

*Celebrating*  
**100**  
*years*  
SERVICE · ACTION · IMPACT

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**  
union county

**YWCA IS ON A MISSION**



**ANNUAL REPORT 2021**

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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
- 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.

## Letter from the President, Board of Directors

For the YWCA Union County, the past three years can only be described as a pendulum, swinging back and forth between highs and lows, the routine and the extraordinary. Beginning with the low of the devastating fire to our headquarters in September 2019, to the highs of successfully completing our “Building for the Future” Capital Campaign, breaking ground in September 2020, and seeing the building literally rise from the ashes throughout 2021.

Also, throughout 2021, we worked to figure out how to best serve our clients in what is the new “normal” as we entered the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. We held a vaccination clinic for clients and staff in March 2021, and surveyed clients (anonymously) about how well we were meeting their needs and how to make them feel safe receiving services – we were pleased to learn that the large majority of our clients gave the highest grades for the quality of the services they were receiving virtually, and many indicated that they would prefer to continue to receive services in this way. While being mindful of the regular waves of variants, we have taken our clients’ input into account, and begun to take steps to welcome clients back for those who prefer face-to-face meetings, including fully reopening up the Family Justice Center for in-person services.

Of course 2021 also saw our lowest low, as we lost our beloved CEO, Jan Lilien, on May 3, 2021. But I know she would be proud of how we have persevered and continued to move forward. We brought on Karen Geer as an Interim Executive Director to provide the organization with strong leadership during this period of transition. Despite the barriers, in 2021 we served over 30 percent more clients than we did in 2019, the last “normal” year before the pandemic. We continued to be a leading voice around domestic violence – we co-hosted the 7th annual

Union County Domestic Violence Symposium which focused on the impact of COVID-19 on domestic violence, we organized the Stand Against Racism panel “Racism as a Public Health Issue” and we were invited to be part of the “Community Roundtable on Responding to Domestic Violence” by Assemblywoman Annette Quijano following the tragic death of Yasmin Uyer of Rahway last summer. In September, we provided clients with critical support following the devastating flooding of Tropical Storm Ida, putting out a call to action to our donors for the need for immediate financial assistance. In the fall we also began a partnership with More Than a Phone, providing our survivors with free smart phones complete with four months of prepaid service enabling them to access their virtual court hearings, job interviews, and other digitally based services critical for achieving stability. And we were able to hold our annual gala in-person in October 2021; it was wonderful to see so many of our friends and supporters after such a long time.

As we start out in 2022, I am hopeful that this year we will continue to see the clouds part and the sun shine through on this organization, hopefully culminating with the grand opening of our new headquarters in Elizabeth. We wouldn’t have been able to make it through these past few years without you, our contributors and friends. On behalf of all of us at the YWCA Union County, I thank you for your continued support and I look forward to celebrating our bright future with you.

In gratitude,

*Tina Earley*

**Tina Earley**  
President



# We Love Our Volunteers & Partners



## Alpha Kappa Alpha – Theta Phi Omega Chapter and Assemblywoman Linda Carter

Thank you to the Theta Phi Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha and Assemblywoman Linda Carter for their generous in-kind donation of personal care items for our clients during the holiday season. Together, they donated over \$1,000 of items for all our programs. The Assemblywoman has been a longtime friend of the YWCA.

## BW NICE Union County Chapter

Business Women Networking (BW NICE) is a networking group involving charity and education, dedicated to ending domestic violence with 16 chapters throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and recently California. We are so grateful to have members of the Union County chapter serve as volunteers, advocacy committee members, mentors, and Strides4Strength walk participants. On July 17, the BW Nice Union County chapter walked independently to raise money for this year's Strides4Strength. In September, BW NICE held a Nice on Ice fundraiser in Garwood with the proceeds going towards YWCA programs.



## Backpack Drive

In the fall, Infineum and Phillips 66 donated over 100 stuffed backpacks for our back-to-school drive for the children and families we serve.



## Lambda Theta Phi

In April, the men of Lambda Theta Phi Fraternity, Eta Chapter at Rutgers-Newark conducted an amazing donation drive of hygiene products, shampoo, soap, tampons, baby wipes, and so much more. Thank you so much, gentlemen!

## Project for Empty Space

During their second annual Womxn-in-Need Donation Drive from February 13 through April 21, Project for Empty Space's Feminist Incubator collected much needed essentials from toothpaste to soap to baby products. They also donated art supplies and textbooks for the children who utilize our services. Project for Empty Space is based in Newark and creates socially engaging, multidisciplinary art exhibitions and programing around issues of intersectionality and social tolerance. Their Feminist Incubator program is a series of short-term residences, happening, performances, and public discourses on the empowerment of women.



## TCC Gives, More Than a Phone

We were so grateful to begin a partnership with TCC Gives' More Than a Phone program this past fall, making smart phones and prepaid phone plans available to all of our clients who need them to stay safe and to access critical services.



We Love Our  
Volunteers & Partners



## Vine Republic and Tatum Petruzzello

In January, we created our TWIN Honoree Women Networking Series. These events happened on Wednesdays and included a range of topics from workplace issues, work life balance, book club, and wine tastings. On March 10th, we conducted a wine tasting for our TWIN Honorees. Vine Republic of Berkeley Heights and Mountainside supplied a bottle of red, white, and sparkling wine to every participant. Thank you to store manager Tom Belden for providing these bottles to us at cost. Sommelier Tatum Petruzzello made the night a highlight of everyone's week through her presentation and selection of these wines – all from female wine makes. Thank you for making this an event to remember.



**We Love Our  
Volunteers & Partners**

# Our Staff Are Committed to Our Mission

It [our mission] means that hope is alive. The hope to keep working towards ridding all girls and women from all forms of oppression... as times change there will be new challenges to face, but ... I have seen firsthand the amount of women who have started with us and have grown stronger as they accessed services later on.

**- Domestic Violence Liaison since 2013**



Children come to me frozen, before I can do the deeper work, I need to help defrost them by showing them how to have fun and trust again....The PALS program is a creative arts therapist dream. The chance to support children and their caregivers in a way that is truly healing.

**- PALS therapist since 2021**

A former PALS's client ... wrote to me ... thanks about the support she and her children received from our program. Client appreciate(d) so much our commitment to support victims of domestic violence and how we give her hope for the future.

**- PALS therapist since 2016**

It is such a great feeling seeing the relief spread across a client's face as she begins to understand her next steps on her case and realizes all of the resources that are available to her.

**- FJC Court Advocate since 2020**

One of my biggest success stories was a client who I began working with in July 2020. She was living with her abuser, unemployed and unsure about her options. She wanted to relocate but wasn't ready to end the relationship and didn't have the financial means to. The client was referred to other agency programs and provided resources which she utilizes. Presently, the client is now employed, was selected for an affordable housing unit in which she was able to relocate to and upon relocation the client filed for divorce.

**- Case Manager since 2018**



Having witnessed two people in my life endure power and control dynamics within their relationships and feeling helpless to support them, I now feel like I am making a difference in other people's lives and it feels great...Witnessing growth in my client's self-esteem is so rewarding. Seeing them become empowered to support themselves financially through finding work that they enjoy is also a great feeling.

**- STEP Coordinator since 2021**

It [our mission] means everyone of every ethnicity and background has a chance to start over. It means that a life of freedom is possible.

**- Shelter Advocate since 2021**

# How We Help – Hope’s Story

Hope’s\* first contact with the YWCA came after she called the police to report a particularly violent episode of abuse from her husband. The officer activated the Crisis Response Team and a CRT volunteer provided Hope with resources and referrals including YWCA programs that could help her leave her abusive husband and seek safety.

Later that night, Hope called the YWCA’s 24 hour hotline. She needed a place to be safe and get help. She and her children were welcomed at the emergency shelter the following morning. After getting settled in their own private bedroom, Hope and her children were shown the stocked pantry and kitchen. She made her children pancakes and then met with a Shelter Advocate.

Hope and the Shelter Advocate talked about Hope’s most immediate needs. They determined that Hope needed legal help first and she was referred to the Family Justice Center. The FJC staff walked her through the process of applying for a Temporary Restraining Order.

Back at the shelter, Hope and her children worked with the Child Advocate who helped coordinate school transportation, engaged the children with art projects and provided homework support. Hope met weekly with a shelter counselor to work through the feelings and trauma she had experienced as a result of the abuse.

The **Crisis Response Team Program** offers victims support and resources at the time of a police call.

In 2021, the CRT Program responded to 89 call outs.

The **24 Hour Hotline** is available for survivors to call and speak with a trained advocate who connects them to the resources they need such as emergency shelter.

In 2021, the hotline answered 4,297 calls.

The **Emergency Shelter** provides immediate safety for survivors and their children. They are provided with support and services to find stability in this moment of transition.

In 2021, the emergency shelter program served 68 adults and 91 children.

The **Family Justice Center** is a collaboration of the County, the Union County Prosecutor’s Office and the YWCA Union County. The center co-locates multiple services for the safety and convenience of clients.

In 2021, the Family Justice Center served 567 clients.



After a few days in shelter, Hope expressed concern to the shelter advocate about her financial situation. The Advocate connected Hope to the YWCA's workforce development program, STEP. Hope met with the STEP Coordinator and talked about finding employment and repairing her credit score. The Advocate helped Hope complete an application for Project Independence, a micro-loan program to help her rebuild her credit. Hope continued to meet with the STEP Coordinator to look for a job.

Over the next three months, Hope secured a Final Restraining Order with help from the Court Advocate at FJC.

With help from STEP, Hope created a resume, practiced her interview skills, and secured a full-time job.

After spending time in emergency shelter, the shelter advocate connected Hope with our Supportive Housing Program. She and her children moved into a secure and confidential apartment and continue to work with her case manager toward her long-term goals.

The Supportive Housing Case Manager connected Hope and her children to the YWCA's PALS Program. PALS uses creative arts therapy to help children and youth deal with the trauma of the violence they have witnessed.

The youngest child worked with the art therapist and the older child worked with the drama therapist. Both helped Hope's children process the trauma of what they had seen, and of having their lives uprooted. Therapy also increases their personal sense of safety.

### **Skills Training and Employment**

**Program (STEP)** offers survivors assistance with financial, educational, employment and entrepreneurship goals.

In 2021, STEP served 92 clients.

### **The Supportive Housing Program**

provides survivors with long term housing and case management support.

In 2021, the Supportive Housing Program served 8 adults and 16 children.

**Peace – A Learned Solution (PALS)** is a creative arts therapy program serving children and youth from 3 to 17 years of age who have been exposed to domestic violence. The program also offers counseling and case management to the non-offending parent.

In 2021, PALS served 59 children and youth and 39 adults.

*\*Hope's story is a compilation of several survivors' stories served by the YWCA through our programs in 2021.*

# Our Impact at a Glance

In 2021, the YWCA Union County served **8,828** community members through all our programs.

24 Hour Hotline .....	<b>4,297 Calls</b>
Emergency Shelter Program .....	<b>68 Adults, 91 Children</b>
Supportive Housing .....	<b>8 Adults, 16 Children</b>
Housing Navigator .....	<b>34 Clients</b>
Court Advocacy .....	<b>294 Clients</b>
Family Justice Center .....	<b>567 Clients</b>
STEP (Skills Training and Empowerment Program) .....	<b>92 Clients</b>
Counseling and Case Management .....	<b>253 Clients</b>
Crisis Response Teams Program .....	<b>89 Call Outs</b>
Domestic Violence Liaison Program .....	<b>324 Clients</b>
PALS Program (Peace: A Learned Solution)...	<b>59 Children, 39 Parents</b>
Community Education .....	<b>80 Presentations; 2,597 Participants</b>

## Some of the Services Provided

- 1067 Case Management Sessions
- 1397 Counseling Sessions
- 531 Creative Arts Therapy Sessions
- 629 Financial/Job Coaching Sessions
- 389 Legal Options Sessions
- 708 Safety Planning Sessions
- 3,230 Shelter Bed Nights per household

# STAND AGAINST RACISM

## Stand Against Racism Panel **Racism as a Public Health Issue**

On April 15, we held a Stand Against Racism Panel with keynote speaker Dr. Pamela Brug from the New Jersey Black Women Physicians Association. Our panelists, Kathleen Dolan, Moms Demand Action Union County Group Lead; Bryan Baugh, MD, Global Medical Affairs Lead at Janssen; Linda Flores-Tober, Executive Director of The Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless; and Cassandra Gibson, Founder of Karing is Mutual, LLC; utilized their expertise to engage in an informative conversation about racism as a public health issue.



# Domestic Violence Symposium

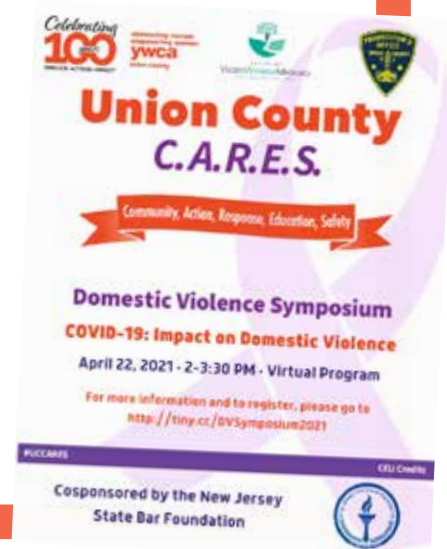
## COVID-19: Impact on Domestic Violence

On April 22, YWCA hosted our seventh annual Union County C.A.R.E.S. Domestic Violence Symposium titled, "COVID-19: Impact on Domestic Violence". It was cosponsored by the New Jersey State Bar Foundation and in partnership with the Union County Prosecutor's Office and Office of Victim/Witness Advocacy. This event was created to shine a spotlight on an important issue in our society – domestic violence.

This Symposium takes place each year to coincide with National Crime Victims' Rights Week in April. This year, the Symposium was presented virtually for the first time, and addressed the unique challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and how professionals in the fields of healthcare, law enforcement, and victims' services have developed new and innovative ways to continue serving victims of domestic violence.

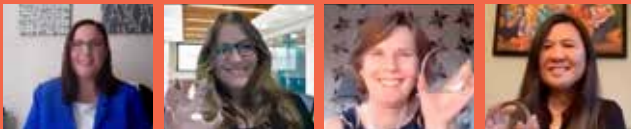
We know that the pandemic created new and dangerous challenges for victims of domestic violence. For those sheltered with their abuser, the danger and level of abuse increased. For those who were living independently after leaving their abuser, many faced extreme financial hardship. The pandemic magnified the problems survivors, and their children, were facing.

Our goal was to show how these challenges impacted victims in our communities and how the community responded. We thank our expert panelists for sharing their experiences and unique perspectives from domestic violence organizations, and the front lines of health-care, to the ranks of law enforcement.



*Tribute to*  
**WOMEN**  
**INDUSTRY** eliminating racism  
empowering women  
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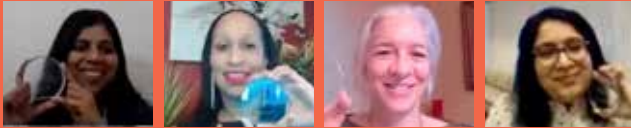
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*Celebrating*  
**THE PAST**

*Ready*  
**FOR THE  
FUTURE**

The YWCA Union County celebrated over 100 years of providing services to survivors of domestic violence and their children. The Celebrating the Past, Ready for the Future fall benefit and dinner celebrated serving our community, empowering survivors of domestic violence, and eliminating racism. We presented Assemblywoman Annette Quijano with the first ever Janice C. Lilien Humanitarian Award. We honored our community partners Investors Bank and The Westfield Foundation.



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Assemblywoman Annette Quijano  
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# Strides Strength

*A Walk to End Domestic Violence*



**Walk Sponsors**

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## In Memoriam



### Janice C. Lilien

Jan was a tireless advocate who brought remarkable passion and energy to all that she did, including her work at the YWCA Union County, serving as CEO for over 12 years. During her time with our organization, she moved us forward and grew the organization and its services. Jan worked with the county to establish the first Family Justice Center in 2017, a major step forward for survivors of domestic violence. In 2013, she oversaw the start of our workforce development program and grew the program to be an important service for our clients.

After the fire at the YWCA Union County's headquarters in Elizabeth in September 2019, Jan saw the opportunity to rebuild a modern facility that will take the YWCA into its next 100 years, providing more accessibility for our clients and room to grow our services. She was determined and tireless in this effort, leading the organization through a successful capital campaign and planning process to make this new building a reality. We will continue to honor Jan by completing the YWCA's new home headquarters and opening new doors to hope.

Jan is remembered as an inspiring leader in our organization, creating a culture of collaboration to move our mission forward. Her memory continues as inspiration to us all as we continue to carry out the work of our mission of eliminating racism and empowering women to which she dedicated her life.

# Donations in Memory of Jan

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Lauren Ramsay  
Phyllis Reich  
Judith Revels  
Wendy Reyes  
Michael Richardson  
Shelby Robinson  
Heather Rosado  
Dina Rosato  
Erika Rowe  
Nancy Sadlon  
Janet Sangekar  
Luz Santana  
Elisa Santos  
Lynn and Nicholas Schiavo  
Emerald Sheay  
Nancy Sheridan  
Jemia Singleton  
Marcee Sloan  
Douglas Smarr  
Julia Smith  
Susan Smith  
Sonal Sokolowski  
Nicole Solotist  
Tara Stone  
Carrie Sumas  
Heather Sumba  
Bruce Tangowski  
Gigi Thakor  
Betty Thomas

Hawaiian Thompson-Epps and Craig Epps  
Keith Timko  
Anthony and Elizabeth Tomasello  
Tess Tomasello  
Christina Topolosky  
Trinitas Regional Medical Center  
Angie Tsirkas  
Jenny Von Feldt and David Kieselstein  
Union County College  
United Way of Greater Union County  
Unity Bank  
Jennifer M. Vriens  
Kelly Waters  
Edie Way  
Donald White  
Arthur Winter  
Samantha Wolf  
Corey Wu-Jung and Tim Jung  
Mary Yergalonis

## In-Kind Donations

All Star Giving Foundation  
Alpha Kappa Alpha - Theta Phi Omega Chapter  
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc - Omega Omega Chapter  
Victoria Avallone  
Wendy Avila  
B.R.A.T.S. M/C Community Development Association  
Beth Balaban  
Margot Baruch  
Bethlehem Judah Christian Fellowship  
Anne Marie Bramnick  
Richard Brown  
Ken Cantore  
Chestnut Street Community Church  
Theresa Cosmas  
Daughters of the American Revolution -  
Rebecca Matochshoning Chapter  
Marc and Lisa Favata  
FCS Group LLC  
Feder Insurance Services LLC  
Fine Group Inc.  
Patrice Fleming  
Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library  
Governor Livingston High School - Olive Branch  
Operation  
Patricia Granda  
Great Cents Bookkeeping, LLC  
Green Thumb Garden Club of Cranford  
Hanson Park Conservancy  
Kimberly Holloway-Berry  
Infineum USA L.P.

iZion Christian Church  
Laura Johnson  
Kipling  
Kiwanis Club of Bloomfield  
Susan Kloepper  
Constance R. Knupa  
Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity Inc. - ETA Chapter  
Linda Logue  
Love With Oscars Inc  
Claudia Lugo  
Steven Martinez  
Richard McLeod  
Sarah McMahan  
Ashley Meto  
The Mills at Jersey Gardens  
Monarch Cypress  
More Than A Phone  
Mountainside Recreation Department  
Pat Murphy  
National Association of University Women  
Natalie Olarte  
Pajama Program  
Shirley Pajuelo  
Vicc Perez  
Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery  
Portugal Express  
Project for Empty Space  
Sensible Organics, Inc  
Margie Shuler  
Amaris Taveras  
Paula Teixeira  
Maria Tsitsiragos  
Elsa Yuriko Tsuji-Balderas and Victor Morales Benitez  
Kristen Tutein-Noor  
Union Baptist Church  
Union County Office of  
Community Engagement and Diversity  
Christine Urban  
Victoria's Secret - Menlo Park  
Visions and Pathways  
Weichert Realtors  
Arthur Winter  
Woman's Club of Berkeley Heights

\*Deceased

In preparing this report, the YWCA Union County has attempted to recognize all those who contributed so generously during the period January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021. We apologize for any errors or omissions.

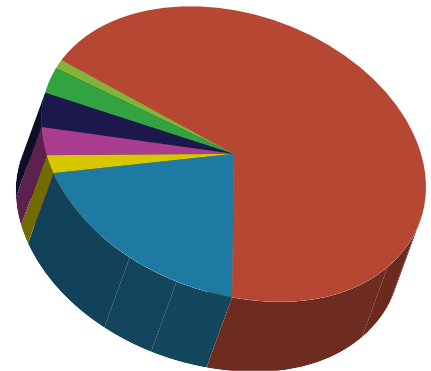
# Financial Highlights

## Fiscal Year 2021

Fiscal Year 2021  
(January 1 to December 31)

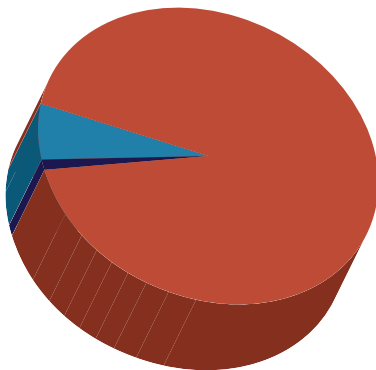
### OPERATING REVENUE

● Government Grants & Contracts	\$2,822,983	68%
● Donations & Contributions*	787,783	19%
● Program Service Fees	71,430	2%
● Proceeds from Insurance	137,512	3%
● Contributions In-kind	167,878	4%
● Special Events (net of expense)	128,928	3%
● Realized & Unrealized Gain on Investment/Other	55,727	1%



**TOTAL REVENUE: \$4,172,241**

\* Capital contributions included



### EXPENSE

● Program Services	\$3,009,786	93%
● Management & General	33,370	1%
● Fundraising	179,274	6%

**TOTAL EXPENSE: \$3,222,430**

\*Pre-audited financials



# 2021 Management Team

(as of 12/31/21)

**Karen Geer**

*Interim Executive Director*

**Adela Caceres**

*Assistant Executive Director for Core Services*

**Ana Y. Martinez**

*Director of Finance*

**Lisa K. Poris**

*Director, Family Justice Center*

**Jennifer M. Vriens**

*Director of Development & Marketing*

**Program Directors:**

**Anna Marie Amaya**

*Director of Residential Services*

**Alejandra Londono**

*Director of PALS*

**Kathryn Lynch**

*Director of Community Support Services*

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**Annual Report Editing:**

Jennifer M. Vriens

Lisa K. Poris



eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**  
union county

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