



eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
union county

courage
compassion
commitment

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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(as of 12/31/24)

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YWCA Union County **MISSION**

The YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

In this context, YWCA Union County is on a mission: to empower survivors of domestic violence to become safe and free from abuse, and to promote social justice and eliminate violence against women and girls.

We accomplish this mission through the provision of comprehensive, client-centered services, and through education, collaboration and advocacy that builds safe, informed and supportive communities.

YWCA Union County **CORE VALUES**

COMMITMENT to the mission and working together for the well-being of the community.

INTEGRITY in relationships, practices, and decisions.

RESPECT for each one's roles, diversity, and viewpoints.

COMPASSION in understanding, attitude, and action.

EMPOWERMENT to create positive choices, recognize potential, and reach goals.

EXCELLENCE in practice and expectation.

DEAR

YWCA Union County

COMMUNITY



*Executive Director
Kathryn Lynch*

As we reflect on 2024, we are filled with gratitude for the incredible support that has allowed us to empower survivors of domestic violence and expand our programs. This year has been one of growth, resilience, and transformation as we continue our mission of building safer, more informed, and supportive communities.

We provided direct services to 7,754 individuals, with a total of 10,992 people impacted through our various programs. Survivors received critical support through legal advocacy, counseling, job readiness training, and creative arts therapy, helping them rebuild their lives.

This year marked new initiatives, including the Healthy Relationships Initiative, equipping young people with knowledge about healthy relationships. We also partnered with the Strangulation Institute to provide a statewide training for over 100 professionals, strengthening community education and outreach.

We are also thrilled to have secured the Office on Violence Against Women FY2024 Expanding Legal Services Initiative Grant, allowing us to provide survivors with legal representation.

The success of our fundraising events, including the Building New Beginnings Gala, Raffle Night for Rebuilding, and Champions for Family Justice Awards Breakfast, was made possible by generous donors, sponsors, and our dedicated community.

Additionally, we are excited to share that our new 13,000-square-foot building is nearing completion. In 2025, we look forward to hosting a celebratory ribbon-cutting event, marking a new chapter in our ability to serve survivors and the community.

None of this would have been possible without our dedicated staff, volunteers and interns, whose passion and commitment drives our mission forward. As we step into 2025, we do so with renewed dedication to providing life-saving services and advocating for survivors.

Thank you to all who have contributed to our building, our work and our mission to empower women and eliminate racism.

To make a contribution, please go to ywcaunioncounty.org and click the "Donate" button. Every donation helps!

With gratitude,
Kathryn Lynch

Thank you

YWCA UNION COUNTY 2024 YEAR END STATISTICS

Hotline	5162 calls
Emergency Shelter	65 Adults, 73 Children
Housing Navigator	58 Clients
Court Advocacy	997 Clients
Family Justice Center	456 Clients
STEP (Skills, Training & Empowment Program)	97 Clients
Counseling & Case Management	251 Clients
Crisis Response Team	158 Callouts
DVL (Domestic Violence Liasions)	362 Clients
PALS (Peace: A Learned Solution)	41 Children, 34 Parents
Community Education	105 Presentations, 3,238 Participants

TOTAL SERVED = 10,992 (7,754 DIRECT SERVICE)

2024 Impact



RESIDENTIAL

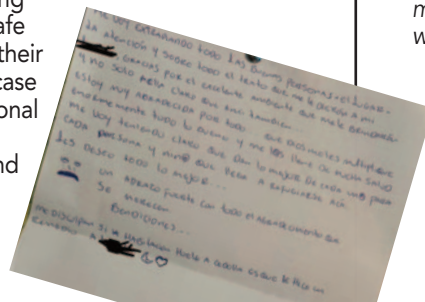
Union County's only **24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline** and **Emergency Shelter** are at the core of the YWCA's Residential Program. Both offer critical round-the-clock support and resources for victims in crisis. In 2024, we answered over 5,000 Hotline calls and were able to provide 65 adults and 73 children with a total of 5,826 safe nights of sleep.

While the importance of emergency shelter and resources for domestic violence victims fleeing their homes cannot be overstated, the YWCA recognizes that it is just a temporary solution. 2024 saw the YWCA focus efforts to address clients' long-term housing needs through two programs.



2024 saw the first full year of the **Housing Navigator** program, which was launched in Fall 2023 to address the critical shortage of housing in Union County and throughout the state. Since inception the **Housing Navigator** has given out over **\$103,500** of concrete assistance to close to 40 clients including help with security deposits, assistance with back rent, securing storage spaces and providing household items such as pots and bedding.

The YWCA was thrilled to be able to relaunch our **Supportive Housing** program this past Fall. With this funding, we expect to support eight survivors and their children each year by providing them with an apartment. Supportive Housing helps survivors by providing a stable and safe living environment where they can rebuild their lives. It offers necessary resources such as case management, life skills training, and emotional support, which are crucial for survivors to regain independence, heal from trauma, and create a future free from violence.



SPOTLIGHT

JANET RIVERS



Janet Rivers began working with the YWCA nine years ago as a per diem employee at the shelter, but that wasn't her first encounter with the YWCA. Janet had been a client of the YWCA 30 years before. She started working at the YWCA as a way to give back for the help and support she had received when she had fled her abuser all those years ago. Shortly after starting she transitioned to a full-time role and became the Overnight Shelter Advocate. Janet has now been an overnight fixture at the shelter for nine years, and has been available to help countless shelter residents with emergencies and answer the most desperate of middle-of-the-night Hotline calls, when most of us are long asleep.

Janet says, "I work in this field to help our clients during such a traumatic time in their lives. I've always been a night person and knowing that I am there for clients when no one else is makes my work that much more rewarding."

COMMUNITY

SUPPORT SERVICES

SPOTLIGHT

KAREN SCOTT



Karen Scott has dedicated seven years to advancing the mission of the YWCA through her impactful work in the field of domestic violence. Beginning her journey with the agency in 2017 as a Crisis Response Team Volunteer, Karen went on to serve as the Case Manager for the now dismantled Oaks Housing Program in 2019, then as a Housing Navigator in 2022, and currently holds the role of Community Educator.

Karen describes her work as profoundly fulfilling, as it allows her to empower individuals with knowledge, encourage victims to seek help, and assure them they are not alone. By breaking the silence and stigma surrounding domestic violence, she hopes to foster meaningful change. As Maya Angelou famously said, "You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them."

“

Qué es una buena ayuda para las mujeres que estamos enfrentando una violencia doméstica, este programa me ayudado mucho, para poder ser una mujer independiente y segura.

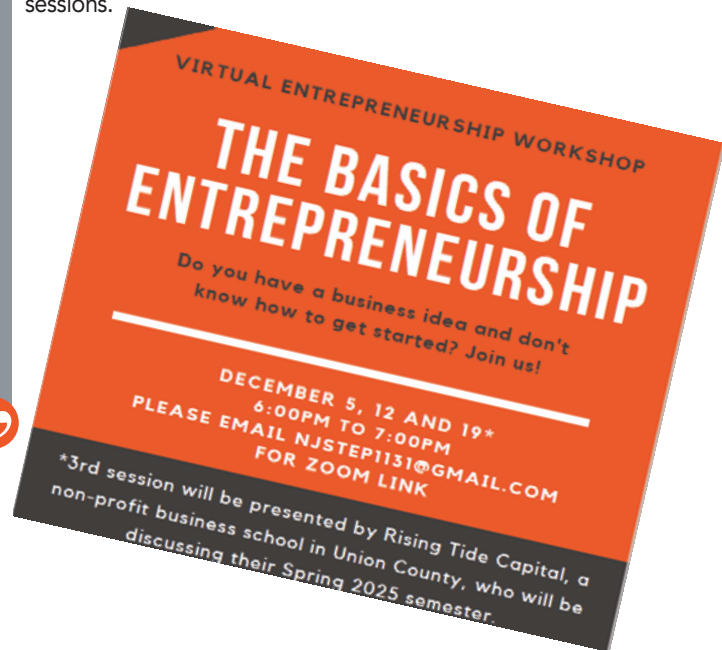
Translation: This program is a great help for women who are facing domestic violence, this program has helped me a lot, to be an independent and safe woman.

”

CSS offers our victims an array of services to help them take comprehensive steps - outside of the Residential Program - necessary for securing safe and stable futures as survivors.

In 2024 we were able to offer many new services including **professional makeovers and headshots** for our clients in partnership with Courtney Kay, Adalys Rodriguez and Gabriela Sepulveda. In collaboration with Michael Page, our **Skills Training and Empowerment Program (STEP)** offered **mock interviews** throughout the year, accommodating survivors in multiple languages. Additionally, we secured funding to relaunch our **STEP mentor program** – offering survivors the unique opportunity to work with experienced professionals as they take steps to beginning new career paths. We were also able to offer **26 computer labs** – an opportunity for survivors to work with an advocate in a quiet setting on improving their computer skills as well as editing their resume and completing job applications – in three different locations including our confidential shelter, administrative office in Kenilworth and at the Family Justice Center.

Thanks to a generous grant from Phillips 66, we were able to expand our **Counseling Services** by hiring three additional counselors, who together provided a total of 249 counseling sessions.





We also welcomed eight interns, who, under the supervision of a Licensed Social Worker (LSW) and a Master of Social Work (MSW), supported 64 victims. In total, our counseling team provided 1,031 individual counseling sessions, as well as 142 participants served through our **English and Spanish support groups**.

Our **Case Management** team played a vital role in offering a wide range of referrals, connecting individuals to essential advocacy organizations and services. These included local agencies such as VCCO, 4C's, DDD, Social Services, legal services, mental health support, furniture assistance, and internal referrals within the YWCA, ensuring comprehensive care and support for those in need.

In close collaboration with Trinitas Hospital, the **Emergency Room Domestic Violence Liaison (ERDVL)** provided on-site support two days a week in the Emergency Room, offering immediate services to patients. Additionally, three days a week, the ERDVL extended their support through case management, accompanying clients to follow-up appointments, reviewing available resources with them, and assisting with phone calls to ensure continued care and support. In 2024, the ERDVL served a total of 46 survivors, providing them with 327 services.



“ I am beyond grateful for the support and encouragement that I received from this program. I will continue working on myself to get the courage and strength to do what is best for my children and I. I have come so far from where I was just a few months ago. I cannot thank (my counselor) enough for helping me see myself and not the illusion my abuser has created. ”



SPOTLIGHT

PALS

Peace: A Learned Solution

SHERI GROOVER



Sheri Groover obtained her Bachelor's of Arts in psychology in 2007 and went on to pursue her Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology with a Specialization in Art Therapy in 2012 from Caldwell University. Before coming to the YWCA, Sheri worked for five years in the PALS program at Women Aware, a domestic violence agency for Middlesex County. She came to the YWCA's PALS program in December 2018 starting first as an art therapist, and now as Director since 2022.

Sheri says, "PALS is amazing because it is free and we provide transportation which greatly reduces financial barriers for our clients that we serve. I am grateful to have experienced the role of PALS Art Therapist, to continue learning and growing over the years which greatly helped in my transition to Director with the support of all program directors, senior admin, YWCA staff and PALS team. Most of all, as an agency, I feel we all work as a team to provide the best services to all clients that access the various programs offered at the YWCA."

In 2024, PALS served 34 new non-offending adults and 41 children, providing them with 643 **creative arts therapy sessions** over that time in the form of music, art, drama, and for the first time, sand play therapies.

In 2024, PALS held 13 **Family Fun Nights** through the support of generous donors to provide special activities and events including a holiday event at Pump It Up in Union County attended by 70 individuals. In addition, during this event, each child was given three Holiday wishes that were requested by their parent. The holiday wish list items were generously donated by private donors to all PALS children and teens. PALS also held **support groups** for the non-offending parents and **Creative Arts Therapy Groups** for kids and teens in 2024.



Perhaps the best way to literally and figuratively illustrate the work done by PALS, is to visualize the 1,200 crayons provided to PALS children – with each new child receiving their own box which they can choose to bring home to continue to work on their skills.



FAMILY

JUSTICE CENTER

SPOTLIGHT

NICOLE PEREZ



Nicole Perez began working as the Social Services Intake Worker at the Family Justice Center in June 2022. As Intake Worker, Nicole often meets clients when they first go to court and in that role acts as a combination of case manager, crisis counselor and court advocate by helping them process their trauma, understand their legal options and connecting them to resources at the FJC, YWCA and in the community. She is currently pursuing her MSW from Rutgers University. Prior to working at the FJC, Nicole worked in the social services field both at a substance abuse program and a supervised visitation program.

Nicole says, "I've always been passionate about advocating and being able to do so with victims of domestic violence at the FJC has deepened my commitment to lifting up the most vulnerable and helping them navigate the complex systems, especially non-English speakers."

2024 was a busy year at the **Family Justice Center (FJC)**. Between clients serviced directly by FJC staff, our **Court Advocacy Program** and the **Crisis Response Team (CRT)**, we worked with over 1600 clients, providing them with much needed support and information including navigating making police reports, receiving restraining orders, understanding the legal system, and connecting them with community resources. Additionally, in 2024 we opened an onsite **food pantry** which includes toiletries and diapers in addition to canned and other shelf stable food in order to be able to provide clients with emergency necessities as they navigate the first few days after losing the financial support of the person who caused them harm.



"I want to say "thank you" to the lovely advocate who was with us today at court... She was kind and supportive to each of us and I'm so sorry I didn't catch her name. Her presence was comforting, and I'd like to make sure she knows how much I appreciated her support, and kind words as I left after proceeding with my order dismissal. In a time that can feel so uncertain, I'm glad to know you are here for me and others. Thank you."

The volume of victims seen at the FJC and throughout the YWCA underscores the importance of offering preventative education to young people, and in 2024 FJC staff soft-launched the **Healthy Relationships Initiative** through which interactive workshops are offered to tweens and young teens teaching them the signs of healthy platonic and romantic relationships.

Finally, the FJC was honored to be selected as a recipient of a federal Office on Violence Against Women FY2024 Expanding Legal Services Initiative Grant. Staff are looking forward to working closely with OVV to launch the **Survivor Representation Project** in the coming year.



"The court advocate was a comfort to have at the hearing, and easy to talk with before going in to the hearing... It was my first time in the process and it helped to have someone who felt like they were in my corner at least, when the defendants often have lawyers to represent them, and victims are often alone."

Jennifer* first connected to the YWCA when she filed a police report in Plainfield following an incident with her boyfriend. Jennifer was pregnant at the time, and her boyfriend wanted her to get an abortion. She refused, and he hit her. She spoke with a CRT volunteer who informed her of all the services available throughout the YWCA. At the time, she did not want anything.

The YWCA next heard from Jennifer when she was seven months pregnant. She reached out to the Family Justice Center herself as she was now thinking about filing for a new restraining order. He was still hitting her for not having gotten an abortion. She disclosed to the FJC advocate that her obstetrician had shared that the baby was not developing normally, and would likely have significant medical needs once he was born. The advocate escorted her to court and accompanied her through the process of filing for a restraining order and discussed her options for child support. After receiving the temporary restraining order, the advocate also sat with Jennifer while she called the Hotline to be screened for shelter. Jennifer didn't think she would be safe at home once her boyfriend was served with the restraining order.

About a week after Jennifer moved into shelter, she gave birth to the baby who,

as predicted, was born with significant medical needs. Her shelter advocate worked closely with Jennifer - helping her secure WIC, Medicaid, and SSI benefits. Additionally, her shelter advocate helped Jennifer - who had limited English - schedule the myriad of appointments that the baby needed including to a pediatric pulmonologist, sleep specialist, and orthopedist as well as setting up Early Intervention therapies and advocating with the medical supply company for the feeding supplies needed by the infant.

Her shelter advocate also connected Jennifer to the Housing Navigator program as well as STEP.

With the assistance of an attorney from one of the FJC's partner agencies, Jennifer was able to obtain a permanent restraining order against the baby's father along with an order of child support. With the public benefits she was able to obtain and the child support, the Housing Navigator was able to help Jennifer identify affordable apartments and was able to assist with paying the security deposit.

Once Jennifer was secure in the apartment, the STEP advocate helped Jennifer apply for child care through the CCCCs program and locate ESL classes, so she could take steps towards securing employment.

A Client's Story

**Name changed to protect confidentiality*

IN THE COMMUNITY

SPOTLIGHT

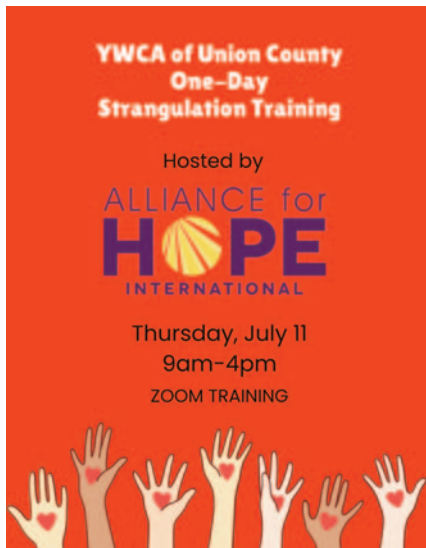
LUCIA LUCAS



Lucia Diaz Lucas is a Domestic Violence Liaison to the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCPP). She has been with the YWCA since 2014 and has worked in the field of domestic violence for 22 years. She obtained her BA from Ramapo College of New Jersey where she double majored in Psychology and Social Science with a Concentration in Criminology. She then attended graduate school at John Jay College of Criminal Justice where she studied Forensic Psychology. Lucia started her domestic violence career as a research analyst for the NJ Fatality & Near Fatality Review Board.

She takes pride in empowering, advocating and implementing system's change.

Her passion to help two of the most vulnerable populations in our society—victims of domestic violence and children experiencing abuse and neglect—has spearheaded her devotion to this field.



As part of our mission to build safe, informed and supportive communities, community education and outreach is promoted across our programs.

At the Family Justice Center, court advocates have offered near daily presentations in the courthouse waiting areas to inform victims about their legal rights and options since 2022, as well as doing community workshops in English and Spanish on the legal rights of victims of domestic violence. In 2024, our CSS Community Educator provided workshops to 26 different agencies and high schools across Union County. And in Fall 2024 we piloted our Healthy Relationships Initiative, educating middle school aged tweens and teens about the importance of healthy relationships before they ever even have their first romantic encounter.

Additionally, we partnered with experts from the Strangulation Institute to provide an all-day training about strangulation, attended by over 100 professionals across New Jersey.

Community education goes hand in hand with outreach, and we tabled at multiple events throughout the county including at high schools, public libraries and food pantries so that we can ensure more community members know who to turn to for help for their friends, neighbors and colleagues who may be experiencing domestic violence.



“ I really appreciate the help provided to me. The Y served as (a) survival missing link for the victim. I think this service needs to be advertise(d) to help a lot of blindfolded victim(s) to survive before it's too late. Usually we think that we have no (e)scape, therefore we stay in the situation for a long time ...by the time we get out, life is basically over and the impact and scars are deep ... The point is that a lot can be avoided if this service is know(n) and advertise(d) to the community.



EVENTS

RAFFLE NIGHT FOR REBUILDING

We had a blast at our Raffle Night For Rebuilding in May. We had over 200 friends, relatives, colleagues and community members come out for a night of bingo, baskets, and raffles to help raise money for the reopening of our building! We were touched by the support and generosity of everyone who donated basket items from earrings to appliances to plane tickets and of course, everyone who purchased tickets and joined in the fun.



We especially want to thank our raffle sponsors:

Elizabeth Housing Authority, Elizabeth, NJ

Pinnacle Construction Group, Elizabeth, NJ

Maffey's Security Group, Elizabeth, NJ

Summit Elks Lodge 1246, Summit, NJ

Ann Janson

Phillips 66 Refinery, Linden, NJ

Garden State Window Cleaning, Parlin, NJ

Sarah Spade

Matthijssen Business Systems, Cedar Knolls, NJ



EVENTS

On May 9, 2024 we celebrated the inaugural Union County Champions for Family Justice Awards Breakfast. We were excited to recognize community members who dedicate themselves to improving the lives of families in crisis.

Honorees:

Lifetime Achievement Award
Anne Evans Estabrook

Leaders in Justice Award
Karen M. Cassidy, A.J.S.C. (Ret.)

Chief Giacomo Sacca,
Elizabeth Police Department

Defender of Justice Award
Yasser Gonzalez
Gonzalez Law Firm, LLC

Accessing Justice Award
Naomi Miranda
Retired Assistant Division Manager,
Family Division, Union County

Community Service Award
Jo Ann Boyle
Access Benefit Consulting,
YWCA Volunteer

Dr. La'Tesha Sampson
Executive Director, Great Joy
Counseling and Consulting Services
Director, MSW Practicum Education,
Seton Hall University

Champions FOR FAMILY JUSTICE



Thank You to Our Sponsors



BAYWAY REFINERY



EVENTS



THURSDAY
OCTOBER 24, 2024
6 to 10 PM
The Clubhouse at
Galloping Hill Golf Course
Kenilworth, NJ

In October we held our Building New Beginnings Gala, raising money to support the reopening of our new building. It was a beautiful night and we were thrilled to celebrate our amazing honorees. A heartfelt thank you goes to all our generous donors, and our dedicated politicians, especially Mayor Christian Bollwage of the City of Elizabeth, without whom we would not be where we are today, on the precipice of opening the doors to our new 13,000 square foot space.

Thank You to Our Sponsors



Honorees

Janice C. Lilien

Humanitarian Award

Karen Dinsmore, M.P.A.
Assistant Director,
Department of Human
Services, County of
Union

Renew Award

Phillips 66

Reopen Award

**Pinnacle Construction
Group**

Westfield Foundation

Revive Award

City of Elizabeth

**Janet L. Pegg
Foundation**



EVENTS

DV Awareness Month/Walk

In addition to our regular outreach activities, every October YWCA staff go above and beyond in participating in events for **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**. From tabling at events, wearing **purple**, to workshops at schools and in the community, it was a busy month filled with opportunities to further our mission and educate the community about the prevalence of domestic violence in our society.

We were especially proud to participate in the Spooky Strides for Strength 5K Run and Walk with fellow domestic violence agencies, publish an article about being a mother experiencing domestic violence, and hosting a series of free webinars.



**IN THE KNOW:
WEBINAR SERIES**

Join us during Domestic Violence Awareness Month for a series of **FREE** webinars to keep you in the know when it comes to domestic violence.

We'll discuss:

- 10/4, 12pm-1pm: How to Talk to Your Tween/Teen About Domestic Violence and Healthy Relationships
- 10/7, 12pm-1pm: What is a Restraining Order and How Can Someone Get One?
- 10/18, 12pm-1pm: What to Do If You Suspect a Friend or Loved One is in an Abusive Relationship
- 10/21, 12pm-1pm: Domestic Violence and Immigration (with guest presenters from American Friends Service Committee)

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SPOOKY
STRIDES FOR STRENGTH
5K RUN & WALK
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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REGISTER FOR THE WALK OR 5K BY VISITING
<https://bit.ly/spookystrides2024>
OCTOBER 27th | WEST ORANGE, NJ

EVENTS



DENIM DAY

Raising Awareness

Throughout the year, YWCA staff took additional steps to further our mission of empowering women and ending racism. Staff wore **denim** in April to raise awareness about **sexual assault**; helped clean-up parks in Elizabeth for **Earth Day**; wore **green** in May to shine a light about **mental health**; displayed our flags in June to support our **LGBTQIA+** clients and community; and celebrated **Hispanic Heritage Month** in the Fall.



EARTH DAY



PRIDE MONTH



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS



HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

2024 CONTRIBUTIONS

**THANK YOU
TO THE FOLLOWING
INDIVIDUALS,
GOVERNMENTAL
SOURCES,
FOUNDATIONS,
CORPORATIONS, AND
COMMUNITY
ORGANIZATIONS FOR
YOUR SUPPORT!**



INSTITUTIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

HAVEN SPONSOR (\$25,000 AND ABOVE)

Elizabethtown Health Care Foundation
The Janet L. Pegg Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery
PNC Institutional Asset Management
United Fund of Westfield, N.J.

DEFENDERS (\$10,000 TO \$24,999)

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Flagstar Foundation
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Crennel Family Foundation
Elizabeth PBA Local 4 Civic Association
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The Max Challenge of Cranford
OceanFirst Foundation
Union College of Union County
Walmart Payouts

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Brian and Joelle Fally Family Foundation
Chipotle
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The Counseling Center for Human Development
Election Fund of Manny Grova, Jr.
Financial Resources Federal Credit Union
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Partners for Women and Justice Inc.
Sugar Nails by Yudi & Ali
Woman's Club of Berkeley Heights

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AARP Chapter No. 607
B.J.&M. Auto Inc.
Lauren DiGiovanni - Ayr Wellness Inc.
Machlowitz Family Charitable Fund
Nationwide Pest Management LLC

2024 CONTRIBUTIONS

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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2024 CONTRIBUTIONS

IN-KIND DONATIONS

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Ayr Wellness Inc.
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Bovella's Pastry Shoppe
Jo Ann Boyle
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Central NJ Alumnae Panhellenic Association
Noreen Chua-Kasak
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Janice Iosso
Vishakha Johari
Jules' Closet
Bernie Lambert
Stephanie Licata
London Jewelers
Serene Longsworth

Jessica S. Lynch
Jenna Medina
Maria Mendez
Millburn High School Feminist Club
Mindfully Aware
Moms Helping Moms Foundation, Inc.
Yesenia Montague
More Than A Phone
Vanessa Moreira-Corbett
Nicole Morelli
Inesha Nash
Lois Nelson
New Jersey State Police Victim Services Unit
Doreen O'Brien
Johanna O'Connor
Oh Brian's On the Green
Marilyn Olmo
Det. Jennifer Perez
Perth Amboy Popeyes
Rita Peyton
Nadia Philemon
Pro Bono Partnership
Mayra and Srikanth Reddy
Susan Reich
Lelani Romero
Dr. La'Tesha Sampson
Sue Seto
Louise Sgarro
Janice Sheaffer
Nancy Sheridan
Ruth Smith
Susan Smith
Allison Spranger
Tara Stone
Donald Sullivan
The Giving Mood
The Mills at Jersey Gardens
Erin Thomas
Stephanie Torres
Union High School
Union Police Department
Marsha Vaughn
Rachel A. Walls
Anne Wargo
Karyn Weingarten
Ashley Wohlrab



IN-KIND SERVICES

Ana Abraham
Alex Adams
Ricania Aunondieu
Kymm Balinth-Regan
Danielle Bongiovanni
Jo Ann Boyle
Heather Burnett
Marie Camaya
Sarah Chodnicki
Taylor-Michele Coriolan
Berithsa Dalzon
Patricia Daquila
Ashley Delaney
Grace DeSana
Michele Dilworth
Lar-yome GobahPorter
Karen Johnson
Courtney Kay
Jacqui Lenner
Serene Longsworth
Miracle Matthews
Amanda McLean
Lydia McNally
Alyssa Orlando
Daisy Paisi
Sanmary Palacios

Cheryl Petroski
Amy Rivas
Adalys Rodriguez
Maria Romero
Carolina Rozewski
Marlon Sarmiento
Gabriella Sepulveda
Serena Sirchio
Betty Thomas
Deiny Ucros
Noel Walker
Jane Yarnell
May Yoshitome

In preparing this report, the YWCA Union County has attempted to recognize all those who contributed so generously during the period January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024. We apologize for any errors or omissions.



FINANCIAL

Highlights

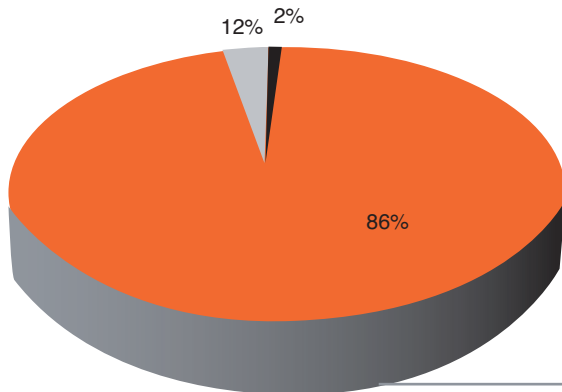
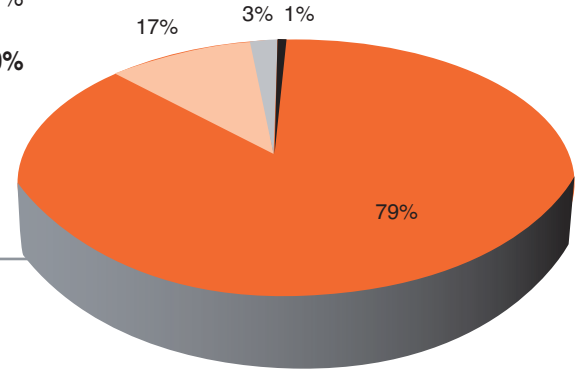
Fiscal Year 2024

Operating Revenue

Government Grants and Contracts	\$ 2,834,932	79%
Donations & Contributions	\$ 597,551	17%
Program Service Fees	\$121,965	3%
Realized & Unrealized Gain on Investment /Other	\$ 25,923	1%
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 3,580,371	100%

* Unaudited financials

OPERATING REVENUE*



Operating Expenses

Program Services	3,049,475	86%
Management & General	\$435,855	12%
Fundraising	\$72,643	2%
Total Operating Expense	\$3,557,972	100%

* Unaudited financials

OPERATING EXPENSE*

VOLUNTEERS

AND INTERNS



In order to be able to meet the needs of all the victims who come to the YWCA for support, we rely on our well-trained volunteers – some of whom have been with us for decades! – to help provide services. Volunteers provide critical support throughout the agency, and in particular the Crisis Response Team and Court Advocacy Team. And our interns provide counseling and case management support across the agency including Residential, PALS, CSS and FJC. Each year our volunteers and interns contribute thousands of hours of their time, making a difference in the lives of hundreds of survivors. Their dedication makes the YWCA an even stronger agency, and we are all so appreciative of the empathy and passion they bring with them every day.

We were especially thrilled to honor longtime volunteer Jo Ann Boyle with a Community Service Award at our Champions for Family Justice Awards Breakfast in May. Jo Ann has volunteered in multiple capacities throughout the agency - outreach, Board Committees, and the Crisis Response Team to name a few.

“

CRT VOLUNTEER:

Being a CRT means sharing the journey and the light at points when it is so dark for these survivors. It means helping other survivors (I'm one too) know and feel they are not alone and we understand and hear them. There is no judgement

CRT VOLUNTEER:

I never imagined that a simple "thank you" from victims and survivors could hit my heart so deeply. It carries immense weight, knowing all they have endured. This has been an incredibly rewarding experience so far.

COURT ADVOCATE INTERN AND CRT VOLUNTEER:

Being both a Court Advocate and CRT volunteer gave me the opportunity to use my empathy and understanding of domestic violence to support survivors in the best way possible. I am so appreciative of the experience and I will take everything I learned with me as I continue to support survivors.

”



WELCOME

to Patricia and Kathryn

Meet the New Executive Management Team

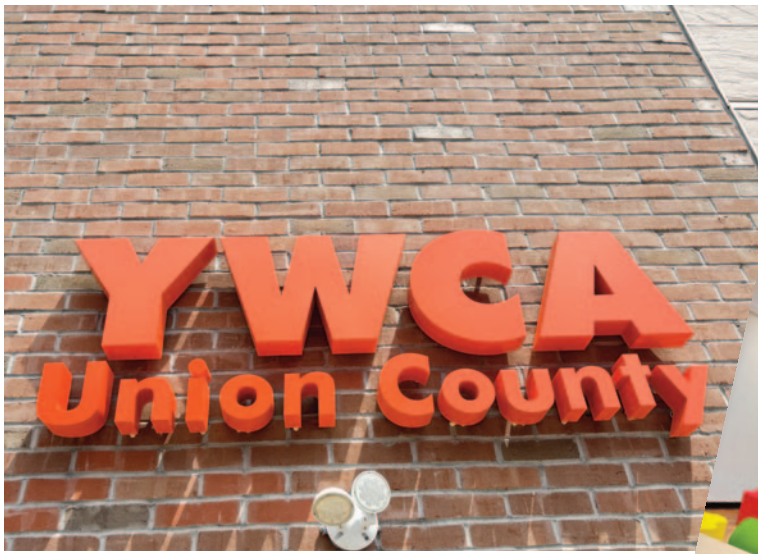


One of the core values that makes the YWCA Union County an incredible resource for victims of domestic violence is that the agency invests in its staff. Providing flexibility for staff to pursue graduate degrees and for professional growth, enables us to have the most committed and experienced staff to serve our clients. The strength of this model has led to the promotions of the new 2024 executive management team who bring a combined 20 years of work within the YWCA before rising to their current positions.

Executive Director Kathryn Lynch first began with the YWCA as an intern in the STEP program in 2015. Since that time she has pursued a Masters and then a Doctorate in Social Work, and has held the roles of Job Specialist, STEP Coordinator, Director of CSS, Assistant Executive Director and now Executive Director.

Patricia Mejia began with the YWCA as a CRT volunteer in 2013. She was later hired as a Shelter Advocate, followed by Case Manager, Residential Counselor, Coordinator of Counseling, Director of CSS and finally the penultimate role of Director of Operations before becoming Assistant Executive Director at the end of 2024. During this time Patricia pursued and received her Masters in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and later earned her LPC.

As the agency looks ahead to 2025 and the next chapter, we do so knowing that the institutional knowledge, professional experience, and core values of the agency are held in the highest regard, positioning us in the strongest place possible for whatever lies ahead.



In 2025, YWCA Union County will open a new chapter in our mission to support survivors of domestic violence with the launch of our new headquarters in Elizabeth. This building is more than just bricks and mortar—it represents hope, safety, and a fresh start for countless individuals and families in our community.

Strategically located for easier access via public transportation, the new facility will help more survivors reach our life-saving services. With enhanced security features, we are creating a protected and welcoming environment where healing can begin, and dignity can be restored. A generator and solar panels have also been installed to ensure the building remains resilient and energy-efficient—prepared for emergencies and built for long-term sustainability.

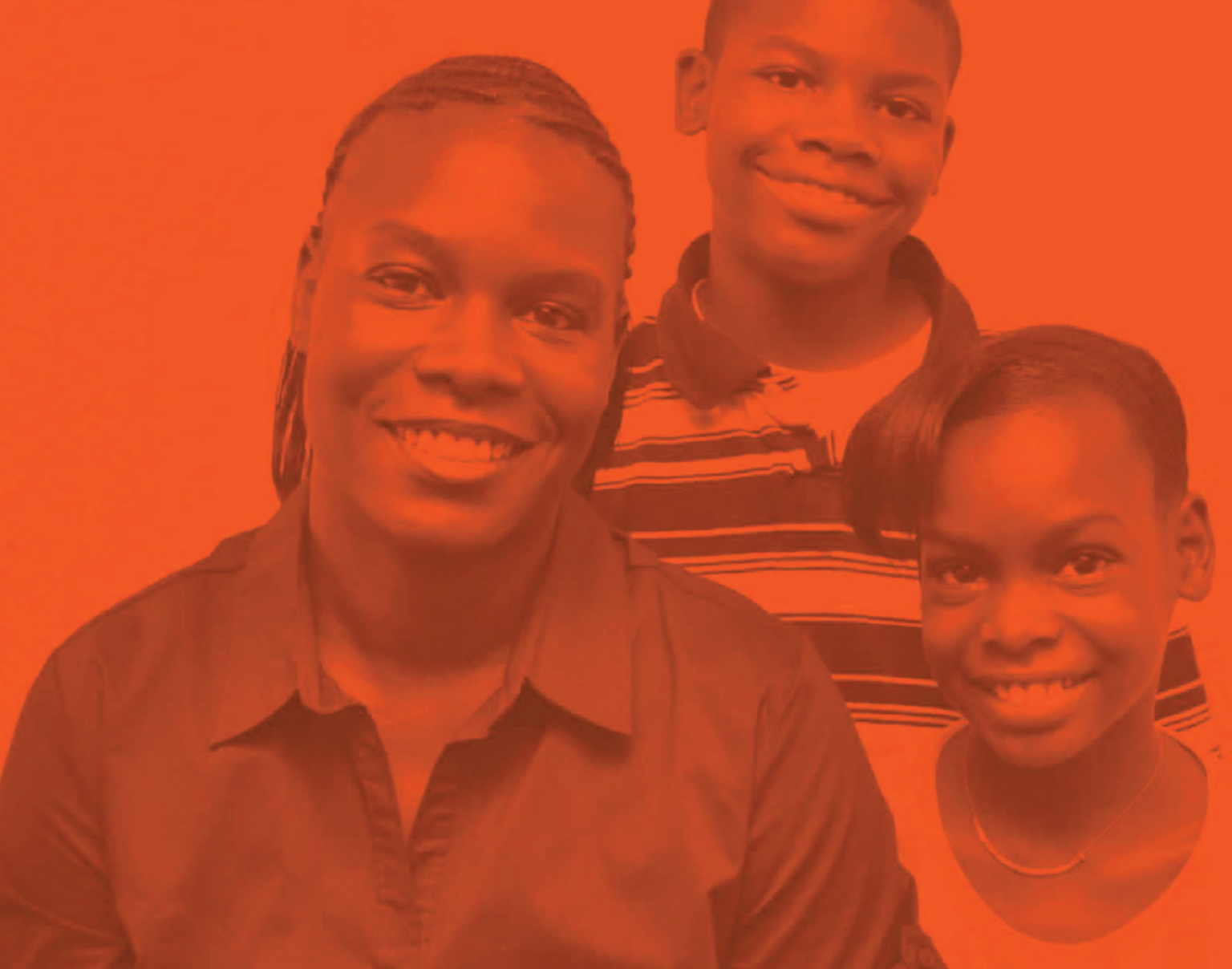
This new headquarters will expand our capacity, deepen our impact, and strengthen our ability to respond in moments of crisis.

As of December 9, 2024, we are proud to share that the project is 99% complete. This milestone would not have been possible without the steadfast support of U.S. Senator Cory Booker, Mayor J. Christian Bollwage and the City of Elizabeth, and the many foundations, corporations, and individual donors who stepped up when we needed them most. Your belief in our mission is now etched into the very walls of this space.

We are especially grateful to Pinnacle Construction Group, Armando D’Errico, and Michael Petosa for their commitment and tireless effort in bringing this vision to life. Their work has created more than a building—they’ve helped shape a refuge where survivors can find safety, support, and the strength to rebuild their lives.



new building



**eliminating racism
empowering women**

ywca

union county

PO Box 462
Kenilworth, NJ 07033
Phone: (908) 355-1995
24 Hour Hotline: (908) 355-HELP (4357)

ywcaunioncounty.org

*To learn more and support the
YWCA, scan the QR code.*

