

March 16, 2020



Dear Stakeholders and Supporters,

This newsletter was scheduled for publication Friday March 13<sup>th</sup>. That same day, the reality of COVID-19 landed on us – our region, our State and our nation. We postponed publication and got to work – pivoting so we could continue our services and expand our collaborations during this extraordinary time.

As with all of you, we hold up the health, safety and dignity of each person in our community and our community as a whole, as our highest value. Our mission and long-term community commitment is unwavering. That is why we have done (and will be doing) the following during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

- **Programs and services are being modified for online and telephone delivery very quickly.**
  - We are transferring staff to remote working models, keeping in mind that they are at the same time adjusting to having to care for children, elderly and themselves.
  - We expect to be offering select programs remotely by the end of this week and most others rolled out next week. Some programs cannot be provided except in person, such as clothing fittings in our women's boutiques, so they will be on hold.
- **Locations in Milwaukee and Racine are closed to the public for standard in-person services, however...**
  - As tenants in our Milwaukee location serve those receiving specific public assistance that still requires them to come to an office in person, select YWCA SEW staff will be on site so that there is no disruption in help for vulnerable community members.
- **Events - such as Circle of Women: Face of the Future and the annual Stand Against Racism will now be virtual!**
  - Don't change your plans for the evening of April 23rd - we are working with sponsors and table captains to host a truly distinct Virtual Circle of Women on the same date we would have gathered in person. And in the fall of 2020, we will celebrate in person with our virtual Circle of Women event attendees.
- **Work on new initiatives continues!**
  - The re-design of our Women's Professional Breakfast Series continues in anticipation of a fall 2020 launch and research on the PayEquity/LivingWage Report Card will not slow down.
- **We are standing with each other.**
  - Our Board is working diligently to support all of this work and is committed to keeping our staff supported.
  - We have advised United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County and United Way Racine to consider us a resource for sister organizations serving the vulnerable during this time.
- **Communication remains key.**
  - We will not flood your email box but we will stay in touch.
  - Please follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and check our website for important updates.
- **Thank you for your help!**
  - A number of supporters have reached out to us aware that the financial pressure that this situation will create for all of us - but especially for social sector nonprofits - is immense. We appreciate that at the same time you are concerned about what comes next, you have asked how you can [donate](#). Anything you are able to share is welcome.

We are grateful to call Southeast Wisconsin home, where we know we are all doing what is needed to slow the spread of this virus and remember the words of Maya Angelou:

***Without courage, we cannot practice any other virtue with consistency. We can't be kind, true, merciful, generous or honest.*** If you have suggestions or ideas on how we can continue to serve, please send an email to [communication@ywcasew.org](mailto:communication@ywcasew.org) .

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry Jann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President & CEO