

Celebrating
100
years
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eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
union county



Empowering
WOMEN

Thursday, October 27, 2022

6pm - 9pm

The Westwood in Garwood

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Welcome

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the YWCA Union County's 2022 Empowering Women Gala!

While each Gala is a special time for our community, this year's event is particularly meaningful because we are celebrating the PALS (Peace: A Learned Solution) Program. Since the program launched in 2008, over 750 children have been served. We provide creative arts therapy to children that have suffered trauma as the result of domestic violence. Tonight we are showcasing some of this work: we are listening to the words of a child survivor through some of their dramatic work, and we are seeing the art work of children as they express themselves therapeutically through art. We would like to recognize the PALS staff for their hard work and dedication. Thank you Alejandra Londono our PALS Director, Marisol Corbo, Sheri Groover, Sheryl Machlowitz, Alberto Olarte and Lillian Ribeiro.

We are so fortunate to be honoring Dr. Annette Vaccaro, a pioneer and leader in this work. Creative Arts Therapy is a necessary tool to help survivors put words to feelings using these techniques and we are proud to be a part of this process.

We are proud to honor with the Jan C. Lilien Award, M. Theresa Daniels, Program Lead at the NJ Department of Children and Families Division on Women. Theresa has devoted her career to advocating for women and families. For more than 30 years, she has worked to improve services and policies for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, as well as crime victims, and has worked to enhance women's health care and protect reproductive rights. Theresa has worked tirelessly with us to help us keep programs running, support us with self-care advice and resources. This award is the result of her dedication to the sector.

Finally I want to thank all our honorees, our donors, our politicians, particularly the Mayor of the City of Elizabeth, Christian Bollwage and the Elizabeth City Council for helping us raise the funds to finish our beautiful 13,000 square foot building which is now scheduled to open in April, 2023. Your donations today bring our program services to new heights in Union County. We could not do this without your help.

Sincerely,
Karen Geer
Executive Director





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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.

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Alejandra Londono, *Director of PALS*

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Program

Welcome

Dinner

Awards Presentation

Building Presentation

A Child's View

Presented by Milena Lavin

Directed by Lillian Ribeiro

Service Auction

Raffle Drawing

Closing Remarks

Master of Ceremonies



Brittany Bell

Brittany is an award-winning meteorologist at ABC7NY, who has earned the prestigious Certified Broadcast Meteorologist seal from the American Meteorological Society. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Professional Meteorology at Mississippi State. While at Mississippi State, Brittany was selected to participate in the school's Great Plains storm chase. She spent a few weeks in tornado alley chasing severe storms.

Her passion for weather began as a child. One major event that sparked her interest in severe weather was the Nashville F3 tornado in 1998. Brittany was actually in school when the twister hit only miles away. The calm demeanor of the meteorologists on TV inspired her to be that voice of calm when severe weather hit.

Brittany has worked in several regions of the country, so she is used to covering active weather ranging from tornadoes to snowstorms. She began her career freelancing at WMC-TV in Memphis during her senior year of college. She then worked at 40/29 in Northwest Arkansas, WAPT in Jackson Mississippi, and ABC 11 in Raleigh, North Carolina. While in North Carolina she covered several impactful hurricanes such as Florence, Dorian, and Isaias. She then joined the weather team at ABC7NY. Brittany has also filled in on Good Morning America as well as on World News Tonight.

In her spare time Brittany enjoys spending time outdoors and eating at local restaurants. She's married and has two "fur babies," a black lab mix named Stormy and a beagle mix named Summer.



Assemblywoman Linda S. Carter

Linda Carter has spent her entire career fighting for improvements for her community. She has served locally for nearly two decades, as a member of the Plainfield City Council and as a member of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders now known as Commissioners. In May of 2018, Carter, a lifelong resident of the City of Plainfield, was appointed to serve as a member of the New Jersey General Assembly representing the 22nd Legislative District, comprised of Union, Middlesex & Somerset Counties to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Assemblyman Gerald B. Green. Shortly thereafter, at a special election she was elected to complete the term.

Assemblywoman Carter currently serves as the Vice-Chair of the Science, Innovation, and Technology Committee, the Vice-Chair of the Higher Education Committee and is a member of the Law and Public Safety Committee. Most recently, she was elected to serve as Secretary of the New Jersey Legislative Black Caucus. The youngest of her siblings, she graduated from the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. Assemblywoman Carter also holds a Master of Science degree in Management, Information Management from Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken.

Currently, Assemblywoman Carter is employed by the Passaic Board of Education as a High School Business Education Teacher. She is a proud member of the Theta Phi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and is also a member of the New Jersey Board of Realtors.

As the only educator to serve in the New Jersey General Assembly, Linda Carter is proud to advance and protect the rights, benefits and interests of educators across this state and to promote a quality system of public education for all students.

A Child's View



Milena Lavin

Milena Lavin is an emerging artist with a passion for theater, music and visual arts. Most recently, she formed part of the ensemble cast for the Cranford Dramatic Club's spring musical production of "A Bronx Tale." She made her debut at the CDC in winter 2021 in the parody musical, "Frosted."

She is a sophomore at Union County Academy for Allied Health Sciences in Scotch Plains, where she is preparing for studies and a career in medicine. At the Union County Vocational Technical Schools' campus, she is a returning member of the Drama Club, where she has performed in a supporting role in a comedy ("Who's Dying to be A Millionaire?," 2022) and a musical number ("The Schuyler Sisters" from "Hamilton," 2021). Earlier this year, she played "Glinda" in a production of "The Wizard of Oz" at Community Access Unlimited in Elizabeth.

Her previous acting credits include leading roles at Cranford's Hillside Avenue School musical production of "James and the Giant Peach" (as Ladahlord) and the play "Alice in Wonderland" (as the Queen of Hearts). She also appeared in "Annie," "Peter and The Starcatcher," "Shrek The Musical," and "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe." She also played Tinkerbell at Camp Cayuga's production of "Peter Pan." In seventh grade, she was accepted into the Union County Middle School Art program for gifted and talented actors.

Milena is a member of Cranford's Celebration Singers, performing at St. Michael's Church during the Christmas holidays, and was a longtime member of the HAS school choir and HAS orchestra where she played viola. She took vocal lessons from Michael Ryan ("Newsies" on Broadway) at the Tim Welch Vocal Studio, and performed lead vocals in her brother's rock band at the Union Performing Arts Center in 2021 and 2022. Outside of school work or theater, she has an interest in visual arts, especially anime and manga drawing, Dungeons & Dragons, she trains in static trapeze, and trains and competes in horseback riding at the Watchung Stables. She also plays ukulele.

Our Services Include

24 Hour Domestic Violence Hotline

Information on services, advocacy, safety planning, referrals and resources.

Emergency Shelter Program

Shelter, counseling, case management, advocacy, and children's services.

Supportive Housing

Long-term, secure housing for women and children leaving shelter, including case management and support for independent living.

Counseling & Case Management

Individual and group formats to empower and support survivors.

STEP (Skills Training and Empowerment Program)

Workforce development services including workshops, coaching, computer lab services, and scholarships.

Union County Family Justice Center

Co-location of services to victims of domestic violence in one location including police officers, prosecutors, court advocates, counselors, and other social services.

Court Advocacy

Legal referrals, court preparation and accompaniment.

PALS (Peace: A Learned Solution)

Creative arts therapy for children ages 3 to 17 who have been exposed to domestic violence.

Crisis Response Teams (CRT)

Crisis support, safety planning and referrals for victims following a police call.

DVL Program

Assistance to families with co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse / neglect.

Emergency Room Domestic Violence Liaison

A program in partnership with Trinitas Regional Medical Center to offer domestic violence services and resources to survivors in the emergency room.

Community & Professional Education

Information and training for community groups, schools, volunteers, and businesses on the dynamics and issues of domestic violence.

Information filed with the attorney general concerning this charitable solicitation and the percentage of contributions received by this charity during the last reporting period that were dedicated to the charitable purpose may be obtained from the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey by calling (973) 504-6215 and is available on the internet at <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/charity/chardir.htm>. Registration with the Attorney General does not imply endorsement.

Janice C. Lilien Humanitarian Award



Janice C. Lilien, Former CEO

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 honor Jan by completing the YWCA's new home and opening new doors to hope.

Jan will be remembered as an inspiring leader in our organization, creating a culture of collaboration to move our mission forward. Her memory will continue 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.

Janice C. Lilien Humanitarian Award



M. Theresa Daniels

M. Theresa Daniels has devoted her career to advocating for women and families. For more than 30 years, she has worked to improve services and policies for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, as well as crime victims, and has worked to enhance women's health care, protect reproductive rights, support women's leadership and help women get elected to office.

Through her work, she has assisted many advocacy and community providers, while also serving on the boards of the Women's Political Caucus, Greater Role and Opportunities for Women, the Friends of the Homeless Animals, the Eldridge Park School's PTO, where she served as Vice President, and the Lawrence Jr. Cardinals Football and Cheer organization, where she served as the cheer director. She has also worked with the Megan Nicole Kanka Foundation. Theresa has also been a frequent volunteer at her daughters' schools.

Theresa also served on the Frenchtown Borough Council for four years, including two as the Council President, during which she worked on and advocated for environmental protection, public health, library, and affordable housing initiatives. Theresa has also worked for political consulting firms and elected officials, assisting them on women's issues.

Creative Arts Therapy Honoree



Annette Vaccaro, EdD, SCPsyA, LPAT, LPC, ATR-BC, ACS, ATCS

Annette Vaccaro is a wife and mother of three children. She is a psychoanalyst, art therapist, counselor and social worker with a specialization in clinical supervision. She is an Associate Professor and Program Coordinator of the Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling with Art Therapy Specialization at Caldwell University.

She is Dean of Curriculum for the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, and Director of Curriculum at the Academy of Clinical and Applied Psychoanalysis (ACAP, www.acapnj.org). She has a general private practice in Livingston, New Jersey (www.familylife.net).

Annette Vaccaro is credentialed as State Certified Psychoanalyst, a Licensed Professional Art Therapist, Licensed Professional Counselor, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, a Registered and Board Certified Art Therapist, an NASW credentialed Clinical Supervisor, an Approved Clinical Supervisor and an Art Therapy Credentialed Supervisor.

Corporate Honoree



Northfield Bank is a full-service community bank serving New Jersey and New York. It is headquartered in Woodbridge, NJ and has 400 employees. Each day, the bank upholds its mission to be the financial institution of choice for individuals and businesses by delivering innovative financial products and exceptional customer service.

Northfield was founded in 1887 in Staten Island, NY and obtained its name from the neighborhood in which it first opened its doors as the Northfield Building and Loan Association. The bank expanded over the years and entered the New Jersey market in 2002 and the Brooklyn market in 2007. With 38 branch locations and \$5.6 billion in assets, Northfield provides a full range of financial solutions for both retail and commercial customers. These include lending, cash management, digital banking, deposit, and investment solutions.

Northfield's commitment to the community goes beyond offering financial services. Together with the Northfield Bank Foundation, the bank actively supports community organizations that are working to make their neighborhoods a better place to live and work.

The Northfield Bank Foundation was founded in 2007 and has issued grants in excess of \$9 million. These grants have helped support education, health and human services, youth programs, and other types of community organizations or civic-minded projects that improve the quality of life around them.

Northfield employees also donate their time and expertise by becoming members of committees of non-profit organizations and volunteering at food banks, beach clean-ups, and senior centers.

Much has changed for the bank over the past 140 years, but its focus on its core values of trust, respect, and excellence remains the foundation of the company.

Community Advocate Honoree



Elizabeth Development Company (EDC)

Founded in 1977, EDC is a 501 c (3), non-profit corporation whose mission is to promote the economic, civic, and social welfare of the greater Elizabeth, New Jersey area by providing a comprehensive program of economic development. EDC has worked closely with the City of Elizabeth and Mayor Chris Bollwage to provide city business owners with access to capital, via grants and low-interest loans, state incentives, and technical assistance for continued investment and expansion. EDC is the Zone Development Corporation for the city successfully administering an award-winning Urban Enterprise Zone program since 1985 which last year was reauthorized by the State of New Jersey - promising millions of dollars of upcoming investment in the zone.

Recently, during the COVID-19 Pandemic EDC came to the aid of the business community by providing over \$4MM in grants and loans. As a result, EDC was awarded a \$1.4MM grant from the NJEDA to expand its financial assistance to businesses in Elizabeth, Hillside, and Plainfield. EDC also has strong workforce development programs that have provided training, in-demand industry certifications, and job placement assistance to over 300 residents in the last four years.

Since 2005, EDC has administered a Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit neighborhood in the Elizabethport neighborhood of the City of Elizabeth serving as a catalyst for millions of dollars of investment into that neighborhood. In 2009, EDC submitted a neighborhood plan for its second NRTC designation in the Historic Midtown neighborhood. Between both neighborhoods, more than \$7MM has been invested. The NRTC is designed to foster the revitalization of New Jersey's distressed neighborhoods. Sixty percent of the funds must be used for activities related to the development of housing and economic development. The remaining balance may be used for complementary activities such as the provision of assistance to small businesses, removing barriers to self-sufficiency, and promoting the integration of mixed-income neighborhoods.

We are proud to support the work of the YWCA of Union County as they deliver critical social services in the greater Union County area. Through their programs, victims of domestic violence and their families receive the care and support needed to recover from a traumatic experience and the assistance to move forward in life.

Community Advocate Honoree



William O'Dea, Executive Director Elizabeth Development Company (EDC)

William O'Dea, a native of Jersey City, has extensive experience as an elected official, having served two consecutive terms as a Jersey City Councilman, elected in 1985 and 1989. He has served as a Hudson County Commissioner since 1997. Currently, Bill O'Dea is Executive Director of the Elizabeth Development Company, considered the best-administered Enterprise Zone development company in the country.

His leadership and commitment to economic development include administering funding for economic and community development projects (this includes loans, grants, and projects); negotiating redevelopment agreements; managing over \$950 million in redevelopment projects; developing budgets, proformas, and financing structures for projects.

Bill led the way for the \$35 million NRTC Program and has overseen several projects where State NRTC funding was deployed. He has also served on the task force that worked on developing state legislation relative to the deployment of state tax incentives for commercial and mixed-use development in New Jersey. He, together with Pat Kelleher, is the founder of PROJECT IMPACT and at EDC has worked hard to expand employment and training programs.

Bill also serves as Vice Chairman of PROCEED, Inc., a tax-exempt social service corporation that addresses the growing social, health, and economic needs of the Latino and non-Latino communities in the city of Elizabeth.

Commissioner O'Dea is a graduate of St. Peter's Preparatory in Jersey City, where he won the Silver Medal in Oratory Competition and the Silver Medal in Business Law. For his many academic successes, he was included in Who's Who Among American High School Students. Bill graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science degree from St. John's University. He won the Gold Key Awards as a top student in criminal justice and in political science.

Bill O'Dea knows that politics is, at times, theater. He has taken his talents in that direction and is the author of two plays and six screenplays. He is also the author of the novel, "The Legacy of Haugesville." He has also performed in community theater in recent years as LBJ in the play, "Martin Luther King" and as F.W. DeKlerk in "Mandela." Commissioner O'Dea, however, takes his politics very seriously and has also served as Executive Director and Treasurer of the Jersey City Democratic Party.

He was named to "Who's Who in International Business" in 2005 and to "Who's Who in America" in 2006.

Community Advocate Honoree



Puerto Rican Alliance of Elizabeth

The Puerto Rican Alliance of Elizabeth is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization and we are also registered with Guide Star. We are 100% volunteer based which means all of our fundraising is utilized for scholarships, free community events and relief efforts, while simultaneously highlighting our culture, heritage and traditions.

When established in 2015, we solely focused on education. Our founder's only goal was to raise monies to fund one scholarship per year while sharing with the community our Puerto Rican culture and heritage. By raising funds and through the help of generous donors, we have surpassed those initial goals. Our achievements include: Graduating Senior Scholarship, Freshman College Scholarship, Cultural Dance Instruction, Community Parade & Festival, Hurricane Relief Efforts, Beauties of Puerto Rico Cultural Showcase, Back to School Supply Give Away, Back to School Ice Cream Night and providing supplies to a local confidential women and babies shelter. The Puerto Rican Alliance has become a resource for many other organizations in that we provide technological, graphic design and event assistance at no cost.

We have been privileged to witness and award individuals that have shown valor, hard work and dedication in our community with a much deserved "Excellence Award." Our Excellence Awards proudly include: Humanitarian, Cultural, Educational, Business and Corporate Awards. This year we spearheaded our first fundraiser at our Beauties of Puerto Rico to benefit the Union County YWCA and were able to make a generous donation in the name of our PRAE kids. The purpose was not only to raise funds, but to bring awareness to the Hispanic community on the fight against battered women.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month



Brief History

Domestic Violence Awareness Month was first observed in October 1987, the same year a national toll-free domestic violence hotline was established. In 1989, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month Commemorative Legislation was passed by the U.S. Congress.

The Facts

Domestic Violence affects one in three women and one in seven men in their lifetimes. It is the leading cause of maternal death. In fact, an average of three women a day are killed as a result of domestic violence. Domestic violence is the leading cause of homelessness among women and children, and it has been estimated that the monetary cost of intimate partner violence in the United States exceeds 9.3 billion dollars a year. Nationally, the YWCA is the largest provider of domestic violence services, serving over half a million women each year, with over 1,300 locations across the United States.

Use Your Voice

Help us spread the word this and every month by empowering yourself and your loved ones with the facts about domestic violence.

PALS



2022 PALS Program Staff

Peace: A Learned Solution

The YWCA Union County PALS (Peace: A Learned Solution) Program offers creative arts therapy and counseling for children (ages 3-17) who have witnessed domestic violence in their homes. In addition, Case Management and Counseling are offered to the non-offending parent. Services are available in English and Spanish.

PALS is a six month program, based on the hypothesis that children learn both violence and peaceful solutions through their experience. If they have learned violence by witnessing domestic abuse, they can be taught to relearn peaceful problem-solving through the therapeutic process. Participants (children and parents) must be free of abuse for a minimum of three months to participate.

Creative arts therapy is specifically designed for children and teens and is offered in four modalities; art, music and movement, drama, and play. The PALS Program offers individual and group creative arts sessions twice weekly to participating children and youth. The use of creative arts has been shown to be more effective in treating trauma in children than verbal counseling alone. Through activities such as sand play, dance and movement, music, drama, and art therapy, PALS therapists help children express their emotions, reduce their fear and anxiety, teach them how to cope with stress, rebuild a sense of safety, and encourage non-violent problem solving skills.

For more information, call (908) 518-9911 ext. 210.

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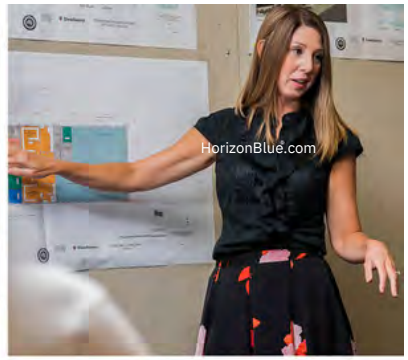
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We utilize Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR); Art Therapy; and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to treat trauma(s) such as domestic violence, sexual violence, emotional neglect, and others.

Interested in learning more? Visit our website at:

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YWCA UNION COUNTY 2022 GALA

With special congratulations to the honorees:

M. Theresa Daniels

The Janice C. Lilien Humanitarian Award

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Corporate Honoree

Dr. Annette Vaccaro

Creative Arts Therapy Honoree

Elizabeth Development Company (EDC)

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About ACAP

ACAP serves as a community resource by offering courses, clinical programs and experiences, and Continuing Education (CE) opportunities to help build skills for those working with individuals and groups in the areas of interpersonal relationships, crisis resolution, education and mental health issues, and parenting.

ACAP with its partner ICPS, a branch of the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis (BGSP), are educational and mental health resources, offering degrees, empowering individuals and organizations with practical, successful life strategies.

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Mercer Advisors proudly supports the YWCA as part of our
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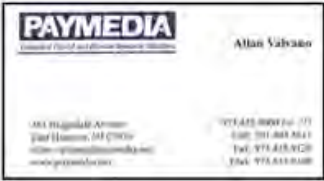
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Our team at **Paymedia** congratulates all at the YWCA for the hard work and assistance provided to those in need throughout the year. We are so happy to be able to support them in their mission!

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In celebration of the life of fellow Rotarian
Jan Lilien

The Rotary Club of Elizabeth

Proudly congratulates

M. Theresa Daniels

Recipient of the Janice Lilien Humanitarian Award

**The YWCA Union County
Board of Directors
Congratulates Our Honorees
and the
YWCA PALS Staff
for Their
Dedication**



**Manny Grova, Jr.
Councilman-At-Large**

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Elizabeth, New Jersey 07206
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Infineum USA L.P. is proud to support the
Empowering Women Gala
of YWCA Union County

Best wishes to the Honorees

M. Theresa Daniels

Dr. Annette Vaccaro

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