

# YWCA IS ON A MISSION

FALL 2021



eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

Charleston, WV

## A YWCA SOJOURNER'S SUCCESS STORY

### A Dedicated Mother and Her Four Beautiful Children

Amy is a single mother to four beautiful children (ages 2 -11) who struggled for years to make ends meet due to the difficulty of working in retail while raising young children. Eventually she lost her apartment and found herself living with extended family only to find an unhealthy environment forcing her to leave again in search of a safe home. When Amy arrived at Sojourner's Shelter for Homeless Women & Families, she reported feeling relieved to have a place for herself and her children where she *"feels safe and able to just breathe."*

Determined to make a better life, Amy immediately started working with her assigned case manager on identifying barriers and developing a service plan that would help her get employment and stable housing. Amy's barriers included things such as a missing birth certificate for one of her children, clothing needs, school/daycare for the kids, employment, and of course housing.

Amy was initially provided with clothing vouchers from YWCA Past & Present to take care of immediate clothing needs and then was further connected with the Kanawha County School system for additional school clothing vouchers. Amy also worked with staff to secure the required documentation to enroll her children in school and daycare and to obtain state/federal benefits (including SNAP, WIC, and other assistance programs) for her family.

The children's immunizations had also fallen behind and they hadn't been to the doctor for regular checkups as recommended. Amy worked to get a new doctor for the children and was able to get them all up-to-date on physical exams and immunizations. She was then able to enroll three of her children in the local, year round elementary school and the youngest in a local daycare with Connect referrals.

With all the children enrolled in school/daycare, this allowed Amy to focus on employment opportunities. Amy worked with Sojourner's Job and Education Readiness Center staff to brush up on her interview skills and seek employment. After a few short weeks, Amy found a new job, giving her a huge sense of accomplishment.

Within a week of coming to Sojourner's, Amy began working with the housing coordinator to find affordable housing. Amy completed many applications and within a month was able to secure an apartment in Cross Lanes where she is still living with her children and doing well. Amy is a true success story. With guidance and support from staff, she was able to build her self-confidence, strength, and determination to follow through with her service plan and move her and her family's lives forward. She is now financially independent and stably housed.

In the last year alone, YWCA Sojourner's provided shelter and services for more than **451 homeless children and adults**. By supporting YWCA Sojourner's through fully tax deductible donations, donating items to the shelter, or by participating in Guys Night Out or Foodie Feast, you are providing a hand up, not a hand out!

Visit [ywcacharleston.org](http://ywcacharleston.org) for how to get involved.

## WELCOME SHANTÉ ELLIS

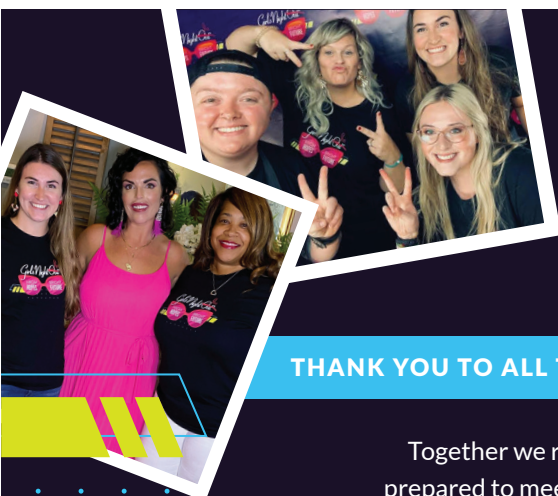
### YWCA Charleston Racial Justice Program Director

Shanté Ellis is an accomplished educator, trainer and mentor who is no stranger to being a community thought leader and frequenting public speaking engagements. Before starting as the Racial Justice Program Director, Shanté spent six years as a Quality Improvement Specialist for River Valley Child Development Services and 2 years as an instructor at Bridge Valley Community College.

After a successful career providing professional development opportunities for Early Childhood program directors and mentoring programs across the state to provide quality childcare for children, Shanté has joined the YWCA Charleston in hopes of facilitating healthier race relations in our region and provide programs that support racial justice initiatives as well as, provide open dialogue and training opportunities that will enrich our communities to move forward in our mission to eliminate racism.

Shanté enjoys bike riding, crafting, going on hikes and planning for the next adventure with her husband and son. Shanté is available to conduct group meetings, provide an array of implicit bias and racial justice trainings and continue developing the YWCA Racial Justice Programming.

You can reach Shanté at [shante@ywcacharleston.org](mailto:shante@ywcacharleston.org) or (304) 533-7333.



THANK YOU TO ALL THE SPONSORS, DONORS, AND PARTICIPANTS OF GNO 2021!

Together we raised enough funds to ensure the YWCA Resolve Program is prepared to meet the needs of more than 2,000 survivors of domestic violence from our communities in the coming year. YOU have given the gift of hope!

## VOLUNTEER *spotlight*

At the YWCA Charleston our annual fundraising events play a critical role in ensuring our programs can serve their clients all year. But as any good fundraiser knows, an event is only as great as it's volunteers and Ellen is certainly one of the best!

**ELLEN SLOTNICK**  
**GIRLS NIGHT OUT COMMITTEE**  
**AUCTION CHAIR**

Serving her third year as Silent Auction (or in virtual times, Online Auction) Chair for our annual Girls Night Out event, Ellen's efforts have already helped raise over \$45,000 for the YWCA Resolve Family Abuse Program!

Ellen's determination and kind spirit have made us extremely grateful to have her on our committee and part of the YWCA family.

Thank you, Ellen!





NOV  
15-20



For the second year in a row, Foodie Feast is proud to present Where Foodies Can Feast! Dine in or order out at local restaurants during the week of November 15-20 where a percentage of sales will benefit YWCA Sojourner's Shelter for Homeless Women and Families.

To learn more, [visit foodiefeastwv.com](http://visit.foodiefeastwv.com)

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## WHAT'S NEW AT THE YW



### WAREHOUSE ART INITIATIVE

We had a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with the City of Charleston's Office of Public Art, the Charleston Urban Renewal Authority, and an extremely talented native WV muralist who goes by the name of "Zulu Painter" (check out his Facebook and Instagram accounts!) to bring a gorgeous new mural to the Elizabeth Street side of our warehouse building. After the first mural was debuted we decided to continue the effort and requested an additional mural to be painted facing our Shanklin Center for Senior Enrichment.

Not only brightening the East End of Charleston, these murals embody our mission of eliminating racism and empowering women.

If you would like to make a donation to assist us in covering the expenses of this beautiful mural please visit [ywcacharleston.org/donate](http://ywcacharleston.org/donate) and select the 'Warehouse Art Initiative.' Thank you!

### YWCA PAST & PRESENT ONLINE STORE - NOW OPEN!

Our YWCA Past & Present Gently Used Clothing Store on-line shop features donated items that are valued higher than our standard in store prices of under \$25. Items include designer bags & clothes, jewelry, artwork, and more!



Proceeds from YWCA Past & Present support the operations of the YWCA Alicia McCormick Homes.

SHOP NOW: [ywcapastandpresent.square.site](http://ywcapastandpresent.square.site)

Craft Beer | Wings | Games | Tons of Food



**GUYS NIGHT OUT**  
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

Oakes Field, South Charleston | [guysnightoutcharleston.com](http://guysnightoutcharleston.com)

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2021 *Leaders*  
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Charleston, WV

*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.***

**WE HAVE  
NIP TAX CREDITS!**

.....

**peace**

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As part of a competitive application  
process, YWCA Charleston was  
awarded a limited number of  
Neighborhood Investment Program  
(NIP) tax credits for eligible gifts of  
\$500 or more!

To reserve your credits, contact  
**Shannon Lester (304) 720-0541,**  
mail a check, or donate online at  
**ywcacharleston.org.**