing.



2020 Stats

- SHYM: 20 women, 20 children
- WISH: 32



Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking

From Violence To Resilience And The Commercial Sexual Exploitation Of Children And Youth

Over the past five years, YWCA Halifax has developed and implemented multiple projects addressing human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth.

Safer Spaces

Safer Spaces, which opened in July 2020, is the first publicly funded emergency transitional housing program for victims of sexual exploitation and human trafficking in Nova Scotia. The program provides youth in crisis with a safer space to stay so that they can stabilize and take the first steps to regain their personal autonomy. By providing on site support in a small, residential facility, Safer Spaces helps young people move forward with their recovery from the sex trade.

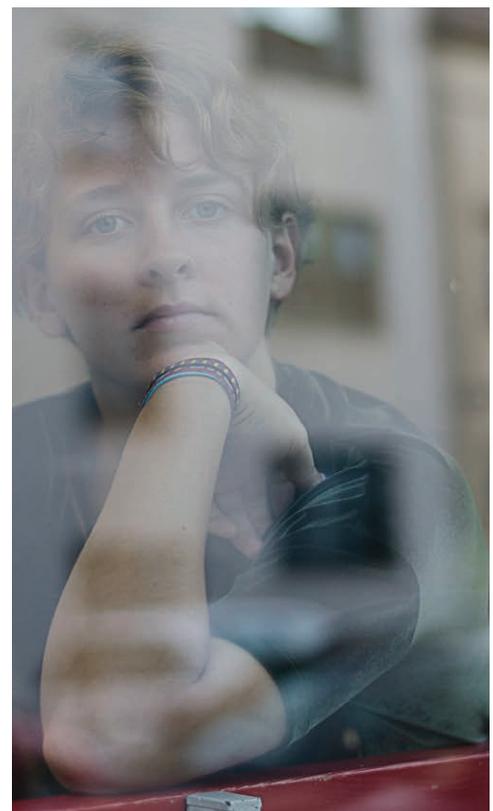
Nova Scotia Transition & Advocacy (NSTAY)

An innovative program that employs a multi-disciplinary team, NSTAY provides exploited and trafficked youth with wraparound supports and connects them with the services they need. Developed with a trauma-informed lens and using a harm-reduction approach, NSTAY is a non-judgmental program that incorporates promising practices from across Canada and is informed by those with experience of exploitation within the sex trade.

In 2020, NSTAY was expanded and now includes four peer outreach workers, a family and community support worker, and a community outreach worker.

Trafficking and Exploitation Services System (TESS)

Based on the principle that systemic problems need systemic solutions, the YWCA continued to convene the Trafficking and Exploitation Services System (TESS). Made up of partners across the province from multiple sectors and informed by an Indigenous Advisory, African Nova Scotian Advisory, a 2SLGBTQI+ Advisory, and a Lived Experience Advisory, TESS continues to be one of the most effective tools to address human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in our province. Through extensive training and capacity building, network building, and research, TESS has been key in developing a coordinated access system to support survivors, a peer empowerment network, and policy and program reform.



Served

- Safer Spaces: 5
- NSTAY: 68



Nova Scotia opens new safe house for survivors of human trafficking

The December 6th Fund Program

The December 6th Fund is a zero-interest microloan program for women, non-binary, and gender non-conforming persons who are fleeing or have recently fled abuse and/or violence.

Loans go up to \$500 and are intended for use on housing supports such as rent, damage deposit, power payments/arrears, moving or storage costs, and phone/internet payments.

My Voice Matters

YWCA partnered with Be The Peace Institute on the research project, My Voice Matters: Supporting And Engaging Young Women To End Domestic Violence. Thirty participants of the December 6th Fund were interviewed to:

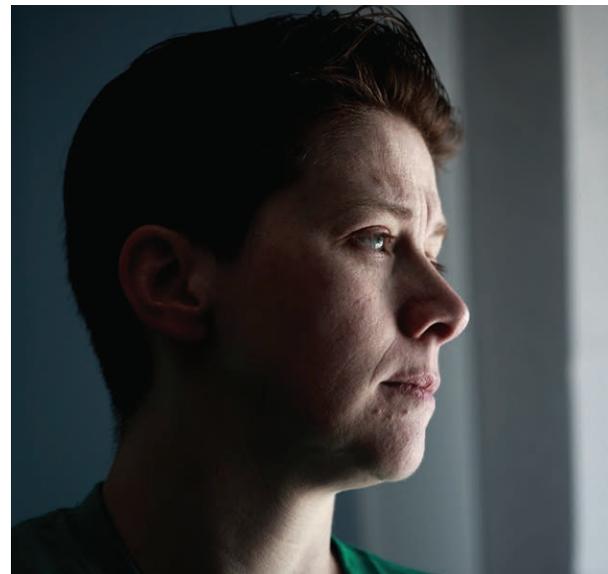
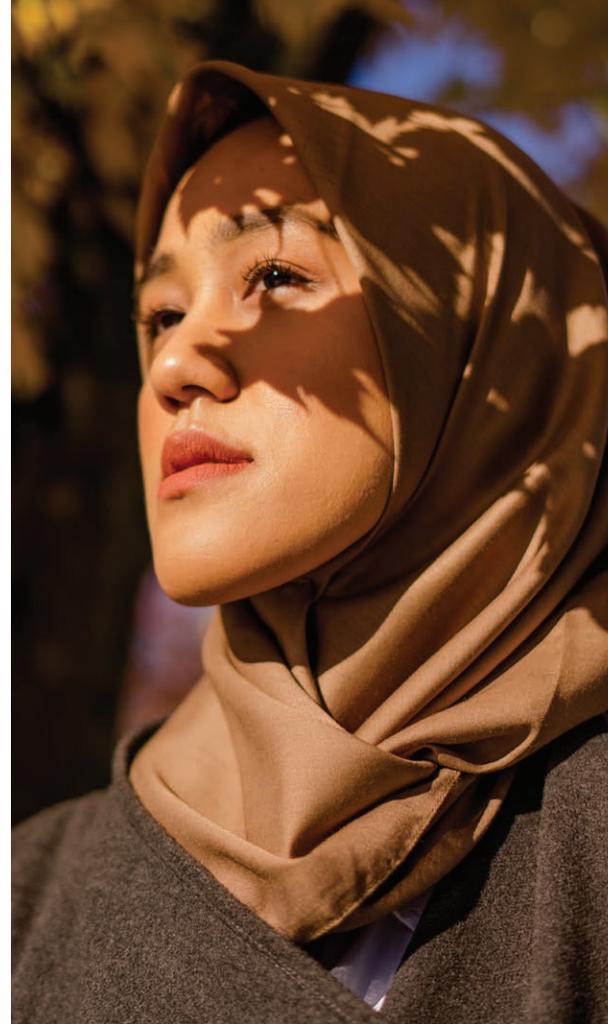
- identify the needs of women survivors recovering from gender-based violence (GBV);
- identify priorities for preventing GBV informed by women survivors, and
- to test the provision of wraparound and community-based supports for survivors in their recovery.

It became very clear that while the loan program is key to women accessing safety, so too is trained and adept staff that are able to meet the diverse needs of complex cases of GBV.

As a significant resource for domestic violence survivors at a critical point, the December 6th Fund and the connection with YWCA staff continues to provide pivotal support to survivors of GBV as well as assistance to connect with key resources in their communities.

“As a result of the relief money I got through the December 6th Fund, I was able to move into my own apartment where I felt safe, met new people, and got a new position at work with increased hours. All because I was able to get away from the violence.”

– Loan Recipient



Stats

- 32 participants received a microloan
- A total of \$14,567.05 was dispersed

New To Canada

Business Builders

An eighteen-week business hub dedicated to helping newcomer women discover and develop their entrepreneurial ideas into reality. During the first nine weeks, participants engage in learning sessions (both in-person and online) to increase their understanding of basic business concepts as well as learn from industry experts on key business topics including taxation, marketing, building a network and business plan writing. Following the in-class sessions, women are matched with local business mentors to help them broaden their understanding of the market as they hone their business plans. The hub experience concludes with an opportunity for all participants to present their completed business plans for review before launching their new business.



Served

• 17 participants



Experts by Experience (EX2)

A unique and interactive service model to help newcomer women navigate the system as well as connect to the right resources.

It can be difficult to figure things out when you first come to Canada. The Experts by Experience program creates a space where participants can foster a sense of belonging and helps newcomers feel supported while making this country their home. They are experts of their own experiences.

Financial Literacy for Newcomers (FLNP)

Reaching over 500 Newcomers annually, FLNP provides support and educational programming including workshops on budgeting, savings, credit, and buying a home in Nova Scotia. FLNP provides newcomers with a better understanding of how to navigate Canada's financial system, improving and accelerating the settlement experience.

Served
• 50 participants



Served
• 300 families and individuals

Youth Programs And Open New Tab

One of the longstanding foundations of the local, national, and international YWCA movement is our commitment to the well-being and leadership of young women. This is why, for example, it is an international and national standard that 25% of all YWCA Boards be comprised of women under 30 years.

At YWCA Halifax, not only do we meet our mandate through our Board, many of our programs have a specific focus on young women, including Supportive Housing for Young Mothers, Launch Atlantic, NS Transition and Advocacy for Youth, and The December 6th Fund Program which primarily supports young women leaving violence. The Women's Leadership Collaborative similarly has a strong emphasis on advancing young women who are emerging leaders in the private sector.

Based on our provincial survey of young people and our 2016 SafetyNet project, YWCA Halifax proposed to Public Safety Canada a comprehensive youth cyberviolence program.

Open New Tab (ONT) now works with junior high and upper elementary youth to explore and address cyberviolence in the lives of young people. Although they spend a tremendous amount of their lives online, there are few supports and resources that build youth online citizenship or address online gendered violence.

ONT's GirlSpace, GuySpace, and YSpace are dynamic, community-responsive programs that incorporate best practices in youth programming and community development. These free-of-charge programs are facilitated throughout HRM and target the needs of young people 9-16 years with a specific focus on those who are facing multiple barriers.

Thanks to the generous support from the Halifax Youth Foundation, the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, and Public Safety Canada.



Served

- GirlSpace: 12 schools and 115 youth served/week
- GuySpace: 12 Schools and 128 youth served/week
- YSpace: 3 Schools and 67 youth served/week



Leadership, Equity, Activity And Diversity

Women Active Nova Scotia (WANSA) and Leadership, Equity, Activity & Diversity (LEAD)

The participation of diverse women, girls, and gender diverse people in the field of sport and recreation continues to be a political act. YWCA Halifax's long roots in this area date back more than a hundred years when we were organizing women's basketball and baseball leagues before girls had access to physical education in the public school system. Many Haligonians remember the YWCA pool on Barrington St. which became a hub for women-only aquatics and even hosted a program for breast cancer survivors.

This history is what made us so excited to partner with Women Active Nova Scotia, the only initiative in the province whose mandate is to advance the participation of diverse women and girls in all aspects of sport and recreation. As Board members, officials, coaches, and players, we know that women and girls continue to be under represented.

In early 2020, WANSA, as a distinct non-profit, dissolved and entrusted YWCA Halifax with its mandate. With the generous support of the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, and Heritage, YWCA Halifax and now LEAD took on the mandate to advance the participation of women and girls in sport, recreation, and physical activity and to empower them to take on leadership roles in all of these sectors.

Today, LEAD is made up of working groups across the province working in multiple areas, including supporting coaching certifications, Board membership, and a gender equity assessment tool for sport and recreation centres.

In 2020, YWCA LEAD:

- Worked closely with Canadian Women and Sport to develop and deliver new programs;
- Launched a weekly communication called We LEAD Wednesdays, highlighting women and girls in sport and recreation provincially, nationally, and internationally;
- Worked to secure funding for a facilitator to create a Charter for a WANSA/LEAD Gender Equity Assessment Tool;
- Joined the Gender Equity Collective in Nova Scotia; and
- As part of the Women and Girls Task Force, offered 2 professional development sessions per month.

Shift Change

Women continue to be underrepresented in the skilled trades sector. We've characterized some of these sectors as providing family-sustaining wages and offering future-proof jobs but they continue to be women-wanting in their representation. For example, the proportion of women in the trades, at around 4%, has remained largely unchanged for fifty years.

With the support of the Government of Canada's Department of Women and Gender Equality, YWCA Halifax has been working to address the systemic barriers to women's participation in these industries. Creating cultures that attract and retain women in good jobs is an important strategy in addressing women's economic empowerment.

Over the past three years, Shift Change has collaborated with and connected sector stakeholders, including employers, industry leaders, government, educational institutions, and other non-profits throughout Nova Scotia. In 2020, we completed our needs analysis and created industry-specific responses on inclusion and diversity.

Among some of the findings:

- Women in these workplaces requires adjustments that can feel difficult to men;
- Men already often feel undervalued in their places of work;
- The perceived challenges of increased diversity are complex;
- Many men fear the risk of repercussions if they make a mistake while trying to adapt to change.

Among our initiatives to respond to our findings, in late 2020 we launched the first social-emotional learning program for 16 male supervisors from eight employers in skilled trades.



Served

- Collaborated with 4 Female Leadership Networks
- Developed Gender Equity (GET) tool
- Staff participated in 20 virtual panel discussions
- Shift Change: 26 participants

COVID-19 Relief

COVID-19 provided us the a unique opportunity to support our community.

We leveraged more than \$450K in direct benefits to the community, including:

\$150K

Grocery Gift Cards

To YWCA participants and partner organizations to address food security.

\$5K

Gift Cards

To partners within the Trafficking and Exploitation Services System (TESS) to support vulnerable youth.

\$283K

Financial Support

To Family Home Day Care operators to support childcare.

We continued to serve.

The global Coronavirus pandemic meant challenging times for everyone, hitting some communities harder than others. In all aspect of our programming, the YWCA Halifax team embarked upon a mission to reimagine how we could continue to serve, safely and responsively. Nobody stopped working and nobody was laid off.

Where feasible, programs and support moved online or was offered over the phone. In some cases, such as our housing programs, in person social service provision continued. What's more is that the pandemic created new needs or exacerbated inequity, leading the YWCA to secure and flow through more than \$450,000 in new resources. We applied for and received more than 20 new COVID-19 related grants that we turned around and brought back into our community.

Housing

During the pandemic, Nova Scotians were urged to stay at home. Many of us working in the housing and homelessness field knew all too well how this exhortation was made in vain: if you don't have a home, where should you stay? For us, all of our housing programs remained operational and at full capacity, with every available unit occupied by a woman in need of housing.

The housing team also continued to support all participants through increased outreach – lots of phone calls, emails, and texting.

With secure wifi available throughout the SHYM building, we lent tablets to SHYM participants to stay connected with staff and supports in their lives. The tablets also allowed participants to attend virtual appointments with doctors, the courts, and with child protection staff. For those moms whose children are not in their custody but in temporary care, the tablets allowed virtual visits with their children. Access to wifi and tech was key!

With the help of Shelter Movers, the YWCA safely moved many WISH participants out of shelters into furnished apartments during the lockdown. We also moved some families into and

out of SHYM, helping them secure furniture and everything they needed to get settled.

We used the United Way's Atlantic Compassion Fund to do lots of deliveries of home-cooked meals and food baskets, baby supplies, medications, cleaning supplies, personal protective equipment, and more. With funding from Housing Nova Scotia, we hired two new Housing Support Workers to help increase our capacity to support women and families in our community.

Through the Get Everyone Online (GEO) project, the YWCA was able to get devices with internet for WISH participants and phones with data plans for those who didn't have them. Helping people stay connected during lockdown and long periods of isolation was key.

Finally, prior to the mandated eviction freeze, as some participants had lost earnings and fallen behind in rent, they were at risk of eviction. We covered their arrears with new funds and helped them come out of the lockdown housed and without crushing arrears.

Family Home Daycare (FHDC)

The closure of childcare centres was devastating for families, particularly women for whom loss of employment or reduced hours as they cared for their children. This meant childcare operators, particularly small, independent family home daycares, were left vulnerable.

Family Home Daycare providers care for children in their own homes. They are approved by licensed third parties, including the YWCA, but primarily function as micro-businesses of their own. FHDCs supported by the YWCA are predominantly operated by newcomer women pursuing personal economic empowerment.

When the province mandated that all licensed childcare centres and approved FHDCs close in March 2020, many independent operators who rely on parent fees were left without most or all of their income. YWCA Halifax, working

We continued to serve.

\$1.5K

Feed Nova Scotia Grocery Gift Cards

To participants in our Supportive Housing for Young Mothers (SHYM) and Women in Supportive Housing (WISH) programs.

\$3.4K

Rental Assistance

To those struggling to pay rents and to prevent evictions.

\$15K

Atlantic Compassion Funds

For materials such as bedding, laptops, notepads, books, and craft supplies, to community members.

with our partners, helped build the case with the Province of Nova Scotia that these operators be included in the COVID-19 operating cost grants. As a result, more than \$280,000 flowed through the YWCA to FHDC operators.

During the closure period, the YWCA team continued to support FHDC operators with regular online meetings, professional development, and preparing for re-opening through improvements to their spaces and the provision of personal protective equipment. We worked with operators to ensure they understood and followed Public Health guidelines, both for their safety as well as the children and families in their care. To date, no YWCA family home daycare provider tested positive for COVID-19, even after re-opening in June.

LAUNCH/LAUNCH Atlantic

The economic impact of the pandemic and resultant closures came in quickly. Women, particularly racialized and newcomer women, were hit hardest as service sectors closed and as childcare fell through. Women were out of work or under-earning, hovering on the brink of financial collapse.

YWCA Halifax's longstanding employment programs needed to pivot hard. Placements were put on hold or moved online as participants prepared for lockdown and managed caregiving obligations. We continued to support participants with wages as income security programs ramped up. YWCA staff also continued to provide participants with guidance and support through email, phone, text and other online channels. We accessed and delivered COVID-19 related relief, including gift cards, tech devices, personal and childcare items, food and grocery support, and much more.

When our regular LAUNCH program ended, YWCA Halifax lobbied hard for a new contract to support women in Atlantic Canada. In July 2020, with \$1M in funds from ESDC, LAUNCH Atlantic was initiated, providing employment support for women impacted by the pandemic and living in Halifax, Moncton, and St. John's. Our first participant intake in the summer had 22 spots but received 122 expressions of interest.

Right away we knew that women were looking for a way to move out of the pandemic and into financial security.

COVID-19 accommodations continued, including:

- Program delivery moved online, including group facilitation, independent work, and 1:1 meetings with Coordinators;
- Laptop and technical equipment were loaned to participants to participate digitally;
- Additional funding for online certifications were secured and programs delivered (e.g. WHMIS, Microsoft Word and Excel);
- An increased focus and inclusion of digital literacy workshops and instruction was incorporated into programming;
- Workshops and guest speaker presentations were delivered online;
- A fund was created to financially support participants in emergencies (e.g. grocery gift cards, cell phones, childcare, etc.);
- All in-person meetings, collaborations and partnerships with employers, community partners and/or participants were arranged and delivered in accordance with all provincial health and safety standards; and,
- Coordinators navigated multiple challenges including obtaining necessary document signatures, reviewing placement agreements, and equipment delivery and returns, using effective and creative problem solving that proved successful.

Recipients of resources included:

- YWCA participants
- Mulgrave Park Caring and Learning Centre
- East Preston Family Resource Centre
- North Preston Childcare Centre
- Uniacke Square Family Centre
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia
- Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia
- Chebucto Parent Resource Centre
- Chebucto Community Centre
- Family SOS in Greystone
- Adsum for Women and Children
- YWCA staff

\$5K

Uber Eats Vouchers

To participants to address food security.

\$30K

Financial Support

To women leaving violence.

Leadership, Equity, Activity & Diversity (LEAD)

While the pandemic restricted gathering in groups, we took the down time as an opportunity to build and promote LEAD (formerly WANSAs). After all, when everything from schools to parks were closed, it was more important to maintain mental health and well-being through sport and recreation.

We developed a weekly communication called We LEAD Wednesdays and together with Women and Girls Taskforce, delivered biweekly professional development sessions online.

LEAD funding also supported the hiring of YWCA Halifax's first Grant Writer in fall 2020 with a mandate to secure funds for the ongoing sustainability of LEAD initiatives.

Nova Scotia Transition & Advocacy for Youth (NSTAY)

The pandemic had a particular impact on young people isolated at home and who spent long hours online. Online recruitment, camming, and youth exploitation online took on a whole new dimension.

As a result, we're proud that all of our NSTAY programs continued to serve in 2020. Participants worked with staff virtually by phone, email, texts, and through social media. Any young person being sexually exploited was accompanied by our team and families seeking support were assisted.

We also provided extraordinary supports including grocery and gas gift cards, bus tickets, and assistance with primary needs. The YWCA reprofiled unspent budget lines to offer similar supports to our TESS partners working with other vulnerable youth across the province.

The YWCA participated in multiple media stories on the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth, alerting adults to youth vulnerability to online exploitation during the pandemic.

December 6th Fund Program

Among the many stories of 2020 was how stay-at-home orders held women captive in situations of domestic violence. At first, referrals to the YWCA's December 6th Fund Program went quiet. We surmised that women felt unsafe to plan their escapes, waiting out the lockdown until it was safer to leave and they could get the support they needed.

Eventually referrals resumed and then picked up. We paused loan repayments from April to July, making sure that participants had the capacity to pay. We accessed multiple grants to increase loan amounts as well as add to our staffing contingent.

The December 6th Fund Program therefore provided additional emotional support to participants through a variety of virtual means (phone, text, email) as well as emergency assistance, including grocery gift cards and bus tickets. A third party evaluation of the program entitled My Voice Matters is available on the YWCA website.

2020 Highlights



Wall Of Honour

Every year, YWCA Halifax recognizes community members and organizations who have made outstanding contributions to advance our mission. They champion our cause with their generosity. We are honoured to acknowledge their efforts to improve our community and the lives of the women we serve.

Melita Scott

Together with Susan Eldridge, Melita Scott co-founded Business Women Connect (BWC). Reflecting Melita and Susan's deep commitment to supporting women, BWC uplifts women business owners while, at the same time, supporting the YWCA as BWC's longstanding charity of choice. Over the past two plus years, Melita has also been volunteering with YWCA Halifax, putting in countless hours setting up and troubleshooting a database system for the organization. No matter how busy she is in her regular work at KPMG, Melita always finds time to help solve problems and come up with solutions. Her flexibility, enthusiasm, and generosity reflect Melita's deep belief in the power of women and the mission of the YWCA.

Karen Oldfield

A Hali-legend in her own right, Karen Oldfield was a true champion of the YWCA in 2020. One of the inaugural members of our Women's Leadership Collaborative, last year Karen and Laurel Broten of Nova Scotia Business Inc. spearheaded a She-Covery campaign in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their efforts brought vital resources to support YWCA's work in responding to job losses, housing insecurity, and safety as the pandemic impacted women. Karen continues to be an inspiration for many and demonstrates how leadership and community involvement walk hand-in-hand.

PR Hive

Robyn McIsaac and the PR Hive team have been supporters of the YWCA's mission for several years. Whether sponsoring YWCA events, managing our social media content, or taking a phone call to walk through a communications issue, Robyn and the PR Hive team embody a deep commitment to a healthy and vibrant Halifax where women and girls are empowered to live their best lives. We are so lucky to work with a communications firm that believes in our work and is prepared to move mountains!



Braedon, age 12

Braedon Cruickshanks

Braedon Cruickshanks has been volunteering with the YWCA Halifax since we opened our Spryfield location over 8 years ago. Braedon volunteered with the Food First program, helping the women with the garden, carrying and packing our produce packs, stocking food bins on the Mobile Food Market bus. He has volunteered with the childcare centre washing dishes, getting groceries, stocking shelves, gardening, shovelling and salting, running errands, including the all-important Tim's runs!

Braedon, an honours student, graduates from J L Ilsley this year. He has been accepted at Dalhousie University to study Engineering. He plans on becoming an Aerospace Engineer. We know Braedon's future is bright and we wish him all the success in the world. Thank you Braedon!

Thank You

To our donors and supporters who generously contributed and believe in our mission.

Aaron Smith
Affordable Housing Association of
Nova Scotia
Aileen Furey
Alan Leard
Alana Patterson
Alannah Delahunty-Pike
Alexandra Yip
AliaYassin-Saied
Amanda Dean
Amanda Hodgekinston
Amy MacKay
Andy Fillmore, MP
Angela Ralph
Ann Boswick
Anna Stuart
Apple Self Storage
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Armview Restaurant
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Feed Nova Scotia
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GDS Home Renovations and
Landscaping
George Bucci
Gerard Goldenberg
Golden Dog Design
Government of Canada:
Canada Summer Jobs

Canadian Heritage
Employment and Social
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Justin McDonough
Karen Hutt
Karen Oldfield
Katherine Feindel
Kelly Gaudet
Kept Gifts

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Kim Mundle First Aid
Kimberley West
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Nova Scotia Community College
Nova Scotia Early Childhood
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Royal Canadian Mounted Police
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Ruby Osmond
Ruth Buckle
Sarah Dawson

Sarah Ingraham
Sarah McInnes
Sarah Smith
Sarah Williams
Sarah Young
Shannon Paquette
Shanti Hot Yoga Studio
Dartmouth Inc.
Shelagh McCorry
Sheri Lecker
Sheri Penner
Shirley Jewett
Shivani's Kitchen
Shoppers Drug Mart
Simon Vigneault
Sky's the Limit Events
Sleep Country
Sobey's Spryfield
Sonya Fraser
South Eastern Community Health
Board
St. John's Ambulance
St. Paul's Home Society
Stefanie Adams
Stella Lord
Stewart McKelvey
Stil James
Sue Bookchin
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The Canteen on Portland
The Home Depot Canada
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The PR Hive
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Tina Ruel-Baksh
Tracey Barbrick
Tracey Bentley
Trampoline
United Way Halifax
Universal Realty Group
Verona Singer
VIDA Living
Wanda Hill
Wendy MacGregor
William MacLean
YMCA of Greater
Halifax/Dartmouth
YWCA Canada
YWCA Toronto
Zwicker's Gallery

Financials

	2020	2019
Revenues	\$4,896,262	\$3,695,927
Expenditures	\$4,558,833	\$3,632,276
Excess of revenues over expenditures	\$337,429	\$63,651
Investments	\$10,769	\$34,323
Forgiveness of debt	—	\$25,647
Excess of revenues over expenditures	\$348,198	\$123,623

Revenues

Government Funding and Grants:	\$3,568,409
Program Fees and Earned Income:	\$698,366
Foundations and Charities:	\$459,418
Fundraising Events:	\$55,227
Donations and Bequests:	\$88,078
Miscellaneous:	\$26,764

Expenses

Salaries:	\$2,468,403
Facilities :	\$615,504
Program Expenses:	\$835,318
Operational:	\$472,737
Fundraising:	\$17,874
Amortization of Capital Assets:	\$148,997

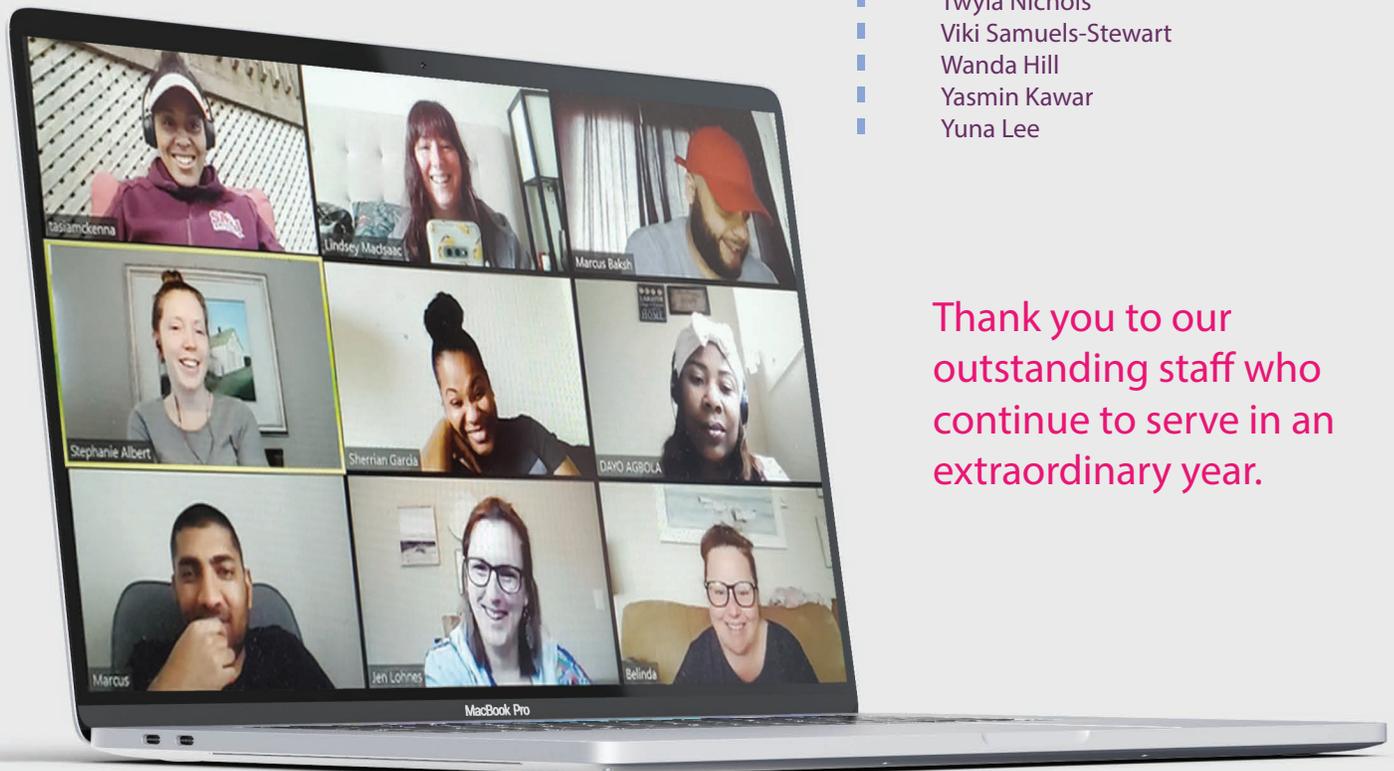
YWCA Halifax Staff

at December 31, 2020

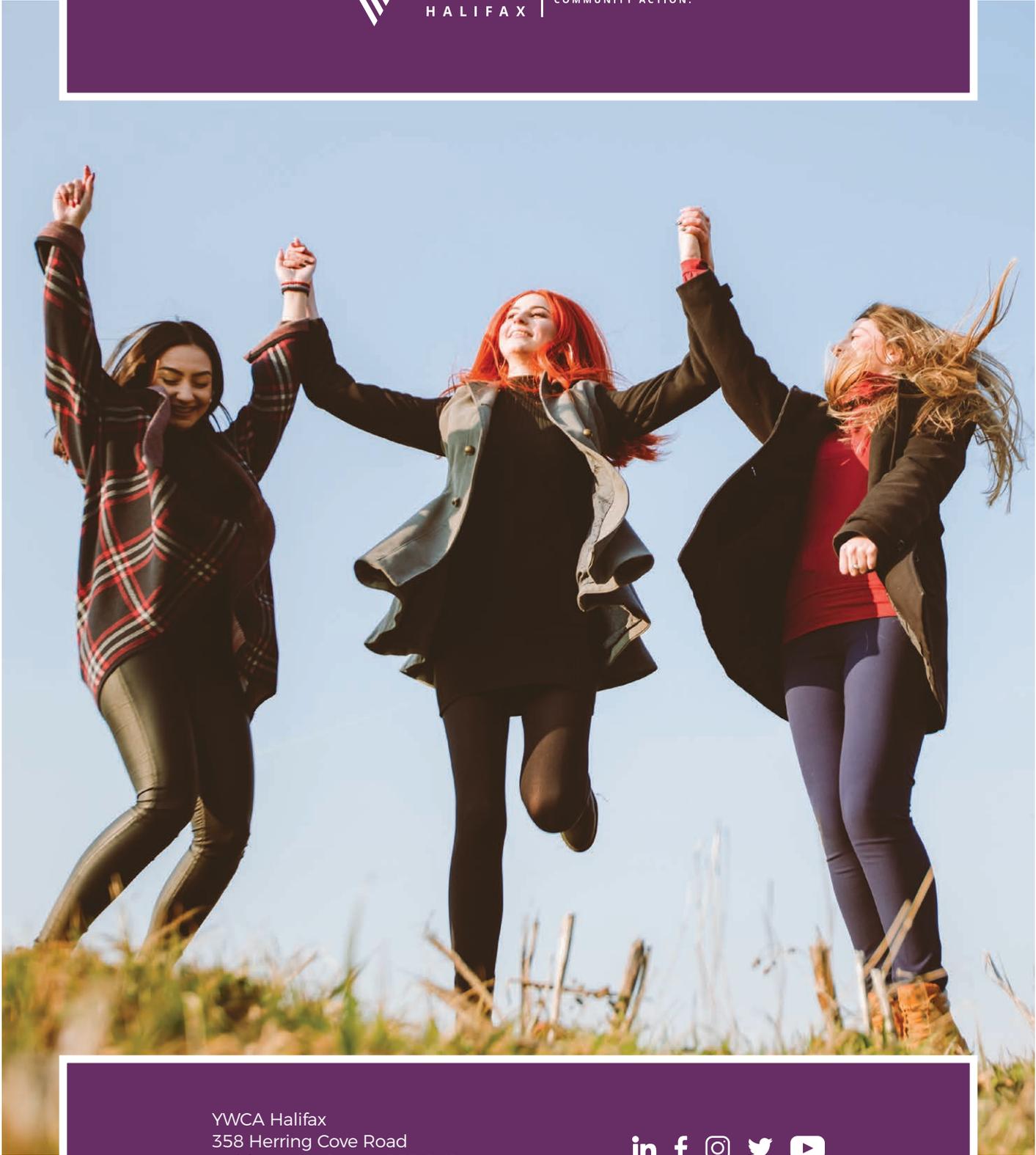
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Amanda Marriott
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Twyla Nichols
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Wanda Hill
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Yuna Lee



Thank you to our
outstanding staff who
continue to serve in an
extraordinary year.



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