"This is good work, and it requires a great deal of courage and fortitude."
- Theresa Lyons, CEO
Greetings Alaska,

Take a deep breath, hold it, and breathe out slowly; repeat.... We find ourselves experiencing emotional highs and lows daily. We are navigating the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus, struggling to figure out how to survive the economic downturn, and feeling outraged at the brutality of policing in American communities. It is a season that requires our focused attention because the moment is important, and how we respond is critical to defining our nation and our state. Yet, we must remember to take care of ourselves and each other because we want Alaskans to endure and overcome these turbulent times; and because we have much work to do.

Racism and systems of racism are an ugly part of the American story. It is painful for most to remember, to reflect upon its impact on the lives of people, to consider the miseducation we have experienced as a nation because the stories of all Americans have not been valued as important and significant. We must acknowledge this hurtful and ugly past and its influence today; acknowledge it as real and true before we will be able to move forward as a nation, as a state.

While some Americans are just waking to the reality that systems of racism exist and how privilege holds it in place, other Americans have been in the fight for racial and social justice for decades, and others yet are righteously angry. We are in this democracy together, and if we are to keep it, it will require all of us working together to find solutions that empowers all peoples of this land.

Across this great state, Alaskans are engaged in conversations about how to dismantle systems of racism, asking how we can learn more about the history of injustices rooted in our policies, seeking to read books that guide us in the conversations about race with our children. This is good work, and it requires a great deal of courage and fortitude.

YWCA Alaska is part of this good work, seeking to create space for people to connect and, to keep Alaskans talking about these issues; for in conversations we will find solutions to chart a path toward a future where Alaskans can live out the ideals of our nation’s creed. In this issue, you will learn about the YW’s advocacy and programming for social justice. We are committed to supporting Alaskans to ensure peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

Sincerely

Theresa Lyons
CEO
Allison is a rising senior at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington studying Gender Studies and Race and Ethnic Studies. Her research focuses mainly on sexual violence and body politics globally, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Indigenous American communities. She is studying to be a trauma therapist and social worker.

Allison stated, “I grew up in Anchorage; and working with an organization that has done so much for women and girls in this community is truly rewarding, inspiring, and exciting for me. I admire YWCA Alaska so much and love how I have had the freedom and guidance to design my own internship project this summer and learn more about anti-violence activism in Alaska. This has already been such a unique and change-making summer and I can’t think of a more relevant time to be doing this work.”

Ms. O'Leary's research paper is entitled "Talking Within Ourselves: Conversations Around Sexual Violence & Intimate Partner Violence Reduction in Alaska".
Summer Interns at YWCA Alaska

My YW Youth Internship

YWCA Alaska, in partnership with the University of Alaska’s TRIO Upward Bound (UB) Program, provided summer internship opportunities for youth. TRIO UB is a federally funded grant program that serves 120 students who will be the first in their families to attend college. Students range from Freshmen through Seniors, and attend Bartlett and West High Schools. As participants of the UB program, students work with Educational Advisors at their area school throughout their time in high school and are mentored in preparation for access to post-secondary education. The TRIO Upward Bound Program is led by Director Kaitlin DeMarcus.

YWCA Alaska served as a virtual internship site for students between June 2 – June 30, 2020. Students had an opportunity to:
- Learn about YWCA Alaska
- Experience workplace culture and learn about career opportunities in non-profits
- Develop leadership, teamwork, and professionalism
- Complete an assigned team project

The interns completed the following projects:
1. Researched the organizational structure of youth councils to determine the best structure for the YWCA Alaska Youth Council.
2. Researched local and federal grants for youth programming in the areas of wellness, economic empowerment, and social justice.
3. Created and developed social media campaigns for youth with a focus on health and wellness, economic empowerment, and social justice.

All groups were required to provide a written report with recommendations. TRIO Upward Bound Summer Interns presented to the YWCA Alaska Board of Directors on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 at 4:30 pm via Zoom.
Women’s Wellness

Thank YOU, YWCA Alaska Team!

YWCA Alaska was excited to support Alaska Run for Women 2020 in their first virtual race to continue to raise awareness, provide education, research and reinvention in the fight against breast cancer.

Our team consisted of 22 community members, staff and board members. One team member lives in Las Vegas, Nevada (a former resident of Alaska). The YWCA Alaska Team raised $880.

Social Justice Front and Center

Our Advocacy Committee responded to the social injustice in our country with a statement demanding justice for victims of police brutality.

CEO, Theresa Lyons was interviewed by Pick. Click. Give. Podcast to discuss the work of YWCA Alaska to eliminate racism and empower women and girls, the importance of social justice work in this time of protest, and the power of community. You can listen to the podcast here.
YWCA Alaska Connect

YWCA Connect is the YWCA’s social justice programming designed to engage Alaskans in conversations that educate, inspire, and transform.


REMINDER!

Remember your Vote Counts
- Apply now for absentee ballots online

Remind family and friends to complete Census 2020
- Complete application here

YOUR VOICE.
YOUR VOTE.
YOUR FUTURE.

#YWomenVote    ywcavote.org
Excellence in Service

We appreciate the leadership and support of our remarkable YWCA Alaska VOLUNTEERS. Your commitment to service is remarkable and so are you. Thank you! Hanna Hurst, Coordinated the YWCA’s team for #akrfw2020

Ms. Hurst has lived-in Southcentral Alaska for one and half years. She loves the beauty of our great state, as well as gardening, hiking, and trying new restaurants. Hanna is inspired by the mission of YWCA and want to be a part of empowering women and eliminating racism. She stated, "It is important now more than EVER!"

GRATITUDE REEL

YWCA Alaska appreciates the Rotary Club of Anchorage East for supporting youth programming. Because of your generosity and commitment to serving our community, YWCA was able to host youth interns this summer. The experience for youth and their impacts on the work of YWCA are invaluable. We were all transformed by the time we shared working collaboratively on projects that matter. Thank you!

Business Spotlight:

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) has positively impacted the lives of Alaskans through public housing, residential energy efficiency, and loans to first-time home buyers, for decades. AHFC is still committed to helping Alaskans thrive. Their support for Alaskans during the pandemic is ongoing, as they work to provide rent assistance to residents affected by COVID-19. Ten million dollars was designated to be distributed by AHFC to eligible Alaskans seeking financial relief from rent/mortgage obligations; keeping Alaskan families stably housed during this crisis. Alaska Housing Finance Corporation is a treasure in our community.
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Online at:
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& click the Donate button
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3400 Spenard Road
Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99503

September

2
ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
5:00 pm Book talk with Anchorage Public Library (APL) Facebook Live

4
JOB LAB
5:00 pm Assistance with resumes and cover letters, mock interviews, and search strategies (Facebook Live)

15
MICROAGGRESSION
3pm-5pm Exploring the impact of everyday slights and insults; Microaggressions in the workplace and classroom

18
JOB LAB
5:00 pm Assistance with resumes and cover letters, mock interviews, and search strategies (Facebook Live)

22
MICROAGGRESSION
3pm-5pm Exploring Implicit Bias: Identifying and Navigating Unconscious Judgements

22
LET’S TALK ABOUT IT
5pm-6pm Youth perspectives on issues that matter.

Financial Literacy
Facebook Live 3:00 pm
Thursdays

Coming soon!
November 2020