WE ARE ON A MISSION
112 YEARS OF IMPACT

PROGRAMS MADE POSSIBLE BY YOU
September 1, 2019

On behalf of the YWCA Greater Charleston board of directors, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your past and continued support. We have had an exciting, productive, and informative year.

YWCA Greater Charleston has served the tri-county area since 1907 and continues to be one of the premier organizations in the Charleston region embracing our mission to eliminate racism and empower women. With your generous support, we have been able to focus on accomplishing this goal.

Please take a few minutes to enjoy reading the following pages, designed to provide you with informative summaries of our core programs. The goal of all our programs is to pursue our mission with the hope of eliminating racism and empowering women in Charleston and her surrounding areas. One of our signature programs, our annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, has been a fixture in the Lowcountry for decades. Others are newer; for instance, our second annual, energy-filled #WhatWomenBring event celebrating women across our state in business, culture, and the community, was attended by women and men from diverse backgrounds and has been a huge success.

There are many issues affecting our community. There is still much work to be done, but thanks to each of you, the Charleston community’s future looks brighter than ever before. I sincerely thank you for your continued support of YWCA Greater Charleston.

Sincerely yours,

Tamara C. Curry
The Honorable Tamara C. Curry
Chair, Board of Directors
YWCA Greater Charleston
#WHATWOMENBRING

In May, women and men from across the Lowcountry came together for a second time to celebrate women’s leadership in business, community, and culture. WCBD News 2 TV anchor & event emcee Octavia Mitchell again led the conversation between an engaged audience and a panel of women leaders who have been changing the face of women in business across 10 different industries, each one candidly addressing real issues women confront in the career world. At this second annual power lunch, the ballroom at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center was again sold out, with a hundred more participants than last year.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **523 TICKETS SOLD**
  Across every age, gender, race, and industry

- **INSTAGRAM: 20,845**
  285 posts/stories, 64 videos reaching 20,845 people

- **FACEBOOK: 12,245**
  66 posts, 52 shares, reaching 12,245 people

- **TWITTER: 13,184**
  134 tweets, 156 retweets reaching 13,184 people

- **EMAIL: 4,266**
  9 emails to 4,266 recipients; open rate 11% over industry

- **100 ORGANIZATIONS**
  Across all industries, from Amazon to Boeing to MUSC
MLK CELEBRATION

First held on January 15, 1972, our annual MLK Celebration was one of the first national tributes of its kind. Since that time, this regional event has grown to encompass 10 days each January. During the 2019 celebration, SC Senator Marlon Kimpson and SC Rep. Marvin Pendarvis served as MLK Parade marshals. Presiding Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr. of the AME Seventh Episcopal District Church gave a rousing keynote at the MLK Ecumenical Service, and Cynthia Bramlett Thompson, former chair of Girl Scouts USA and current vice chair of Spoleto, spoke at our capstone MLK Business and Professional Breakfast.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **30,000 ATTENDEES**  
  Estimated number across 10-day event
- **650 AT BREAKFAST**  
  Business & community leaders of all levels attended
- **219 ON PARADE**  
  219 bands, marchers, floats, and groups in the parade
- **27 NEWS STORIES**  
  TV, radio, and newspapers covered the celebration
- **6 MAJOR SPONSORS**  
  In government, aerospace, health, technology, tourism
- **61 OTHER SPONSORS**  
  Supporting the elimination of racism across all industries
RACIAL EQUITY INSTITUTE

We first brought the Racial Equity Institute (REI), nationally recognized for helping communities address institutional racism, to Charleston in January 2017. We have since conducted 16 REI workshops, and demand is growing! Organizations sponsor executives, staff, or volunteers to attend, or people attend on their own. (For instance, in collaboration with Metanoia and with funding from the Coastal Community Foundation, the North Charleston Police signed up to send all its officers through REI.) Each participant leaves changed, with dramatically elevated worldviews and tools to address racism in their own communities and lives.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **411 PARTICIPANTS**
  Individuals attending our REI workshops this year

- **44% OF ATTENDEES**
  Portion of participants from educational organizations

- **42% OF ATTENDEES**
  Portion of participants from non-profits & foundations

- **15% OF ATTENDEES**
  Portion of participants from for-profits & healthcare

- **10% OF ATTENDEES**
  Portion of participants from government agencies

- **DEMOGRAPHICS**
  29% attending were black; 25% were male, 75% female
In 2017 we launched Charleston’s first Girls Who Code club for middle school girls. We invited girls in the 6th to 8th grades at Sanders-Clyde Creative Arts School, one of Charleston’s lowest-performing schools, to join a sisterhood of supportive peers as they learned coding skills and concepts. Our goal? To economically empower girls, especially girls of color, by enabling them to enter a traditionally white male industry that pays high wages. Our Y Girls Code program will expand to eight clubs in 2020 as we continue to engage a wide base of partners in the community, and broaden our program to include high school girls.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

- **3 CLUBS**
  - During our last fiscal year; more coming this year

- **15 PARTICIPANTS**
  - At Charleston Progressive Academy
  - At Memminger Elementary School

- **12 PARTICIPANTS**
  - At Stono Park Elementary School

- **8-11 YEARS OLD**
  - Average age range of club participants

- **SPECIAL EVENT**
  - A Google Coding Party with Pixelbook awarded

- **Computing jobs are among the fastest growing in the US**

- **They pay more than double the average US salary**

- **Fewer than 1 in 5 computer science grads are women**

- **66% of girls 6-12 are interested in tech; by college 4% are**

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We were delighted to bring this Center for Women program for high school girls into our organization over the past summer! A wonderful complement to our Y Girls Code and Toastmasters Jr. programs for girls, SheStrong is an ongoing program for students who seek to engage with their communities and to develop as leaders and changemakers. Our goal is to equip them with the tools to begin advocating for themselves. The program includes attendance of an annual SheStrong summit featuring women in community leadership roles and enabling attendees to participate in skill-building, community service, and learning programs.

AREAS OF FOCUS

**GROWTH**
Increase opportunities & leadership roles

**AWARENESS**
Amplify the voices of girls & women

**DIVERSITY**
Remove barriers faced by women of all kinds

**SELF DEFENSE**
A girl who fights back has an 86% chance to avoid assault

**WOMEN IN POLITICS**
Women are only 23% of the Senate & 18% of governors

**INTERSECTIONALITY**
Interplay between any kind of gender discrimination
Building on the success of our Own the Room public speaking series for women and Toastmasters Junior series for girls, our newest Career Success Series program will debut this October! Join us from the privacy of your home or car for our first-ever YWCA.GC podcast series. Designed for women in business, the workplace, and the community, your hosts will be our executive director and staff, each with their own take on empowering women... and our guests will range from national advocates to local community leaders and activists. Tune in for Season 1 this fall, and Season 2 in the spring!

**UPCOMING TOPICS**

- **GASLIGHTING** How to handle it when the doctor does it to you
- **RACIAL TURNAROUND** One woman’s story: a 180-degree change of mind
- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP** Owning a business as a woman in Charleston
- **PERSONAL FINANCE** Real-life lessons from a female financial planner
- **FAMILY TALK** Raising a sexually healthy child one talk at a time
- **RACE & FAITH** Candid talk from a round-table of local faith leaders
WOMEN’S HEALTH

As part of our mission to empower women, ensuring women are safe and healthy is key! Health and safety impact every area of life, including economic vitality and mental health. One of our longest-standing programs is YWCA’s Week Without Violence, which has highlighted domestic violence for more than 20 years. Our women’s health focus during the past year has been on our newest program, Choose Well, designed to reduce unintended pregnancies by offering all women affordable access to eight methods of contraception. We also offer free and confidential HIV testing and counseling.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **1,020 WOMEN**
  All individuals served by our health educator

- **707 WOMEN**
  All individuals HIV tested, educated, or counseled

- **184 WOMEN**
  Receiving contraception or family planning assistance

- **30 WOMEN**
  Participating in our forums or workshops

- **4,851 DISTRIBUTED**
  Condoms and educational materials provided for free

- **15-24 YEARS OLD**
  Average age of those served; primarily low-income
MAKING HISTORY

YWCA Greater Charleston was founded in 1907, and we have been empowering women and eliminating racism across our region ever since. (Our national organization, YWCA USA, began fighting for women’s rights upon its founding in 1858, and when it became aware of additional discrimination against women of color in the late 1800s, began fighting to eliminate racism as well.) Our branch played an important role during the civil rights movement in Charleston with Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s wife, Coretta Scott King, participating with our members and board in the historic 1969 MUSC hospital strike.

KEY DATES

**1858**
Founding of our national organization, YWCA USA

**1890**
YWCA USA opens its first branch for women of color

**1907**
We are founded on July 4: Independence Day

**1969**
We take part with MLK’s wife in the MUSC strike

**1972**
We launch one of the first MLK tributes in America

**2018**
We launch #WWB, the first Charleston event of its kind
THANK YOU for taking the time to read our annual report! Your support of our programs is appreciated more than you know.

Our board, staff, and volunteers have again been active beyond the programs highlighted in this report. Last fall, for instance, we launched our participation in the Berkeley Early Education & Care Collective to help women and children who face daunting circumstances in South Carolina’s largest county. Throughout the year we have gladly participated in this incredibly helpful initiative, including leading two racial equity indabas, unique workshops meaning “a community meeting of the minds,” for early childhood professionals from across the US.

I would also like to thank our Racial Equity Institute sponsors. The College of Charleston donates superior meeting space for our workshops, and locally owned Verde provides our participants with discounted lunches. This year, as the program continues to grow, we are seeking corporate sponsors to help us reach even more people in the Charleston community with this needed training. If your organization would like to support this critical initiative, please contact me at 843.722.1644 or lbrown@ywca-charlestonsc.org.

This summer, we were also glad to welcome members from the Charleston Center for Women into our fold. A longtime partner of ours in our mission to empower women, the Center for Women leaves a fine legacy that we very much intend to fulfill.

We could not do this without the moral support and donations of funds and time from our supporters and partners, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Yours,

LaVanda Brown
Executive Director

HOW TO HELP

DONATE TIME
Volunteer to serve as an aide at one of our MLK Celebration events

DONATE FUNDS
Host a Facebook fundraiser or choose your cause at ywcagc.org/donate

DONATE TALENT
Facilitate one of our Y Girls Code clubs. No coding knowledge required!

DONATE GOODS
We’re especially seeking coffee and/or breakfast donations for REI
YWCA IS ON A MISSION

YWCA Greater Charleston is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. JOIN US.