

TURNING — YWCA TORONTO — POINTS

LEADERS IN ACTION
The Final Frontier

**2017 WOMEN OF
DISTINCTION AWARDS**
Highlights and photos



TRANSFORMING LIVES

*The Conversation
That Changed
My Life*

PHOTO | YWCA TORONTO EMPLOYMENT PARTICIPANT NAJIBA

FROM OUR ARCHIVE
1976: "LEARNING WHAT
MAKES A CAR TICK"
PARTICIPANTS OF AUTO
MAINTENANCE COURSE
AT YWCA TORONTO



YWCA
TORONTO

A TURNING POINT
FOR WOMEN



United Way
Toronto & York Region



YWCA TORONTO TRANSFORMS LIVES.
AS CANADA'S LARGEST WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION, WE HELP WOMEN ESCAPE VIOLENCE, MOVE OUT OF POVERTY AND ACCESS SAFE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING. WE WORK TENACIOUSLY TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS THAT HOLD WOMEN BACK FROM ACHIEVING EQUALITY.

ywcatoronto.org



YWCA TORONTO

Board President
Bessy Triantafyllos

Chief Executive Officer
Heather M. McGregor

Director of Advocacy & Communications
Maureen Adams

Director of Employment & Training
Marilda Tselepis

Director of Finance & Information Technology
Lois Fine

Director of Human Resources & Administration
Jeannette Manguiat

Director of Permanent Housing
Alethia Lewis

Director of Philanthropy
Firoozeh Radjai

Director of Property Services & Asset Management
Sally Palmateer

Director of Shelters & Girls' and Family Programs
Nina Gorka

TURNING POINTS PRODUCTION - JUNE 2017

Manager of Communications & Marketing
Marika Motiwalla

Senior Advocacy & Communications Officer
Etana Cain

Senior Marketing Officer
Lisa Hoffman

Senior Design & Production Coordinator
Kim Quashie

Production & Design Coordinator
Lucy Sterezyllo

YWCA Toronto
87 Elm Street
Toronto, ON M5G 0A8

Charitable Business
#10822 9865 RRO001
Publication Mail Agreement
#40932523



LETTER FROM THE DESK OF OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

A \$15 minimum wage in Ontario is a positive step forward for women. As I listened to the Ontario government's recent announcement, I thought of the women across our programs working in precarious jobs – low-wage, part-time employment. Most have no guaranteed hours of work, no benefits and no sick time. Research also points to an overrepresentation of women – Indigenous, racialized and immigrant workers – in precarious jobs. The situation is urgent.

YWCA Toronto's Employment and Training programs are part of the solution. Through one-on-one employment counselling, training and work placements, we help women to access the labour market and build strong economic futures. In our pre-apprenticeship programs, we support women to launch sustainable and well-paid careers as carpenters, electricians, refrigeration mechanics, commercial painters-decorators, truck drivers, Information Technology professionals and horticulture technicians. It is exciting to see women blazing trails in the skilled trades – a traditionally male-dominated sector.

We do not do this work alone. YWCA has formed strategic partnerships with organizations that represent the sector. We partner with colleges known for technical training, including George Brown College, Seneca College, Humber College and Centennial College. We work with LiUNA Local 183, the largest Construction Local Union in North America; and the Canadian Association for Women in Construction. Together, we are part of a growing movement to make precarious employment history.

In this newsletter, you will read more about the life-changing impact of our employment and training programs. I am incredibly proud of our work to move women out of poverty by facilitating pathways to careers with good salaries, benefits and opportunities for advancement.

Heather M. McGregor
Heather M. McGregor,
Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Toronto

IN THIS ISSUE

3 TRANSFORMING LIVES
The Conversation That Changed My Life

5 LEADERS IN ACTION
The Final Frontier

7 YWCA TORONTO AT-A-GLANCE

8 CREATING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

9 DONORS IN ACTION
2017 Women of Distinction Awards

10 SPOTLIGHT ON PHILANTHROPY



PHOTO | PREMIER KATHLEEN WYNNE AND MINISTER FLYNN DISCUSSED THE PROVINCE'S CHANGING WORKPLACE REVIEW AT YWCA TORONTO WITH EMPLOYMENT MANAGER PETYA NACHEVA, AND PARTICIPANTS NAJIBA AND CAMLIA

THE CONVERSATION THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

On a day like any other, one of Najiba's regular customers at the convenience store where she worked told her about YWCA Toronto. "That conversation changed my life," says Najiba.

Najiba and her family arrived in Canada with \$200. She had previously studied Economics in Afghanistan before working at the United Nations as an Administrative Assistant. Because she knew English, she was able to get a job at a convenience store in Toronto, where she eventually became an Assistant Manager. "I liked my job, but I wanted more," says Najiba. "When you are working several jobs and raising a family, you can feel like you are in survival mode. I was not able to think about my long-term career goals. I knew I had a lot more to offer, but I did not know how to get there."

Not knowing what to expect, Najiba booked a meeting with a career counsellor at one of YWCA Toronto's Employment and Training centres. "At first, I was nervous but from the

moment I walked in, everyone was so warm and welcoming," she recalls. "For the first time, I felt like I had options to build my career in Canada." Najiba says that the workshops, resources, and incredible staff are what make YWCA Toronto special.

With guidance and support from YWCA Toronto, Najiba enrolled in a Community Service Worker Program at Trios College, where she finished top of her class. "I have a passion to help others," says Najiba, who wants to help immigrants and newcomers adjust to life in Canada. "It can be scary when you are new to a country and are just working to survive," says Najiba. "I want newcomers to know that they are not alone. There are services available that can help build their careers." After completing her studies, Najiba returned to YWCA Toronto for resume-writing workshops, interview training and guidance throughout the job placement process.



PHOTO | YWCA TORONTO EMPLOYMENT PARTICIPANT NAJIBA

Recently, Najiba had the opportunity to sit down with Premier Kathleen Wynne to talk about the provincial government's announcement to introduce a \$15 minimum wage. "I never in a million years thought I would get to tell the Premier my story and share the kind of impact the minimum wage increase will have on women and women-led families," says Najiba. "I also told her that YWCA Toronto transformed my life, and is transforming the lives of so many women. That was an incredible moment for me."

Since completing the Community Service Worker Program, Najiba now works at YWCA Toronto as an Employment and Placement Specialist. She says the most rewarding part of the work is helping women navigate some of the similar challenges she faced. "I want to help shorten that adjustment period and help women build connections to the community and in the job market," says Najiba. "Most importantly, I want newcomers to know that they are not alone and that YWCA Toronto is here to help." ■

STRONG ECONOMIC FUTURES OUR IMPACT

\$6.4
million invested in
employment and skills training

7,000
women in employment and
training programs gained
stronger economic futures

1,577
newcomers developed job-
readiness skills to prepare them
for the Canadian labour market

615
women built business and
career skills in YWCA Toronto's
social purpose enterprise

8
pre-apprenticeship trades
programs for women, including:
Refrigeration Mechanic,
Electrician, Commercial Painter-
Decorator, General Carpentry,
Gas Technician, Horticulture,
Transportation and
Information Technology

THE FINAL FRONTIER

I often think of the skilled trades as the final frontier. My mind is flooded with images of women with hard hats, steel-toed boots, harnesses and reflective work gear blending against landscapes in construction sites, mining quarries, dense forestry and oil platforms. In my mind, women work alongside men as equals, no longer expending time and effort to prove equal value for equal work. In my vision, women's presence as journey persons, site supervisors, assessors, project managers or technicians has added skills, talent and grit to work sites in all sectors of the economy and in all industries. Good jobs. Competitive salaries. Promising careers. Oh, but what a vision it is!

Of course, the clouds of reality move in quickly and then I remember that women represent only 5% of skilled tradespeople in Canada today. I feel frustrated that this is one of the few remaining labour market sectors where women have not made a significant dent or benefited

from the stable jobs and long-term careers available in the sector. Then, I recall my vision and I am driven by a desire to change this reality. I want to raise awareness of the opportunities to be found in this final frontier, especially for low-income and newcomer women.

To date, YWCA Toronto has trained over 200 women to enter the skilled trades as carpenters, electricians, refrigeration mechanics and commercial painters-decorators. In a unique women-only experience, we provide academic upgrading and employment-readiness workshops and deliver the apprenticeship training portion with academic institutions well known for their technical training expertise.

Most recently, we expanded our programing to include training programs for women as long-



haul and short-haul truck drivers and horticulture technicians. This recent expansion also brought us a new Information Technology program where women receive training in Mobile Applications and Development. It is a perfect bridge for women trained abroad as System Engineers who now require skills upgrading and links to the Canadian labour market.

The opportunities for women in the skilled trades are too many to count. YWCA Toronto is out there working to identify pathways for women to benefit from these opportunities. We know that once women get through the door, their drive and hard work is contributing to a positive shift in workplace attitudes.

They are earning the respect of their colleagues and paving the way for the next generation of female skilled workers.

My hope is that YWCA Toronto's skilled trades programs will be part of this legacy for women. Our work is critical to my vision, teeming with images of our daughters and granddaughters working alongside men as equals - no longer the exception but part of the norm. ■

Dolores Montavez-Ruz is the Manager of Newcomer Services & Pre-Apprenticeship Programs at YWCA Toronto

PHOTO | (FACING PAGE) STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY OF WOMEN IN TRADES

THE DEMAND FOR SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE IS ON THE RISE

By 2020, Canada is predicted to have a shortage of **1 MILLION** tradespeople

21% of the Ontario construction workforce is retiring in the next 10 years

YWCA Toronto prepares women to thrive in the skilled trades. Programs include:

- 5% of skilled tradespeople in Canada are women
- ACADEMIC UPGRADING
- FULL-TIME, HANDS-ON TRAINING
- SAFETY CERTIFICATION
- LEVEL 1 TRADE CERTIFICATION

Our skilled trade programs will have you on your way to a new career in **6 MONTHS**

What We're Reading
Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly
Find inspiration in this true story of the Black women mathematicians at NASA whose calculations helped fuel some of America's greatest achievements in space.

YWCA TORONTO AT-A-GLANCE

NEAR & FAR



- Sabrina Wu from our **Board of Directors** attended the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York City. From policy roundtables to meeting Canada's Status of Women Minister, she made waves on the international stage.
- Welcome to Maya Roy, **YWCA Canada's** new CEO! We are inspired by her inclusive feminist vision, grounded in years of experience working with newcomers and women facing barriers.
- Thanks to your support our **International Boutique** provided a \$10,000 grant to YWCA Jordan that is helping provide legal aid and support for survivors of violence. Visit the boutique at 81 St. Clair Ave. E.

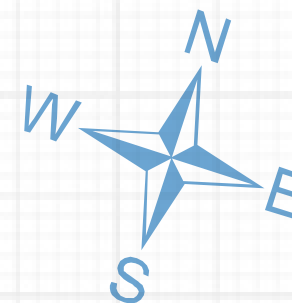
CELEBRATE



- We congratulate Paola Gomez from our **Housing and Support** team for receiving the City of Toronto's Constance E. Hamilton Award. Her work to support survivors of gender-based violence and newcomers through community art and creative writing workshops is changing lives.
- Maureen Adams, Director of **Advocacy and Communications**, was recognized by YWCA Canada with the Clela Herman Award - the nomination was put forward by her team and YWCA Vancouver. Maureen has championed the rights of women and girls throughout her entire career, which began at YWCA Toronto's Stop 86 women's shelter. As a Director, she has re-energized and brought national profile to her department, which works tenaciously to break down barriers that hold women back from achieving equality.
- Sasha Manes from our **Philanthropy** team was honoured by The Association of Fundraising Professionals Greater Toronto Chapter with the Outstanding New Fundraising Professional Award. Her contributions are critical to advancing gender equity across Toronto.
- We celebrate Carol Hines-Dacosta and Erica Fisico from our **Women's Shelter**, the worthy recipients of the Soul of a Warrior Award. This award recognizes the contributions of front-line workers and we are so proud to see two dedicated staff members honoured.

GENDER MATTERS

- The **2017 federal budget** was Canada's first to apply an intersectional gender-based analysis. We applaud the government for taking this important first step in making better public policy. Next, it must ensure matched funding commitments to advance gender equity.
- **2017 Woman of Distinction**
Ceta Ramkhalawansingh shared her expertise on pay equity in Policy Options magazine. She identified unionization, a minimum wage that is a livable wage, and affordable child care as key to closing the gender pay gap.



CREATING
SYSTEMIC CHANGE
ADVOCACY

"Toronto City Council must focus budget choices on what really matters - new revenue generating tools and investment in poverty reduction. That is why YWCA Toronto has joined with 90 other civic leaders to demand action. We must ensure that the services supporting the most vulnerable people in our city are maintained, from reducing the long waiting lists for affordable housing and subsidized child care to addressing overcrowded homeless women's shelters. Toronto can do better."

- Maureen Adams, Director of Advocacy & Communications



Congratulations to Heather McGregor, Honorary Doctorate in Laws

Our CEO, Heather McGregor received an Honorary Doctorate in Laws in recognition of her over 20 years of leadership at YWCA Toronto. Heather's skill in growing and expanding YWCA programs has improved the lives of women and girls all across our city. We could not be more thrilled to see Ryerson University bestow this honour on her.



A Night of Inspiration

2017 YWCA Toronto Women of Distinction Awards

On May 18th, nearly 1,000 women, girls, supporters and allies gathered to celebrate the 37th annual Women of Distinction Awards - a YWCA Toronto highlight of the year celebrating the outstanding achievements of women in Toronto.

Seven remarkable women were honoured for their contributions to transforming the lives of women and girls. Congratulations to these amazing women and a huge thanks to all the attendees for their wonderful support.

Guests mingled over cocktails, delicious food and silent auction bidding before settling down to enjoy the awards ceremony.

Recipients were introduced and honoured by members in their fields and then wowed the crowd with laughter, tears, admiration and inspiration during their heartfelt and passionate acceptance speeches.

The annual fundraiser was a great success, raising nearly \$700,000 towards the vital programs and services that YWCA Toronto provides to over 13,000 marginalized women and girls annually. ■

For more information about the Women of Distinction Awards and to nominate a Woman of Distinction in your community, visit womenofdistinction.ca

PHOTO | (TOP TO BOTTOM) 2017 YWCA WOMEN OF DISTINCTION AWARD RECIPIENTS, MAYOR JOHN TORY, HOST MARIVEL TURAC, MARGARET ATWOOD, YWCA TORONTO DIRECTORS AND GIRLS' CENTRE PARTICIPANTS



(LEFT TO RIGHT) 2017 YWCA WOMEN OF DISTINCTION AWARD RECIPIENTS: DENISE DWYER, HIBAO GELLE, ISHITA AGGARWAL, DR. MARJORIE E. DIXON, CONNIE WALKER, CETA RAMKHALAWANSINGH, JANICE FUKAKUSA



TRANSFORMING LIVES

2017



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

PRESENTED BY



CHAMPION



PATRON



TRIBUTE



FUTURE LEADERS



OFFICIAL MEDIA SPONSOR



SPOTLIGHT ON PHILANTHROPY

YWCA TORONTO'S PERMANENT HOUSING: WINONA'S PLACE
Winona's Place, which serves Indigenous women-led families, is in the final stage of a three-year capital and programming project, which has already raised over a half million dollars for safety and security renovations. On May 3, over forty supporters came to celebrate what has been achieved, and to learn more about the innovative model, which offers crucial programming through an Indigenous lens.

GIRLS' TALK RECEIVES ONTARIO TRILLIUM FUNDING
YWCA Toronto's Girls' Centre has received an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant of \$316,500 over three years to deliver Girls' Talk, a mentorship experience for girls, ages 9 to 13 years, who face barriers. The program develops self-esteem, and builds strong emotional and social skills.

FULL CIRCLE
YWCA Toronto recently received an unexpected and very generous donation. The donor, who asked to remain anonymous, made a \$1,580 gift. She told us she was a former program participant and explained how important it was for her to "give back" in gratitude for the support YWCA Toronto offered her when she needed it most.

"I remember a time when YWCA Toronto helped me and it registered deeply in my heart. You were there for me when no one else was and helped when no one else could. I told myself I would repay it one day."

Scotiabank Charity Challenge

in support of YWCA Toronto

Sunday, October 22, 2017



YOU CAN TRANSFORM A GIRL'S LIFE WITH EVERY STEP

REGISTRATION OPEN for YWCA Toronto
torontowaterfrontmarathon.com/stwm-charities/ywca-toronto

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO
YWCA TORONTO | 87 ELM STREET TORONTO, ON M5G 0A8

