

**eliminating racism
empowering women**

ywca

our voice

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SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

ywca women shape the vision of tomorrow

Throughout the century, the YWCA has spoken out on issues important to women, testifying before government officials, enlisting the support of Presidents...taking a stand whenever and wherever necessary.

Founded in 1911, the YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts has a long legacy of women who have pioneered services to better the lives of women. As a women's membership movement the YWCA values the strength of its members and volunteers. Last December the YWCA celebrated the past by honoring the many women who have served as President of the YWCA Board of Directors. These women reunited, shared memories of the past and projected visions for the future. The event culminated with the unveiling

of a wall dedicated to the past Presidents. Lining the wall of the Levi Standish House ballroom hangs the portraits of 17 of the 41 leaders of the association beginning with Marge Jenney who served as President from 1962 – 1967.

In shaping the vision of the organization's future, the leadership has recently seen transition. Janice Baptist was elected Board President at the October annual meeting, succeeding Patricia Andrade, M.D. Ms. Baptist came into the role of President with 8 years of experience as a member of the board of directors. She is the Director of Disability Services at Bristol Community College. "I am happy to serve the YWCA in this capacity. Our work is important to the entire community as we strengthen women, support their families

and recognize that racial justice is an imperative for the entire community," Ms. Baptist said.

The elimination of racism is an imperative for the YWCA. Not a day goes by when the media doesn't report stories concerning racism, religious

quickly or easily.

Gail M. Fortes was appointed Executive Director of the YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts in September 2006. Ms. Fortes is firmly connected to the mission of the organization and seeing that programs meet the

organization's goals. As stated in its mission, "the association will thrust its collective power toward the elimination of racism wherever it exists and by any means necessary." "I am very passionate



intolerance, or hate related crimes. The YWCA is dedicated to giving a national and global voice to fighting racial injustice. We offer a clear, supportive voice to the inequities women and people of color face in our society. It is not enough to change the laws. You have to change people's hearts, and that is not something that happens

about our mission of eliminating racism and empowering women. The YWCA has provided many growth experiences for me both professionally and personally, and my vision is to continue providing women and girls with opportunities for growth, leadership, and personal development," Ms. Fortes said. (continued on pg. 3)



What's Inside...

02 - 03

from the executive director
from the president
future leaders of the world

04

honoring yvonne m. drayton
06 - 07
week without violence

09

cape verdean parade
equal pay day

10 - 11

spring scrapbook
advocacy

from the executive director...



The YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts is a vibrant and thriving Association. I have the privilege of working daily with a very committed group of Board Members, volunteers and staff. Without them, we could not accomplish all that we do. I sincerely thank all of them for their ongoing dedication and support.

Our YWCA programs, services and activities serve areas from the Rhode Island state line, north to Brockton and east to Cape Cod and the Islands. We are community-focused, serving over 2,200 participants annually. Currently, we are developing exciting plans to increase our capacity in order to better serve women, girls and their families in our community.

The YWCA gives a voice to women's concerns and needs. We are focusing our efforts on promoting self-reliance, empowerment, education and leadership development opportunities for young women; advocating for issues important to women and girls; fighting for social justice and equality for all

regardless of race or gender and ending disparities and inequities of the wages of women and men.

This YWCA has been serving women and girls for over 96 years. Our Board of Directors, Members, volunteers and staff continue to work together to fulfill our Mission: eliminating racism and empowering women. Recent events in the media have clearly shown that racism and sexism still exist in our world. The YWCA is committed to helping our community face these inequities and make positive changes in our society. We have come very far, but there is still much more work to be done. The YWCA

challenges you to end racism and sexism by examining your own beliefs and values, and those around you. This is not just a woman's issue or an issue for people of color; these are issues that impact every one of us. I invite you to join the YWCA and work with us to end racism and sexism.

Gail Fortes

YWCA Executive Director

from the president...



As the new Board President, I want to introduce myself to our membership and thank everyone for their support since I have taken on this new and important challenge. I could not be more enthused and excited. YWCA Staff and the Board have been busily involved in

a flurry of activities and the past few months have been a lively and productive period for the YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts. Our presence in, and our value to the community is strong and increasingly recognized.

Did you know that "the YWCA is the oldest and largest multicultural women's organization in the world"? You can verify this statement by visiting the "About Us" section at www.ywca.org as I did in preparation for writing this article. When I read that statement, I knew that I had "my lead" and the ideal focus for this article.

The "oldest and largest women's organization in the

world" - the significance of that fact took my breath away. I knew we were strong, I knew we were important, I knew we did great work. I knew we had a long history and a bright future and now I've learned that across the globe we are more than 25 million strong, in 122 countries and total 2.6 million members.

That's the big picture, the broad stroke; the YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts is a microcosm of this national and worldwide phenomenon. Our membership advances our goals through a myriad of volunteer opportunities. Committed, knowledgeable and dedicated members of the Board of Directors lead the Association and align

policy. Putting our commitment into action we are all partners: members, volunteers, Board and staff; we are in service, we are the voice of women, a resource, a safe haven, advocates for racial justice and human rights, women's safety and economic self sufficiency. Feel proud, continue to volunteer your time, expertise and energy and please stay in touch with me and your Association.

Jan Baptist

YWCA Board President

vision of tomorrow continued

Gail Fortes became a School's Out/Camp-In Director for the YWCA in 1993. In 1994, she became the program manager for ENCORE^{plus}, providing outreach and education to women regarding breast and cervical health, as well as free screening for women who are uninsured or underinsured. She has transitioned from Adult Services Director in 1994 to the Director of Wellness for Women and Girls in 1998, Associate Executive Director in 2001, and Interim Executive Director in 2004 until her recent appointment to Executive Director.

"Our local, regional and national organization has gone through a significant number of changes over the past few years; Gail Fortes has been a solid staff member throughout," said Patricia Andrade M.D. who appointed Gail Fortes to Executive Director while closing her 4 year term as Board President. "She has

demonstrated the ability to run our YWCA with ease and promise. We are excited to have her take on this very important role as we move forward with our plans for the future," Dr. Andrade said.

Gail Fortes is a 14-year veteran of the YWCA, succeeding Yvonne M. Drayton. The former Executive Director and Campaign Director retired after seventeen years of service to the Association.

The leaders of the YWCA have a vision that includes preservation of a city treasure, the Levi Standish House enabling barrier-free access, and expansion of the YWCA's programs and services. This will enhance the association's ability to service women, girls and their families in the community and throughout the Southeast region.



future leaders of the world



The YWCA recognizes the importance of involving young women in the association. The YWCA has successfully engaged young women as volunteers, board members and staff. Today's young women are the future leaders of our world. Helping to ensure their success is a commitment the YWCA has maintained since its founding. By making available free programs and services that provide young women the opportunity to learn about character, competence and strength, the YWCA is helping young women become informed and active leaders in the community. "The YWCA not only reaches out to young women through events, and activities, but also helps to empower them to feel like they can do anything, be anything and overcome anything. For me, the YWCA provided a positive atmosphere and outlook for women of all ages and our futures," said Kathleen Gearty, a senior at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth and volunteer for the YWCA.

Over the course of the Spring semester, the YWCA partnered with Dr. Juli Parker and Deidre Healy in introducing a service learning/activist project to

Dr. Parker's Third Wave Feminism course at UMASS Dartmouth. The women had to put in 15 hours at a women's activist agency. We were privileged to have 6 women volunteer with the YWCA. These women participated in a range of projects that truly impacted the programs. Claudia Martin used her biology background to facilitate science experiments with the girls in Teen Talk. Kathleen Gearty was a strong and vocal contributor to the Third Sector New England regional committee on young women and also worked on the newsletter. Anna Lisa Vust assisted at events such a Ladies Night Out, Getting Even, and did some lobbying at the State House on Equal Pay Day. It is important that our young women are serving in roles that are valuable to their development, and where they feel they are making a worthy contribution.

The YWCA's plans are vital to continuing and strengthening the critical work of providing programs and services that empower women, eliminate racism and encourage young women to be strong, effective leaders.

honoring yvonne m. drayton

Yvonne M. Drayton has served as a community leader, Executive Director and Campaign Director of the YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts and has retired after seventeen years of service to the Association. Yvonne Drayton has been committed to the cultural diversity of the YWCA board and staff. As Executive Director, she enlarged the YWCA service area to include areas from the Rhode Island line east to Provincetown and north to Attleboro, Brockton and Plymouth in order to provide programs that met contemporary needs; subsequently, changing the name of the association from the YWCA of New Bedford to YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts. During her time as Executive Director, she also purchased 347 Pleasant Street to establish residential programming for women, opened and operated the Blue Triangle Company as a job training program for homeless women to acquire new skills and re-established women's healthcare programming through ENCORE^{plus}.

Yvonne Drayton joined with New Bedford social service organizations to form the Homeless Service Providers Network. She also moved YWCA headquarters to another owned property at 20 South Sixth Street and moved the childcare program from Pulaski School to 89 Merrimac Street. This accomplished woman has served as President and on the Board of the National Association of YWCA Executives, worked on the Reorganization Task Force for the restructuring of YWCA USA; served as the national YWCA representative on Joint Agencies Trust Board of Directors and was elected to the National Coordinating

Board of the YWCA USA.

In 2003, Yvonne Drayton undertook the planning and implementation of restoration of the Levi Standish House with barrier-free access and increased capacity for the YWCA headquarters. Built in 1825, the Levi Standish House remains firmly rooted in the community. The house has been used continuously with only three owners, the Standish family from 1825 – 1916, the New Bedford Women's Club from 1916 – 1979, and the YWCA since 1979. Today, the house remains nearly unaltered, and is a well-preserved example of the high style Federal era.

The YWCA Board of Directors, Staff, Members, Volunteers and the Community honored Yvonne at a retirement party on Friday, March 16, 2007 at the Wamsutta Club in New Bedford.

Yvonne M. Drayton was honored by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, as one of 268 Community Unsung Heroines of 2007. These women come from 262 cities and towns across the Commonwealth and each was recognized for their outstanding contributions in a ceremony on May 16, 2007 at the State House. These Unsung Heroines were carefully chosen from over 600 nominations to be honored for selflessly making a difference in the lives of others.

"We are extremely proud that Yvonne was honored for all the wonderful work she does, not only for the YWCA, but for our community," said Gail Fortes, Executive Director of the YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts. "She is truly a heroine and an inspiration to me and to many other women in our area."



our voice

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Nineteen community women served as models for the event.

- Yolanda Baird
- Nancy Cabral
- Despina Delios
- Yvette DeSilva
- Yvonne Drayton
- Maria Fortes
- Beatriz Guerrero
- Michelle Hantman
- Mary Houtman
- Gig Lang
- Pauline Macedo
- Katie McNiff
- Elsa Maldonado
- Chantelle Pavao
- Audrey Potts
- Lynn Poyant
- Nancy Quintin
- Lisa Strattan
- Tanya Teixeira

red dress fashion show

The YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts held its 4th Annual "Red Dress Fashion Show & Silent Auction" on Wednesday, February 28, 2007, at the Century House in Acushnet. Over 300 people attended this event regarding public awareness of heart disease in women.

The YWCA continues to be an active participant in the national Heart Truth Red Dress Project. The Red Dress Project includes a collection of 19 dresses from America's most prestigious designers modeled by famous women. These dresses symbolize the fact that heart disease is a women's health issue, as well as a man's.

"Many people still believe

that heart disease is a man's disease, when, in fact, it is the number one killer of American women," says Gail Fortes, Executive Director at the YWCA. "Many risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and family history also contribute to a woman's risk of developing heart disease. It is very important that women are aware of the steps that they can take to reduce their risk of developing heart disease."

Mistress of Ceremonies for the event was Melissa Mahan, noon news anchor for ABC6. Keynote speaker for the event was Michaela Gagne, Miss Massachusetts. Michaela spoke about her battle with

heart disease that was diagnosed when she was 17.

The Red Dress Fashion Show included a collection of red dresses from a variety of local stores: Jenn & Jill's Bridal, Celia's Boutique, JCPenney, Julie's Bridal Boutique, Ashworth's, Step Into Fashion, Contrary, Rosalinda's, Margaret's and The Crowning Touch. The event was sponsored in part by Sovereign Bank. Items were donated by a variety of businesses for the silent auction.



our ladies night out!

The doors opened at 4:30 PM and by 5:00 PM the rooms were full of women seeking out sign-up sheets for the services that were being offered on March 8th in honor of International Women's Day.

International Women's Day is celebrated in many countries all over the world. It is a day when women are recognized for their great achievements. It is a day for looking back at past struggles and accomplishments, and more importantly, for looking ahead to the opportunities that await future generations of women. When women on all continents, often divided by national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political differences, come together to celebrate

their day, they can look back to a tradition that represents at least nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development.

What better way to celebrate this day, than a night out of pampering? Lori Hatfield-Rodrigues, Susan Kramer, and Liz Labelle were doing such an amazing job with massages that the ladies were falling asleep on the tables. Judith Rego restored balance to women with the spiritual healing of Reiki. The line was backing-up for manicures by Candy Royster and Jenny Fortes. Betty Tripanier and Heather Hoffman, the Avon representatives were busily giving hand treatments and massages, while Melissa Costa was doing Mary Kay

lip treatments. And of course, there was even room for shopping with Kym Barboza-Owens, who brought a showcase of handbags for sale.

The door continued to open boasting the attendance of over 135 women by the end of the night. Women were able to enjoy a variety of Chinese entrees donated by Chuck's China Inn. Some women even came for the food alone. The event was almost too successful; in the case that some ladies were unable to enjoy the free services because there were so many women. However, the room was roaring with excitement and laughter stemming from conversation that bridged the gap of the generations of women present.



eliminating racism empowering women

ywca

ywca Week Without Violence

October 14 – 20, 2007



Oct.14 “A Day of Remembrance” Sunday Church bells will ring for one minute at **12 noon** in honor of the victims of violence in our communities.



Oct.15 “Protecting Our Children” Monday Fingerprinting for kids with the New Bedford Police Department Community Policing Unit:

Yw kids School Age Child Care, 89 Merrimac Street, New Bedford **3pm - 5pm.**



Oct.16 “Making Our Schools Safer” Tuesday

(Exhibit: All Week) The “When I Get Mad I Draw” art contest

is being held among New Bedford Public School students. All entries will be submitted by October 9th for judging. Winners will be selected to receive an art prize-package. Sponsored by the Alpha Sigma Tau Sorority, Boston Alumnae Chapter.

Gallery X, 169 William Street, New Bedford Exhibit: **Saturday, Oct. 13th & Sunday, Oct. 14th / Wednesday, Oct. 17th – Saturday, Oct. 20th 11am – 3pm.** The reception/ award presentation will be held on **Friday, Oct. 19th 4pm – 6pm.**



Oct.17 “Confronting Violence Against Women”

Wednesday The Clothesline Project is a visual display that bears witness to violence against women. Shirts are decorated and

hung to represent the experiences of the women who are victims of violence. This year’s clothesline is supported by UMASS Dartmouth’s, Women’s Resource Center.

UMASS Dartmouth, Campus Center, 285 Old Westport Road, Dartmouth **9am – 4:30pm.**



Enough!



Oct.18 “Facing Violence Against Men” Thursday In memory of those who have lost their lives to tragedies in our community, we invite families and friends of victims to place a pair of shoes on the steps of the New Bedford Public Library. Notes may be left in the shoes telling the victim’s story. The evening will be led with a call to action by Cecil Lopes Jr. and Shelly Correia.

New Bedford Public Library, 613 Pleasant Street, New Bedford **6pm – 8pm.**



Oct.19 “Eliminating Racism & Hate Crime” Friday Breakfast. Violence is not discriminating. It can happen to anyone.

Please join us for a conversation on racism and hate crimes and pledge yourself to the Elimination of Racism & a Week Without Violence. RSVP by October 16th at 508-999-3255.

YWCA, Levi Standish House, 20 South Sixth Street, New Bedford **8am – 10am.**



Oct. 20 “Replacing Violence With Sports, Recreation, and Fun!” Saturday “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” An Invitation to Men:

We know most of you would never beat your wife, your lover or any other woman. You are our fathers, uncles, husbands, brothers, companions, friends, and lovers. But there are men who are violent. The YWCA is asking the men of our community to take a stand against rape and domestic violence. We are asking men to "walk a mile in her shoes." Please gather at New Bedford's City Hall with a pair of heels to walk through downtown in an effort to raise awareness on violence against women. (Heels encouraged, but not required.) Women and children are also encouraged to walk. The walk will open with speakers from the City, the YWCA, the Women’s Center, and the NB Police Department Domestic Violence Unit. A small reception will be held at the YWCA following the event including refreshments and foot massages.

Meet at New Bedford City Hall, 133 William Street, New Bedford **10:00AM.**

All Events are Free and Open to the Community

For More Info: Please Contact Athena at 508-999-3255

ywca teen talk

The YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts with funding through the Department of Education and the City of New Bedford, Mayor's Invest in Kids Program has successfully completed another semester of the YWCA's *Teen Talk* program for girls ages 10-14.

The YWCA has brought *Teen Talk* to the New Bedford elementary schools, including Carney Academy, Parker School, Gomes School, and recently the New Bedford Charter School. In its fourth year, the program has given girls the chance to learn various tools and values in becoming a teen with a well-rounded personality. These girls explore their self-identity to achieve positive self-esteem. They learn about nutrition and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The

girls learn responsibility when staying home alone, incorporated into a workshop on babysitting. In learning to become a babysitter, they are exposed to basic skills needed in being responsible for others, as well as age-appropriate activities for children. The girls also begin to learn tools towards budgeting for financial stability and economic empowerment. Furthermore, they are instructed on proper manners and etiquette, followed with an actual etiquette dinner to celebrate the close of the semester.

The "Teen Talk" component of the program addresses issues in society that teens are confronting. Girls at the elementary and middle school level are carrying a lot of extra baggage. Giving these girls the

chance to discuss these issues in a setting of friends leaves these girls with a sense of comfort and understanding that they are not alone. In keeping with the YWCA's mission to eliminate racism and empower women, bringing a racial justice component to this curriculum is vital to achieving positive self-identity, racial and cultural appreciation and respect for all people.

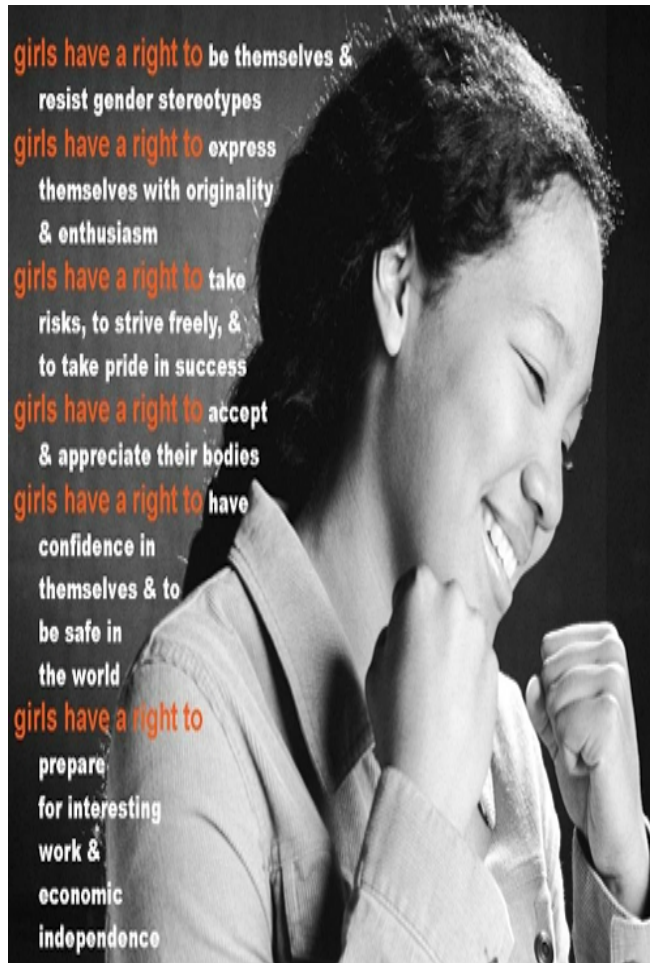


Yw kids

Yw kids School Age Child Care has openings for subsidized child care. The After-School Program is in operation from 2:30PM - 6:00PM and picks up from most New Bedford schools. Call Catherine Bourassa, Youth Services Director at 508-993-5858.



girls have a right to be themselves & resist gender stereotypes
 girls have a right to express themselves with originality & enthusiasm
 girls have a right to take risks, to strive freely, & to take pride in success
 girls have a right to accept & appreciate their bodies
 girls have a right to have confidence in themselves & to be safe in the world
 girls have a right to prepare for interesting work & economic independence



Cape Verdean Recognition Day Parade



Decked out in Persimmon Pride, the YWCA was out marching for peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people.

Pictured Above: Athena Mota, Steve Martins, Joshua Almeida, Ana Silva, Jean Kellaway, Jan Baptist, Gail Fortes, Dr. Patricia Andrade, Gabriella, Victoria and Genesis.

equal pay day



On April 23, 2007, I had the pleasure of attending Equal Pay Day at the State House in Boston. It was a really eye-opening experience learning about the wage gap and hearing first hand accounts on the severity of the issue. I really enjoyed the speakers that presented their arguments on pay equity. I was particularly fond of

Natasha Chatilo, who is the president of the Younger Women's Task Force. She spoke from a younger person's perspective, which I thought was important for a college student like myself to hear that it is important for younger girls to learn about the wage gap, because it will affect them when they graduate from school. I also liked hearing Donna Stewartson speak from a minority standpoint and mentioning the ramifications that a minority woman faces with working; she gets paid less than a white woman. It was quite an honor to see Senate President Therese Murray and Dr. Evelyn Murphy both speak; they are both intelligent and skillful women who care about this issue a great deal. I also got a first hand experience on lobbying with legislative advocacy visits, letting the state reps and senators know about this bill that is trying to be

passed, which is to require the state's human resources division to establish an analysis study of state employees of the executive branch to update the current job classification and job qualifications to insure that employee compensation, pensions, and benefits are free from gender and racial bias. If this bill gets passed it would certainly be monumental because women have the right to make as much as a man, no matter what her race is. This event is so crucial for women to attend because they give you resources to help fight the issue and stand up for this important cause. I look forward to attending more events like this in the future because fighting and advocating for women's rights is my passion.

—Anna Lisa Vust

UMASS Dartmouth Class 2007

spring scrapbook



On May 4th, Scott Costa, Drew Tillett, and Dr. Bob Baarsvik presented a check for \$15,000.00 from the Bufftree Foundation. The Bufftree Foundation hosted *The Beach Bum Ball* at Altitude on March 23rd to benefit the YWCA's Youth Services.

Pictured Above Left: Eusie Zane, Councillor Jane Gonsalves, Gail Fortes, Scott Costa, Dr. Bob Baarsvik, Drew Tillett, Jan Baptist, and Yvonne Drayton. Pictured Above Right: Jan Baptist, Gail Fortes, Councillor Jane Gonsalves and Athena M. G. Mota.



On May 5th, the YWCA hosted its 4th Annual Walk-a-Thon to support ENCORE^{plus} Early Breast & Cervical Cancer Detection and Support Programs.



On May 17th, Dr. Evelyn Murphy joined women at the YWCA for our 2nd annual Economic Empowerment event. The event, properly entitled, "Getting Even" discussed the serious issue of the wage gap. Women throughout the country will lose between \$700,000 and 2 million dollars over the course of their lifetime because women are only earning 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. Dr. Murphy is the former Lt. Governor of Massachusetts, economist and author of the book, *Getting Even: Why Women Don't Get Paid Like Men and What to Do About It*.

Pictured Left: Dr. Evelyn Murphy and Athena M. G. Mota converse during the networking session.

advocacy



Pictured Below: Councillor Jane Gonsalves, Gail Fortes and Athena Mota

In May, a delegation of YWCA Board and Staff went to Washington D.C. for an advocacy visit. The delegation included Jan Baptist, Yvonne Drayton, Gail Fortes, Athena Mota, Councillor Jane Gonsalves and Jean Kellaway. The visit included training at the YWCA National Capital Area. The delegation went to Capital Hill lobbying for women's issues, including VAWA (Violence Against Women's Act) and the Paycheck Fairness Act with Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator John Kerry and Congressman Barney Frank.

Pictured Left: Gail Fortes and Jean Kellaway join the delegation from the New England Region to admire the family photos that line the walls of Senator Ted Kennedy's office.



On May 31st, WHALE (Waterfront Historic Area League) awarded the YWCA with the Sarah R. Delano Preservation Award for the magnificent exterior restoration of the Levi Standish House.

Pictured Right: Jan Baptist, Peter Hawes and Gail Fortes



Volunteer Opportunities

As a non-profit organization, we value the contributions of our volunteers. Our goal is that volunteers will have a meaningful experience and will connect with our mission, *eliminating racism and empowering women.*

These areas can include:

Clerical Support

Custodial Support

Support at Yw kids and other Youth Services Programs

Outreach w/ Wellness for Women and Girls

Ad and Sponsorship Sales

Event and Program Committees

If you'd like to volunteer...
Call Athena @ 508-999-3255.

ywca board of directors

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Jennifer Mulcare-Sullivan
Jacquelyn Ramos
Rita Ribeiro
Eusie Zane

Our Mission

The YWCA is a women's membership movement nourished by its roots in the Christian faith and sustained by the richness of many beliefs and values. Strengthened by diversity, the Association draws together members who strive to create opportunities for women's growth, leadership and power in order to attain a common vision:

Peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all people.

The Association will thrust its collective power toward the elimination of racism wherever it exists and by any means necessary.

ywca staff

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Administrative Assistant
Assistant Residence Services Manager
Finance Clerk
Wellness for Women and Girls Outreach Specialist
Wellness for Women and Girls Outreach Specialist
Supervisor of Facilities Management
Maintenance
Assistant Residence Services Manager
Widowed Persons Services Director
Youth Services Director
Site Coordinator
Coordinator of Support Services
Yw kids Clerical Support
Yw kids Group Leader
Yw kids Assistant Group Leader
Yw kids Group Leader
Yw kids Group Leader
Yw kids Group Leader

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our voice