

Our Commitment to You

Over our organization's almost 130 year history, we have been focused on women's issues - helping women in originally just Bay County. In 2009, our organization expanded to include Saginaw and Midland Counties.

The mission that we live by is "eliminating racism and empowering women." To empower all women, we need to address the real impact that systemic racism has on people of color here at home. Without focusing on serving the marginalized members of our community we can't say we are successfully empowering women. It is our responsibility to lift up all women.

The larger mission statement is "The YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all." This is bigger than words on a website or statements on a brochure. We need to collectively dig deep and listen to the voices of those who are challenged by racism, who lack power, live without peace, are confronted by injustice, and who struggle each day with the absence of freedom and dignity.

We have taken this time to examine and reshape the vital services we provide to women in our Region: women who struggle with unequal opportunities and unemployment in Saginaw, older women shut out of the workforce in rural Bay and Midland Counties, women in correctional facilities, women in domestic abuse shelters, women who need to know how they can move forward rebuilding their financial lives after suffering financial abuse and single mothers throughout the region working to earn a sustainable income to support their families. Moving forward, you won't hear the YWCA talk about ourselves and our programs. It isn't about the YWCA, it is about those that need our help. Our initiatives will be custom-tailored to those we serve, built around our core competencies like Getting Ahead.

We own our bias and understand that because racism is built into our nation's institutions, our own organizational practices must be scrutinized and transformed as well. We will change our Board of Directors recruitment process to better reflect the communities we serve, and we will commit to education for our entire organization. We commit to holding community programs to discuss racism, and to stand up to power structures that create systemic oppression.

No person of color in our community will be alone while the YWCA Great Lakes Bay Region is here. We WILL figure this out together and will work collaboratively with our community to stay accountable as we continue to live our mission.