

March 26, 2020



Dear Supporters and Stakeholders,

Much has happened in a short time. Perhaps that is the understatement of the year. I hope this update from our March 16th message finds you and loved ones well and safe.

Thank you for taking the time to learn below how we remain focused on the health, safety and dignity of our community – especially those who are in many different ways more vulnerable than others during a prolonged national health emergency. **You have A LOT going on too** – we are so grateful that staying connected to our work continues to be part of your values.

Here's how we are working and moving forward now.

- Most of our **programs and services are being provided online and via telephone.**
- Our **staff is staying in touch with program participants** whose programs are on “pause” right now.
- **New services are evolving** in collaboration with others and our Milwaukee headquarters may soon be a staging area for **various essential supply distribution.**
- We are **staying connected:**
 - **Circle of Women is online on April 23rd** with an IRL experience in fall 2020 (more on that soon!).
 - **Virtual Stand Against Racism is in the works** for late April.
- **Partnership with Professional Dimensions** remains focused.
 - The re-design of our Women’s Professional Breakfast Series continues with launch anticipated in September 2020.
- Our **Board is fully engaged** and assuring our staff is supported.

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.

So, here's the bottom line.

- As recognized by public officials, **YWCA Southeast Wisconsin is an active essential resource and service provider during the time of COVID-19.**
 - Whether working at home or on-site (consistent with health department instructions), we have not slowed down. Quite the opposite.
- We are not alone; **we are part of a network of essential providers who are collaborating** and adapting to a changing landscape.
 - In addition to providing most of our services remotely, we are part of teams focused on things like food, diapers, educational access, and mental health, to name a few.
- **The well-being of our community, especially women of color and their families, is intricately connected to YWCA SEW continuing its work**, adapting its work and working with others:
 - We bring a distinct equity lens to the decision-making table – always asking how a certain solution will serve and empower women and people of color.

Despite your own concerns, a number of you have reached out knowing that the financial pressure that this situation creates for social sector nonprofits is immense. **A number of you have released restrictions on previous donations.** Yet, without being sure about what comes next, you have asked **how you can [donate](#)**. Anything you are able to share is welcome at any time.

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, we 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.

In solidarity,

Ginny Finn
President & CEO