We need to believe.

Believe survivors. Believe domestic abuse and sexual assault happen. Believe the uncomfortable truth that people we know are capable of violence. Believe there are structures in place that protect offenders. Believe we can be part of the problem, but also part of the solution. Believe that domestic and sexual violence are not inevitable – they are preventable. Believe the world can be different.

Believing is an act of hope. And it’s what supporters like you do – recognizing that you can help, that you can change things.

Your support of the YWCA makes an impact for the 4,000+ served here each year, and also for our community and beyond. You change lives, you change laws, you change attitudes. The numbers and stories in this report show just how transformative that can be.

Thanks to you, we can support survivors with quality comprehensive services, and make bold change through prevention and empowerment programming. You act in the belief that change is possible – and it makes all the difference. Thank you.

Eliminating Racism
Empowering Women and Girls
Promoting Peace, Justice, Freedom, and Dignity for All

Charisse Mitchell
CEO

Doug Wilterdink
President, Board of Directors
DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES

24-hour confidential helpline • Emergency shelter • Long-term supportive housing • Advocacy • Victim counseling and support groups • Assailant counseling and psychoeducational groups • Supervised parenting time and safe child exchange • Medical forensic examinations • Therapy

SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

24-hour confidential helpline • Therapy • Counseling • Support groups • Medical-forensic exams for adults and children • Advocacy • Short-term respite services for victims unable to return home

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE SERVICES

Therapy • Counseling • Support groups • Medical-forensic exams • Advocacy

100% of those who stayed in the emergency shelter with children reported that education regarding strategies for helping kids recover is useful to them.

8,403 individual and family therapy sessions

41,466 nights of safety for individuals in long-term supportive housing

2,182 advocacy and safety planning sessions

363 medical-forensic exams (rape exams) provided to survivors of assault (including adults, adolescents, and pediatric cases) with an experienced nurse in a safe, respectful environment.

97% of support group participants report feeling less isolated

Responding to the needs of survivors: This year added the inclusion of a support group specifically for LGBTQ survivors, as well as an increased number of Spanish speaking staff.

97% of support group participants report feeling less isolated
PREVENTION AND EMPOWERMENT SERVICES

- Healthy relationship education for co-ed middle and high school classes with a 10-session curriculum
- Young Women for Change after-school leadership and empowerment programming for girls and those who identify as female, ages 13-18, in collaboration with the Michigan Women Forward
- Trainings for educators on topics such as rape culture, healthy relationships, etc.
- Healthy relationship groups for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities as part of the WEAVE (Working to End Assault and Violence for Everyone) collaboration
- Community outreach through events, panels, and workshops
- Outreach to local and state policy makers to build awareness of sexual violence prevention

389 sessions of prevention education provided through Healthy Relationships classes for middle and high school students of all genders. Of these, 98 were for students in alternative schooling.

109 students with intellectual and developmental disabilities participated in sexual education through a partnership between the YWCA and the Kent Intermediate School District, developing the first-ever curriculum in Kent County for youth with I/DD. Individuals with I/DD are sexually assaulted at a rate seven times higher than those without disabilities (via NPR/U.S. Justice Dept. study).

The Young Women for Change after-school leadership and empowerment program kicked off by taking participants to the Women’s March on Lansing. Girls learned about the power they can have and how coming together as a community can make a difference in the issues they care about.

Later, the program continued its summer camp, Activism Academy, for girls grade 7-9 and added the #BecomingAGirlBoss camp for girls grade 10-12. The camps provided girls with the opportunity to learn about social justice topics, develop skills to create change in their communities, and feel safe and valued while expressing themselves.

Few women have influenced our organization as fundamentally as Helen Claytor, and few things mattered more to her than the well-being of girls. In recognition of her commitment, a group of more than 70 donors came together to establish the Helen Claytor Recognition Society. The dollars raised by the Society are used to provide special leadership-building opportunities for the girls participating in the YWCA’s leadership programs.
PRIVATE COMMUNITY SUPPORT

YWCA CEO Charisse Mitchell (left) recognizes title sponsor Mercantile Bank with Mark Augustyn, Senior Lender and West Region President for Mercantile Bank of Michigan

2017 Honorees (from left): Edye Evans Hyde, Binti Abdi, Valerie Carrasco, Deborah Phillips, Sara Knoester, and Jennifer Deamud. Not pictured: Dr. Veneése Chandler

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SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE WHO HOSTED EVENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE YWCA:

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Pinewood Middle School
Spirit Dreams
The Greater Grand Rapids Chapter of Jack & Jill of America - Teen Fundraiser
Heart of West Michigan United Way

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Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board
U.S. Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA)
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of Justice (Office of Violence Against Women)

Grace Dyer Hunting Circle ($5,000+)
As one of the YWCA’s early leaders, Grace Dyer Hunting led the capital campaign in the early 1920s to build our current Sheldon Boulevard facility.

Listed names denote annual gifts, pledges, and pledge fulfillments from October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018.
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Loney Clinton Gordon Circle ($30-$99)
A YWCA volunteer in the 1940s, Loney Clinton Gordon played a leading role in the research that led to the discovery of the whooping cough vaccine. Like her YWCA peers, her contributions extend well beyond our organization and benefitted countless individuals.

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The Putnam Heritage Society honors the generosity of Caroline W. Putnam, whose gift during the early part of the 20th century became the cornerstone of today’s YWCA. Putnam Heritage Society members have graciously made estate gift arrangements to eventually benefit the YWCA and those it serves.

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Few women have influenced the YWCA as fundamentally as Helen Claytor, and few things mattered more to her than the well-being of girls. The Helen Claytor Recognition Society gives life to her vision of a community that develops generations of girls into tomorrow’s leaders by funding leadership-building opportunities for girls in YWCA empowerment programming.

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