

May 1, 2020



Dear Friends,

I am hopeful that this most recent update note finds you and yours safe and coping well with our current health emergency. Despite the stress, I hope there are quiet moments of peace. **As it happens, I have found the weeks since March 16<sup>th</sup> to be both unnerving and extraordinary.**

We all know “unnerving” well. Headlines and social media are sure to share grim pandemic realities from both a public health and economic impact perspective. And, many in our community know this feeling first-hand, not just from headlines.

**That is why we do the essential work we do and why we collaborate with others to be a solid network of essential service.**

**And, that is why our quick pivot to providing all but one of our services remotely is extraordinary.** Adult Ed, Job Readiness, Personal Financial Coaching, Racial Justice Learning – none of it has stopped, in fact, **demand for these services is in overdrive.** And, we’ve added another service, a new [Support Line](#).

**What else is extraordinary? The people who make up YWCA SEW’s community.**

Our community **includes the people who trust us to help them build a better life for themselves and their families.** They use our services and they help us reflect on how to improve. **It includes you** - our donors, stakeholders and advocates who commit financial resources, time and relationships to **building a world where our mission to eliminate racism and empower women becomes a reality.**

We want to stay in touch with you now more than ever; mutual communication remains key. Please follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and check our website for important updates.

**Many thanks** to those who have reached out, recognizing that the financial pressure on social sector nonprofits is immense now. Your support of our service to the most vulnerable of our neighbors, even as you contemplate your own situations at home, has been humbling. Anyone who would like to provide financial support can do so at any time; you can [donate here](#). And, we are grateful.

**There is an extraordinary paradox in this pandemic:** even as we cope with pain, disruption and fear, an extraordinary opportunity to build a more equitable community where everyone has a chance to thrive is here. **Now.**

**I am not being simplistic; I am being direct.** As I shared with our virtual Circle of Women audience on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, we have been part of this community for more than 125 years and we have been to this “rodeo” before. Women’s Suffrage, the Great Depression, Two World Wars

(lots of other battles we call “conflicts” or “eras”), McCarthyism, the Civil Rights Movement, September 11<sup>th</sup> and more. **We have persevered.**

**What will our future – the summer, the fall, next year – look like? It will look like whatever we decide it is going to look like – if our commitment to extraordinary work holds fast.**

**We deeply appreciate that staying connected to our work continues to be part of your values.** 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 Linn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President & CEO