

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

WINTER 2023



Introducing Jennifer Goddard, CEO

Join us in welcoming YWCA Charleston's new Chief Executive Officer

The YWCA Charleston's Board of Directors has named Jennifer Goddard the new Chief Executive Officer of YWCA Charleston, following Debby Weinstein's retirement in December 2022.

The YWCA Board of Directors began a comprehensive, nationwide search process in early 2022 to identify and engage a new CEO due to the planned retirement of Weinstein. The search was successfully concluded, and upon unanimous recommendation of the search committee and executive committee, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the hiring of YWCA Charleston's former Chief Program Officer, Jennifer Goddard, as the CEO on September 1, 2022.

The CEO search committee included a team of current and former board members, CEOs, major funders, HR professionals, and staff, shared Jennifer Vieweg, immediate past board President and CEO Search Committee Chair. Over several months, the committee met to identify the characteristics of the ideal candidate, discussing search criteria, and determining how to proceed with the search. Through various interview rounds and assessments, Jennifer Goddard rose to the top throughout the entire process.

"Not only is she the best fit for the role according to the assessment, but clearly has the skills, experience, and passion for the YWCA's mission that we are looking for in candidates," shared Vieweg.

Jennifer Goddard's career includes experience in nonprofit, agency and corporate communications. Six years ago, she pivoted her career to become the Chief Program Officer at the YWCA Charleston. Jennifer knows the YWCA's programs inside and out.

"It is an honor to be selected as the YWCA's CEO. We stand on a solid foundation thanks to Deb. I'm getting to better know our donors, corporate supporters and all of our community partners so we continue to live the mission and focus on those we serve. I'm excited about the next chapter in our organization and invite folks to help continue this important work," said Goddard.

Now, the YWCA Charleston is looking to the future. Goddard will help set the vision, and will lead the YWCA through challenges in our community and seek new ways to carry out the YWCA's mission of **eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.**

Check inside to read about all 2023 Women of Achievement honorees!

Dr. Tracy Wilkerson was born and raised in Charleston, WV. Following high school, Tracy attended Vanderbilt University and earned a Bachelor of Engineering degree in 1996. After a few years as a civil engineer, Tracy decided to follow in the footsteps of her father to become a Pediatric Dentist. Tracy attended West Virginia University School of Dentistry, graduating with a Doctorate of Dental Surgery in 2002. To complete her pediatric training, she finished a residency at the University of Kentucky in 2004, where she served as Chief Resident. She returned to Charleston to begin her dental career, practicing as a Pediatric Dentist at Children's Dentistry, the dental practice founded by her father. Tracy takes immense pride in the fact that she was able to continue his practice and follow his example of meeting the dental needs of children.



Tracy is a Diplomate of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry and a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. She enjoys helping children in her profession as well as in her role as mother of three, Meredith, Wilkes, and Nora.

In addition to providing quality dental care, Tracy has made "giving back" a major focus of her life. Tracy and her practice support many organizations that impact the lives of her patients and community. She frequently participates in and supports organizations who focus on meeting the needs of children and women in the area.

In addition to financial support and fundraising efforts, for more than 17 years she has served on the Kanawha County Dental Health Counsel, which provides dental care for children. She and her family have also participated in mission trips to Haiti to provide care and support to the village of La Digue. Tracy has also established the

Dr. Tom Wilkerson Scholarship which she awards to patients in her practice.

Tracy and her husband, Rob Aliff, are dedicated to the community in which they live and strive to make West Virginia a wonderful place.

Karen Williams is a retired educator, social justice and women's right to vote activist, board member and community volunteer. Since 1975, Karen has been an educator. An educator committed to helping children read of all ages. Her love and commitment to helping children do their best reading started when she became a teacher at Glenwood High School. From 1975 she held numerous positions from Classroom Teacher, Title 1 Educator, Title 1 Reading Specialist to becoming Head Start Director in 2004. While working in the Kanawha County Schools, she worked as an Instructor at West Virginia State University. For 40 years, Karen has been a powerful and caring teacher who has touched the lives of so many young people helping and guiding them to love reading and education.



Her love of activism came very early in Karen's life. For years Karen has lead campaigns for social justice and women's right to vote. She has organized rallies and spoken to young children, women and men about the importance of voting and getting to the polls to exercise their right to vote. She has dedicated her life to building the political power of young people by helping them to register to vote, voter outreach and having discussion with local political leaders on issues that are concerning to minority communities. Her passion of equal economic, political and social justice is recognized in word and deed.

Karen is a member of the Links, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Incorporated, Poor People's Campaign, Rise Up WV, NAACP, WV Panhellenic Council and Our Future WV. She has served on numerous boards and committees giving of her time and resources to serving others in our community.

Debby Weinstein began her career with YWCA Charleston as a volunteer in 1982 and became an employee in 1983 as an overnight advocate at Resolve Family Abuse Program. Deb's passionate advocacy and big heart are two of the many qualities that make her a relentless champion of social justice. The woman who is a seemingly tireless embodiment of compassion, hard work, energy and activism retired in December as CEO. Long days, endless meetings, tens of thousands of people served and many millions of dollars raised all culminate in support of the YWCA's mission to which Deb is devoted.



From Resolve, Deb was promoted to program director at Sojourner's Shelter for Homeless Women and Families. She helped grow the program from 8 beds in two different locations on Shrewsbury Street until it moved to its current location on Washington Street in 1981. A contemporary of Alicia McCormick, the director of Resolve, Deb later advocated for and developed a transitional housing program in her friend's memory. McCormick's legacy still lives on in a program. Deb also spearheaded the development of YWCA Shanklin Center.

Deb and her family moved to Missoula, MT in 1996 so she could become that community's YWCA CEO. After a successful time out west, Deb and family returned to Charleston when she was named the YWCA Charleston's Executive Director in 1997. Seeing a need and creating solutions is one of her many talents.

Deb has led the organization through capital campaigns to ensure that the work continues through good and bad financial times. She has partnered with other non-profits and businesses so that all of the programs of YWCA Charleston meaningfully serve the needs of participants.

Deb retired as the YWCA Charleston CEO in December and we hope that she can enjoy the next chapter of her life knowing that she leaves a legacy steeped in dedication, compassion and advocacy. Deb's career culminates in celebration for all that she has done in this community as a leader.

Join us in celebrating these inspiring women on Friday, February 24 at 12pm-1:30pm at the Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center! Visit ywcacharleston.org/woa to purchase tickets.

Chanel Hunt, Encova Empowerment Award Recipient

*in her own words

Hi, I'm Chanel. I was born in Bartow, Florida, and spent between the ages of 14 and 18 in the foster care system. At age 16, I became pregnant with my first child, and by age 18, I had dropped out of high school. By age 19, I was married and had two children from that relationship.

After the end of my first marriage, I started a relationship with a man who would become the father of my third child. Suddenly, he walked out of our lives just as easily as he walked in. While I was still pregnant with my youngest, I took a leap of faith and decided to move to Charleston, West Virginia.

Many people ask: why Charleston? Well, I sent out over 180 resumes for jobs across seven states - and I received six calls back from jobs located in Charleston, so here we are.

Terrified - but ambitious - I loaded up my children and we headed to Charleston. On our way, my car broke down in Savannah, Georgia, but somehow we still made it to our destination. With nowhere to live, my children and I stayed at the YWCA Charleston Sojourner's Shelter for Homeless Women & Families for about 3 months until we could find a place to call our own.

As life went on, I finally remarried. However, the man I married had an inappropriate aspect of what love and marriage are. I found myself staying at the YWCA Alicia McCormick Homes, and there I made every single moment of peace count. I started to love myself. I loved my children, and I loved my work. I finally bought a car. I attended CNA school. I finally gained employment as a CNA. I started working toward my dream of opening an assisted living facility.

Since leaving the YWCA Alicia McCormick Homes, I bought property for myself and my children, I upgraded my vehicle, and I will soon be enrolled in nursing school so that I continue to make my dream of owning and operating an assisted living facility a reality.



Celebrating Shanté Ellis

Shanté Ellis, Director of the YWCA Racial Equity and Inclusion Program, received the Elizabeth Mason Harden Gilmore Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Award during the West Virginia Women's Commission 2022 Legacy of Women Awards Ceremony held on Friday, August 19, 2022.



The Legacy of Women Awards honors 11 West Virginia women who are role models and have shaped the state or nation. The awards are named for and pay homage to accomplished women in West Virginia's history who embody the essence of each award. "There are many deserving West Virginia women doing incredible things for themselves, their communities, and their state, and I am thrilled the Women's Commission recognized 11 of them through this year's Legacy of Women Awards," said Julie Palas, WWC Interim Executive Director. Congratulations, Shanté!



VOLUNTEER *spotlight*

KIM BURTON



Kim Burton truly has a servant's heart! Kim joined the Board of Directors in 2007, serving a six-year term, and has been a dedicated volunteer.


Transitioning from the Board, she remained active in advisory roles, the Centennial and Marketing Committees and Women of Achievement where she was the Chair for several years. "Each year this luncheon brings together over 600 people from our community highlighting women, doing amazing things while "living the mission" of the YWCA. In a small community like Charleston, you think you know everyone, but each year I am involved in the selection process I am blown away by the nominees and eventually honorees, chosen", Kim reflected.

Kim, we are amazed by your never-ending willingness to help promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.


eliminating racism
empowering women

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2023 *Leaders*
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*Corporate partners whose support
sustains YWCA Charleston so that we
can continue to serve the most
vulnerable in our communities.
Together, we work to promote peace,
justice, freedom, and dignity for all.*

peace

TRUIST 

encova
INSURANCE

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empowerment

GREYLOCK
ENERGY

freedom



KOMAX
Business Systems

Bailey
& Slotnick
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

dignity

Appalachian Power
City National Bank
Element Federal Credit Union
J.P. Morgan Chase
Optimum
United Bank

2023 YWCA DATES TO SAVE

WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT
02.24.23 | Charleston Coliseum

RACE TO END RACISM
04.29.23 | Magic Island

GIRLS NIGHT OUT
08.12.23 | Charleston Coliseum

GUYS NIGHT OUT
October 2023 | Oakes Field

FOODIE FEAST
November 2023 | TBD