

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

cambridge, ma

FY 2021

ANNUAL REPORT

Photo by: Steve Osemwenkhae

Welcome

Dear Friends of YWCA Cambridge,

In many ways 2021 felt like an extension of 2020. Another year of COVID marked with breakthrough infections, Delta and other variants. Bolder and more blatant racist rhetoric celebrated in the media. We witnessed an insurrection at our nation's capital. When I expressed my disbelief at the unrelenting chaos, I was told it was due to my failure of imagination at how bad things could become.

Despite these overwhelming challenges, YWCA Cambridge never wavered in our commitment to provide for our clients, residents, and community. We responded to breakthrough infections with hosting booster shot clinics and supplying additional PPE for residents. We doubled down on our racial and social justice advocacy work, officially launching our advocacy department. And in response to the mental health crisis affecting youth and in recognition of the lack of support for those across the gender spectrum, we revised our youth leadership curriculum and launched a new program centering trans, non-binary, and gender non-conforming youth.

While we didn't abolish COVID or racism, we did make incremental steps towards that goal, steps that made a world of difference for individuals in our community. Through those efforts we provided housing for 144 individuals at our Tanner Residence and 20 families with their 25 children at Renae's Place. We submitted 21 pieces of testimony to advocate for legislation to end child poverty, uplift housing assistance, and support menstrual equity. And we served 67 local youth through both our longstanding and flagship youth leadership programs.

Your support enabled us to weather extreme challenges and gave our team a strong vote of confidence that our work and our clients mattered. Our annual report documents a number of powerful stories and compelling quotes from those whose lives we've impacted. I encourage you to read their accounts, applaud their achievements, and join me in thanking the staff who poured their hearts and minds into uplifting these individuals.

As YWCA Cambridge enters its next chapter, we invite you to stay connected and engaged with our steady progress towards eliminating racism and promoting women. Our foundation is strengthening, our practice is sharpening, and our extended YWCA network is growing. We can't do this work alone, and together our collective efforts and impact are amplified.

For anyone who doubts the work we will accomplish, it will be due to their failure of imagination.

Thank you for being a vital member of our YWCA Cambridge family.

Sincerely,



Cassandra Ling, Executive Director

2021 Board of Directors

Elizabeth Baldwin, Isioma Chukwu, Tyra Edwards, Renee Gaudette, Emily Irving, Elizabeth Johnson, Natalie MacLean Leino, Cassandra Ling, Jennifer Lord, Cleola Payne, Johanna Pittman, Carmyn Polk, Michele Scott, Meredith Segal, Theodora Skeadas, Hallie Tosher, Ayesha Wilson, Leah Wynn, Marina Zhavoronkova

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(excluding those listed above)

Regina Caines, Estelle Disch, Nancy Lawrence-Smith, Martha Mason, Beth Milkovits, Michael Monestime, Nicci Vaughn, Monique Wilson



On a mission to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

As a YWCA USA member association, we accomplish this work through direct-service programming and community-based advocacy work. YWCA Cambridge provides single room occupancy housing for 103 self-identified women in our Tanner Residence; a safe haven for 10 homeless families at Renae's Place, our Family Shelter; and youth programming on a mission to cultivate self-love, self-expression, and leadership skills for middle and high school Cambridge youth through mentorship and community partnerships.

Through our core programming areas,

- Youth Programming
- Health & Wellness
- Housing & Shelter Services
- Racial & Social Justice Advocacy

YWCA Cambridge served **533** individuals in 2021.



Housing and Shelter Services

Tanner Residence

At Tanner Residence (Tanner), we offer 103 units of quality, safe, single room occupancy (SRO) housing for people who identify as women who have experienced trauma and need a supportive environment where they can heal and grow.

In 2021, 144 people called Tanner home.

100% lived below the poverty line.

Despite the unrelenting waves of COVID, we continued hosting Thanksgiving and December Holiday Dinners for our residents. Thank you, Leader Bank, for your support!

Marybeth's Story

An abusive ex husband left me homeless in December of 2014. I'm not sure if words can truly describe how devastating this experience was.

I lost my home and family, along with my dignity [and] self respect.

There is no dignity in being homeless, especially for a woman.

The Cambridge YWCA is where my journey of self recovery began. Once there, I was able to attend Project Place and become gainfully employed. I now work in a totally different field and go to a job I truly enjoy. I've slowly been able to move forward and beyond a devastating life experience.

I'm able to see now that although I thought my life was over - it was just beginning.

I'm very grateful to all the women at the Cambridge YWCA.

--Marybeth, Former Tanner Resident



Housing and Shelter Services

Renae's Place for Homeless Families

Renae's Place, YWCA Cambridge's Family Shelter, provided housing for **20 families with their 25 children** in 2021.

Shelter staff are available 24/7 to support residents with individualized goals including securing safe permanent housing, developing interviewing skills, and enrolling in job training programs. For 12 months following a family's move to stable housing, our team stays connected and continues to offer stabilization assistance. We are forever grateful for their commitment to our clients.



In 2021, 8 families moved into permanent housing.

We are grateful to Bagelsaurus, Bahá'í Church of Cambridge, First Church of the Nazarene, Friends Meeting at Cambridge, Harvard University, Masks4Missions, Mayor Sumbul Siddqui's Office, Zonta Club of Medford, and others for their in-kind donations.

2021 Success Stories



One Family Shelter client completed their Pharmacy Tech certification at Jewish Vocational Services and is now working full time at CVS pharmacy,



Two Family Shelter clients continued their studies at Cambridge Community Learning Center for ESL and GED classes.



One Family Shelter client achieved their Temporary Protective Status (TPS), enabling them to work and continue seeking permanent residence

Sherri's Story: Finding My Way

Reflections from a former Family Shelter Client

Statistically people like me don't make it out.

That I've clawed my way forward says something about my resilience but it also says something about our community. I needed a lot of help to get where I am.

None of us chose to be homeless. I've seen and heard countless times, from people who have never experienced it say things like "if only they had made better decisions", and while this is true to an extent, it doesn't capture the reality that most of us were escaping horrible situations.

Growing up, my mother struggled with drug addiction and her own unaddressed trauma. As a child I suffered in silence. I shut down and became withdrawn. The people I maybe could have gone to, who maybe could have helped, I didn't, because I didn't know how to process and express the enormity of what had happened and what I was feeling. Even today it's hard for me to talk about.

How can you plan for the future and focus on working to better yourself when your basic needs aren't being met? In my teens and twenties I ran, sought escape and tried so hard to forget the pain. I had internalized so much shame and guilt over things I now know were not my fault. I had no self worth or confidence. I had zero stability and no support network. I didn't think I could ever dig myself out of the pit of despair and drug addiction. I started using heroin to numb the pain, but it soon took over my life and spiraled beyond my control.

I would be dead or on the streets without the services and supports I received. When I finally got sober, I went through a residential drug treatment program. I had plans to move on but after my daughter was born with a rare genetic syndrome I found myself no longer able to work. Her father, my partner, was still struggling himself and not yet sober so I was essentially on my own then. I needed somewhere safe for us to go and that is when I came to the YWCA's family shelter.

Read the rest of Sherri's story on our blog by scanning the QR code below.



Racial & Social Justice Advocacy

YWCA Cambridge's Racial and Social Justice programming focuses on educating, facilitating, and engaging the community in action-oriented dialogue on race and social justice, as well as building a safe and open environment for community members to speak and be heard.

2021 was a year of growth for this crucial work. With the support of Cummings Foundation and Amgen Foundation, YWCA Cambridge officially launched our Advocacy Department and hired an Advocacy and Outreach Coordinator.

Events Hosted

Three-Part Black Maternal Health Series
Women-Owned Businesses and How They Pivoted During COVID
Confronting Anti-Asian Racism and Misogyny in Cambridge
Sexual Violence and Community-Led Safety
Dr. Taharee Jackson: Beyond Allyship
(2) Annual MLK Day of Service
Stand Against Racism

Submitted Testimony for 21 Bills

Transparency in the Workplace
Lift our Kids
Racial Inequities in Maternal Health
Emergency Housing Payment Assistance during COVID-19
Safe Consumption Sites
Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition ARPA Funding
Cambridge HEART
Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition
Safe Communities Act
Right to Counsel, Common Start
Increasing Access to Menstrual products
HOMES Act
COVID-19 Housing Equity Bill
Tenant Protections
Housing Stabilization
RAFT



Youth Leadership

Gold and Gender Expansive Youth Programs

In 2021 we expanded our Youth Leadership Department, which now has two weekly programs, Gold and Gender Expansive Youth (GEY). Gold continues to center girls of colors, while GEY centers trans, non-binary, and gender non-confirming youth. Both programs maintain the critical focus on developing, nurturing, and supporting leadership and advocacy skills in local middle school and high school students.

Each program works with youth to build self-esteem, engage with social justice issues, engage in social-emotional learning, create community, build leadership skills, and explore intersectional feminism and gender as a social construct.

Over the past year, we adapted our programs for participants to share their expertise and lived experience by leading discussions with their peers. Youth participants have the opportunity to brainstorm, create, and facilitate a session on a topic of their choosing. This has created a positive shift in power and reinforces for our youth that adults are not and should not be the only leaders in our community.

We are providing and creating a community that youth aren't finding in other places, a place that values, affirms, and recognizes their whole selves.

67

youth served

"Something I learned about myself in everything is that I'm not alone."

Everyone in this meeting has a story, and it's nice to share and relate."

- GEY Participant

"I'm very grateful I joined Gold, it opened me to new people and I've learned a lot about my values and many social issues."

- Gold Participant



Boston Classical Soo Bahk Do



Health and Wellness

Boston Classical Soo Bahk Do became a YWCA Cambridge program in 2016, more than 15 years after first arriving at YWCA Cambridge's 7 Temple St location!

In 2021, 27 individuals regularly participated in Boston Classical Soo Bahk Do.

Soo Bahk Do is a traditional Korean martial art whose historical sources date back over 2,000 years. It is both a highly effective self-defense system and a beautiful, traditional art form.

YWCA Cambridge's Boston Classical Soo Bahk Do martial arts program offers a holistic form of health and wellness, cultivating self-empowerment and mental resilience alongside physical strength. Income-based scholarships for people of all ages are offered. Through Soo Bahk Do, we bring self defense and leadership skills to the Cambridge community and beyond.

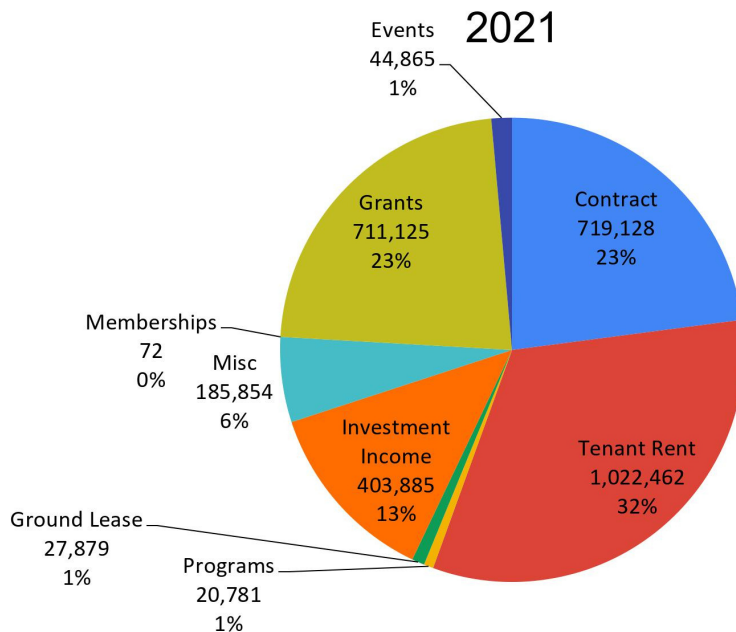
**Soo Bahk Do's guiding philosophy is
"Neh Kang Weh Yu - Strong Inside, Gentle Outside."**



FY 2021 Statement of Activities

Unaudited

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Revenues & Support		
Contract	719,128	698,008
Tenant Rent	1,022,462	1,114,621
Programs	20,781	17,058
Ground Lease	27,879	27,879
Investment Income	403,885	297,068
Misc	185,854	8,841
Memberships	72	1,040
	2,380,061	2,164,515
Grants & Contributions		
Grants & Contributions	711,125	742,761
Events	44,865	14,909
	755,990	757,670
Total Revenue	3,136,051	2,922,185
Expenses		
Revitalization	1,016,533	992,532
Program	1,019,610	931,262
Properties	446,432	391,585
Fundraising	141,871	111,695
Mgmt & Gen	157,055	136,436
Total Expenses	2,781,501	2,563,510
Change in Assets	354,550	358,675



2021 Supporters

\$5,000 or More

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Anonymous
Google
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Betsey St. Onge
Chevron Partners
Cambridge Community Foundation
Community Works, Inc.

\$2,500-\$4,999

Saul Tannenbaum
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\$1,000-\$2,499

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Luke Miratrix
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Natalie Leino
St. Mary's Orthodox Church - RISE
Allie Sherwood Zolenski

2021 Supporters

\$1-\$499 (cont.)

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Thank you for your support!
Because of you, we can.

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