

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



eliminating racism
empowering women

yw
boston

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DEAR FRIENDS,

As I reflect on the past year at YW Boston, I am reminded of a simple but powerful truth: building a more equitable Boston requires courage, partnership, and persistence. Every day, our community, our staff, partners, donors, and volunteers, demonstrate that real change is possible when we commit to doing the work together.

At YW Boston, our mission to eliminate racism and empower women continues to guide everything we do. This year, we expanded our reach and deepened our impact across the region. Through our racial equity programs, workplace initiatives, and community partnerships, we supported organizations and individuals who are working to create more inclusive environments where everyone can thrive.

Our team worked alongside businesses, nonprofits, and civic leaders to advance racial equity in workplaces across Greater Boston. By providing training, tools, and guidance, we helped organizations move from intention to action, strengthening their ability to foster cultures rooted in belonging, accountability, and opportunity.

We also continued to invest in leadership development and community engagement programs that uplift women and youth of color. These efforts are essential to building the next generation of leaders who will shape Boston's future. When women and marginalized communities have the resources, networks, and platforms they need, the ripple effects extend far beyond any single program.

None of this work happens in isolation. Progress is possible because of the extraordinary dedication of our partners, supporters, and community members who believe in the vision of a more just and inclusive city. Your commitment fuels our mission and allows us to meet complex challenges with creativity and resolve.

Of course, we know that the work ahead remains urgent. Structural inequities persist, and the path toward racial and gender equity requires sustained effort. At YW Boston, we remain steadfast in our commitment to confronting these challenges directly; equipping organizations, uplifting communities, and advocating for systemic change.

As we look to the year ahead, we do so with both humility and hope. Together, we will continue to push forward and advocate for environments that value every voice, cultivate leaders who reflect the diversity of our city, and create a Boston where equity is not an aspiration but a reality.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized star-like shape followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that curves slightly upwards at the end.

ABA TAYLOR
PRESIDENT & CEO, YW BOSTON

WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1866, YWCA Boston (formerly known as YWCA Boston) was the first YWCA in the country. Throughout YW Boston's history, we have consistently been a leader in advancing equity and confronting pressing social issues: civil rights, education reform, equal job opportunity initiatives, pay equity, access to health care services, and other causes central to the elevation of women's rights. Today, YW Boston is meeting this moment with bold, forward-looking programming that centers girls, gender-expansive people, and women of color.



OUR WORK

YW Boston's programs foster leadership development for women, girls, and gender-expansive people of color across their lifespan. Through our work, including youth empowerment, senior leadership training, organizational workshops, consulting, and policy advocacy, we intentionally invest in and uplift some of Boston's most marginalized communities, equipping them with the tools, networks, and opportunities to thrive and lead.

As a thought leader in this space, YW Boston hosts numerous events that are designed to welcome, inform, and connect people in Boston to create and sustain a community. At a time when many are experiencing isolation and disconnection, these gatherings offer something essential: a space to build authentic relationships, share experiences, and feel a sense of belonging. Across all our events, whether through advocacy, award ceremonies, trainings, or conversations, we continue this commitment, centering and celebrating the voices and leadership of women of color, girls of color, and gender-expansive people of color. By bringing people together in meaningful ways, our events and programs work to elevate underrepresented voices, nurture collective resilience, and bring us together in the work of creating a more equitable and connected city.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

LEADBOSTON

LeadBoston, YW Boston's signature leadership program, meets organizations' demand for more inclusive leadership by equipping mid-to senior-level professionals with the knowledge, skills, and network necessary to increase equity within their organizations and communities. LeadBoston is unique among leadership programs due to its experiential learning approach and cohort-based structure. Participants across sectors and industries spend a year together, meeting once a month for program days so they can gain knowledge and build skills to analyze the root causes of leadership challenges. The program culminates with each participant pledging to a "Leadership Commitment" that will drive equitable change within their respective organizations and communities. The impact of LeadBoston is evident not only in the participant projects, but also through alumni engagement. Program graduates remain consistently engaged in our online community, maintain relationships with fellow participants, and continue to support YW Boston philanthropically. In 2025, many alumni returned to serve as interviewers, speakers, and partners for the program.



2025 LEADBOSTON HIGHLIGHTS

- In January, LeadBoston's Class of 2025 started their journey at Goodwin Procter, and in February attended a 2-day retreat held at the Wylie Inn and Conference Center to lay groundwork for the year and build relationships among the class. The class was comprised of professionals from a broad range of industries such as finance, education, healthcare, and nonprofit.
- Immersing themselves in Boston, the class explored all neighborhoods in Boston from Roxbury to Charlestown, South Boston to Allston. The program days gathered participants at locations such as Catholic Charities in Dorchester, Roxbury Community College, Boston Medical Center, and the Boston Police Headquarters.
- The class heard from impressive guest speakers such as:
 - Donald Wright – Deputy Chief of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion, City of Boston
 - Sheila Dillon – Chief of Housing Development, City of Boston
 - Dr. Bisola Ojikutu – Executive Director, Boston Public Health Commission
 - Monique Nguyen – Executive Director, Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement
 - Reggie Ramos – Executive Director, Transportation for Massachusetts
 - Kevin Hayden – Suffolk County District Attorney
- The Class of 2025's LeadBoston program culminated in creating Leadership Commitments that they brought back to their respective organizations. These included financial literacy coaching, full reviews of benefits and compensation, a talent retention initiative focused on staff of diverse backgrounds, and establishing cross sector initiatives to enhance opportunities for youth and immigrant families. The 2025 class celebrated its commencement in November at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
- The alumni community gathered for several events, including six virtual Leadership Commitment working groups, a "Meet the Moment" alumni gathering at Urban Edge, and a dinner and scholarship celebration for the late Andrea McGrath, where the Class of 2020 honored their beloved classmate by funding and awarding a scholarship to a current LeadBoston cohort member.

LEADBOSTON BY THE NUMBERS



39

MEMBERS IN THE
CLASS OF 2025



78%

ACCEPTANCE RATE
FOR THE CLASS
OF 2025



39

LEADERSHIP
COMMITMENTS
DRAFTED IN
2025

OUR WORK

F.Y.R.E.

FIERCE YOUTH REIMAGINING EXCELLENCE

F.Y.R.E. is an empowerment and leadership program for middle school girls of color and gender-expansive youth in Boston. It is a weekly in-school and after-school program that uses dialogue, experiential learning, and community building to nurture positive self-identity, strengthen social emotional skills, and gain a deeper understanding of social justice and civic engagement through a lens of wellness.

By the end of this program, participants gain the skills and knowledge to explore wellness as a personal right and a collective necessity. They examine how systems of power, privilege, and oppression impact their ability to experience wellness, joy, and liberation at the intersection of race and gender. Participants reimagine their schools, relationships, and communities as spaces where their full humanity is respected and nurtured. Through the development of their sense of self and their increased capacity for civic engagement, participants explore community organizing principles and practices, discovering ways to use their voice, power, and creativity to address and take action against inequities that limit their access to the wellness they deserve.

PARTICIPANT QUOTE:

“

“I learned about how everybody is different but that doesn't mean you should judge each other. And when facing adversities, don't just sit back and let it happen, you have to speak up and say something and maybe other people will be going through the same thing you are, and you can come together to actually stop what's going on.”

-F.Y.R.E. PARTICIPANT



2025 F.Y.R.E. HIGHLIGHTS

- We changed the “R” in F.Y.R.E. from “reigniting” to “reimagining” to more clearly reflect the mission and values of YW Boston and emphasize that girls of color have always been excellent.
- F.Y.R.E. introduced a new framework to affirm to students that they deserve wellness in the following eight dimensions: Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, Social, Spiritual, Environmental, Occupational, and Financial.
- In July 2025, F.Y.R.E. launched its first-ever summer program hosted and recruited entirely by YW Boston's team.
- 7th graders from Tech Boston Academy focused on hygiene for their final community action project, collecting and donating hygiene supplies.
- F.Y.R.E. students at Curley K-8 made a “Take What You Need” affirmations wall for their final community action project. They installed a bulletin board in the counselor's office for other students to receive affirmations and jokes (in English and Spanish).
- Students at Boston Latin Academy designed and led their own campaign day, creating self-esteem posters, performing poetry about girl power, and rallying together with original chants.

F.Y.R.E. BY THE NUMBERS



202

F.Y.R.E.
PARTICIPANTS



7

PARTNER
SCHOOLS



16

F.Y.R.E.
COHORTS

OUR WORK

DEI COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

YW Boston and the Northeast Human Resources Association (NEHRA) collaborated to launch a DEI Community of Practice in 2020. This forum is a space for diversity, equity, and inclusion professionals to collaborate and troubleshoot in an environment of trust and professional respect. Amid increasing pushback on DEI efforts, participants share that these meetings are a much-needed space for support and rejuvenation.

2025 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE HIGHLIGHTS

- The groups met virtually, once a month for 10 sessions with the option to renew. The participants, divided into two cohorts, represented industries such as biotech, finance, utilities, higher education, environment, and more.
- Participants shared that Community of Practice meetings were a unique space where they could celebrate successes, be honest about setbacks, troubleshoot challenges, and identify cross-organizational trends.



COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE BY THE NUMBERS



12
PARTICIPANTS



OUR WORK

CONSULTING & TRAINING

YW Boston's Consulting & Training team partners with organizations to transform learning into sustained behavioral and structural change. We work with leaders to embed values into systems, translate strategy into action, and build workplaces where equity is an operating principle, not just an intention.

Through organizational assessment, facilitated dialogues, action plan development, and implementation coaching, we create structured opportunities for employees across an organization to surface challenges and address barriers to inclusion. Together, we align diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts with strategic priorities, define meaningful outcomes, and build the structures required to achieve them, ensuring this work remains prioritized and resourced over time.

These partnerships strengthen psychological safety, improve communication and feedback structures, and increase employee agency and capacity to advance equity work – all of which leads to measurable, lasting change in how people experience diversity, equity, and inclusion at work.

PARTICIPANT QUOTE:

“

“I'm glad to see there are so many of us willing to set aside the time to thoughtfully engage with these topics, across all levels of the organization. It's opened my mind to new ways of understanding how oppression and inequity can manifest in the workplace, and I'm looking forward to continuing to identify those and work towards a more welcoming environment for all.”

- PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FOLLOWING THE DIALOGUES
AND ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT SERIES

“I think this program helped to open the door for me and my colleagues to talk about and identify DEI in our workplace. I feel hopeful that this will bring us together more through unity and awareness, engagement and change.”

- PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FOLLOWING A LEADING
FOR EQUITY GOAL-SETTING SESSION



2025 CONSULTING & TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

- We expanded our offerings to include three new trainings focused on effective leadership: Facilitating Dialogue Across Differences, Giving and Receiving Feedback, and Inclusive Communication Throughout Change.
- As part of our Dialogues and Action Planning process, we worked with the City of Newburyport to identify language access as a critical inclusion priority. We subsequently supported the adoption of Pocketalk translation devices to help city employees connect with multilingual residents, visitors, and community stakeholders.
- We facilitated the development of a new set of community practices to guide how staff engage one another with clarity, accountability, and shared responsibility at Silkroad and Boston Center for the Arts.
- Our Dialogues and Action Planning process with Literations increased inclusion and engagement through the relaunch of their Racial Justice and Equity Committee and the creation of a comprehensive internal communication and decision-making guide.
- We guided New England Biolabs, MetroWest Legal Services, and The Price Center through the creation of new committee structures and charters to advance their DEI efforts.
- We piloted coaching engagements to support the transition of organizational leaders into their new roles.

CONSULTING AND TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS



42

CLIENT
ORGANIZATIONS



8

CLIENT ORGANIZATIONS
PARTICIPATED IN OUR
ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT
AND IMPLEMENTATION
PROCESS



72

PARTICIPANTS IN
OUR DIALOGUES SESSIONS



41

ACTION PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION COACHING
SESSIONS

OUR WORK

WORKSHOPS AND EQUITY LABS

YW Boston's Workshops and Equity Labs offer a range of opportunities for learning and dialogue to increase an organization's capacity for addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion challenges.

YW BOSTON OFFERED THE FOLLOWING WORKSHOPS AND EQUITY LABS IN 2025:

- Addressing Implicit Bias
- At the Intersection of Identities
- Creating a DEI Committee Charter
- Creating Community Practices
- Facilitating Dialogue Across Differences
- Giving and Receiving Feedback
- Inclusive Communication Throughout Change
- Leading for Equity
- Organizational Change for Equity
- Power Mapping for Inclusive Change
- The Role of Governing Boards in Achieving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Responding to Microaggressions
- Understanding Racial Equity
- Understanding Social Identity

PARTICIPANT QUOTE:

“

“This training helped to polish the lens through which I see myself, my roles, and how my identity influences how I carry myself and how I interact with others. It also served as a good reminder that I cannot know exactly how others experience their identities, and what part of themselves they may be covering. I can strive to be open-minded and accepting of all people so that they feel comfortable being their true and authentic selves in my presence.”

- PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FOLLOWING *UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL IDENTITY*



2025 WORKSHOP AND EQUITY LABS HIGHLIGHTS

- After attending the Understanding Social Identity workshop, 98% of participants agreed that they could examine the ways social identities impact workplace experiences.
- After attending the Responding to Microaggressions workshop, 99% of participants agreed that they knew how to respond to microaggressions.

PARTICIPANT QUOTE:

“

“What I liked most about the session is this sense of safety and acceptance that mistakes happen. It was disarming – in the sense that I was able to recognize my own areas for improvement without provoking defensiveness. I hope to bring some of that to dealing with issues stemming from bias.”

-PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FOLLOWING *RESPONDING
TO MICROAGGRESSIONS*

WORKSHOP AND EQUITY LABS BY THE NUMBERS



39

CLIENT
ORGANIZATIONS



94

WORKSHOPS,
EQUITY LABS,
AND SPEAKING
ENGAGEMENTS



2491

PARTICIPANTS

ADVOCACY

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

YW Boston's Advocacy Committee was created in 2017 to identify public policy issues, raise public awareness, and facilitate action. The committee fosters discussions about systemic issues while working to impact women, people of color, and in particular, women of color in Massachusetts through advocacy and community engagement.

2025 ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2025 Advocacy Committee had 16 members from the Greater Boston area including three full-time YW Boston staff. The committee members' expertise ranged from marketing, public relations, healthcare, counseling, veteran support, workplace coaching, art, financial management, and antiracism work. Member ages and work experience also varied from college, post-grad, entry-level, and seasoned professionals with race, ethnicity, and other identities just as varied.
- YW Boston worked to build relationships with fellow advocacy organizations throughout the city by serving on multiple committees and coalitions, attending events, and engaging in speaking opportunities when available. This included our partnerships with Mass NOW's International Women's Day Breakfast held every March, Feminist Affair in the fall, and Menstrual Equity Summit in the winter. Additionally, we helped sponsor and were on the host committee of events such as the MAWOCC's 10th Anniversary Gala and attended the National Conference for Women at the Seaport Convention Center this past fall.





- Advocacy members participated in events such as reading testimony at the State House, joining coalition meetings and rallies, and committee meetings. They also engaged in advocacy work by direct and in-direct lobbying with local elected officials. Advocacy Committee members split into three working groups to focus their efforts and expertise on the following topics:

- Civil Rights and Racial Justice: Supporting legislation that promotes peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all, especially those with marginalized identities. Examples of our supported legislation under this policy priority are: An Act Addressing the Racial Wealth Gap, An Act Relative to Livable Wage for Human Service Workers, and the Location Shield Act which would prohibit the sale of privacy and location data in order to protect those seeking gender affirming care, religious freedom, reproductive justice, children, and others.

- Childcare and Education: Ensuring that young people in Massachusetts have access to the materials they need to thrive, and that childcare providers and parents are providing equitable opportunities to contribute to our economy and society. In this area of focus, we support bills such as The Healthy Youth Act that would require inclusive curriculum for sex and health education in all public schools in Massachusetts as well as the Language Access Bill. This bill is especially crucial as we see the continued attacks on people who speak different languages and realize the safety and access of inclusive public documents.

- Gender Equity: Empowering those with marginalized gender identities in Greater Boston through pieces of legislation focused on equity and inclusion. The bills in this category included the I AM Bill and An Act to Increase Access to Menstrual Products in Public Buildings among others highlighted with the Menstrual Equity Coalition. We still support gender and racial parity on public boards and commissions working closely with the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women and the Massachusetts Women of Color Coalition to advance education representation.

- As part of our advocacy efforts to meet the moment, YW Boston cofounded the Massachusetts Alliance for Equity. This cross-sector partnership is intended to foster collaboration, spearhead allyship, and streamline resources for all those who want to protect, preserve, and celebrate diversity and equity practices in the Massachusetts workforce. This alliance proudly hosts around 50 members and is growing. The alliance plans to sponsor a research project to measure the current state of DEI in Massachusetts in 2026.

OUR EVENTS

OUR TRANSFORMATIVE POWER

YW Boston hosted the inaugural *Our Transformative Power* workshop in November, a half-day convening focused on advocacy for women of color. Featuring then Boston City Council President, Ruthzee Louijeune, City Councilor Julia Mejia, Senator Liz Miranda, Shaquera Robinson, and Celia Johnston-Blue, the event included a presentation on demystifying advocacy and interactive breakout sessions. The 50 participants who attended gained practical tools, insights, and connections to strengthen their advocacy efforts.

KUUMBA CONVERSATIONS

YW Boston launched *Kuumba Conversations* in November 2025 with a roundtable at Kuumba Library with Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley on the Black women's unemployment crisis. This series convenes community members, leaders, and elected officials to address key challenges facing women of color in Boston. Through facilitated discussions, it elevates lived experience alongside policy and advocacy expertise, aiming to generate actionable insights and solutions across multiple issue areas.

LEADING WITH INCLUSION

YW Boston launched *Leading With Inclusion* in 2025 as an ongoing webinar series designed to equip diversity, equity, and inclusion professionals with the insights, inspiration, and practical strategies needed to navigate today's rapidly shifting social and political landscape. Across four conversations, the series brought together leaders and experts to explore how organizations can sustain meaningful DEI commitments while fostering workplaces where all employees can thrive.

INTERGENERATIONAL WOMEN LEADERS SUMMIT

We hosted our first *Intergenerational Women Leaders Summit, The Future We Inherit*, in September 2025. This sold-out gathering of 50+ women across generations and sectors consisted of panel discussions, myth-busting "hot takes," and tools like generational mapping. Participants also explored leadership, power, and intersectionality. The event concluded with two-way mentorship conversations, fostering shared learning and meaningful cross-generational connection.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NIGHT

In the summer of 2025, YW Boston launched its first *Young Professionals Networking Night, Quiz and Connect*, at the Samuel Adams Downtown Boston Taproom to engage early- and mid-career professionals. The event welcomed 19 attendees for informal networking and trivia, creating a fun, collaborative space to build connections and learn about YW Boston's mission. It introduced new audiences, strengthened relationships with emerging leaders, and established a foundation for future young professional engagement.

ACADEMY OF WOMEN ACHIEVERS

Since 1995, YW Boston has brought together hundreds of business and community leaders every year to celebrate the city's boldest, bravest, and most influential women during our annual *Academy of Women Achievers* (AWA) celebration. This treasured community event highlights the achievements of five women inducted into the Academy and raises critical funds for YW Boston's programs. On June 17, 2025, YW Boston hosted the 30th Academy of Women Achievers Celebration at The Westin Copley Place. NBC10 Boston Morning Anchor, Bianca Beltrán, emceed the event.

30TH ACADEMY OF WOMEN ACHIEVERS AWARDEES:

- Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell
- Petrina Martin Cherry (Boston Medical Center)
- Lisa Hayles (Trillium Asset Management)
- Allison Picott (The Lenny Zakim Fund)
- Melissa Hector (Boston Public Health Commission)

AWA BY THE NUMBERS



380

ATTENDEES



45

SPONSORS



\$322,365

RAISED

2025 ACADEMY OF WOMEN ACHIEVERS SPONSORS

EQUITY (\$25,000+)

Fidelity Investments
TJX Companies, Inc.

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F.Y.R.E. SEAT ADD-ON

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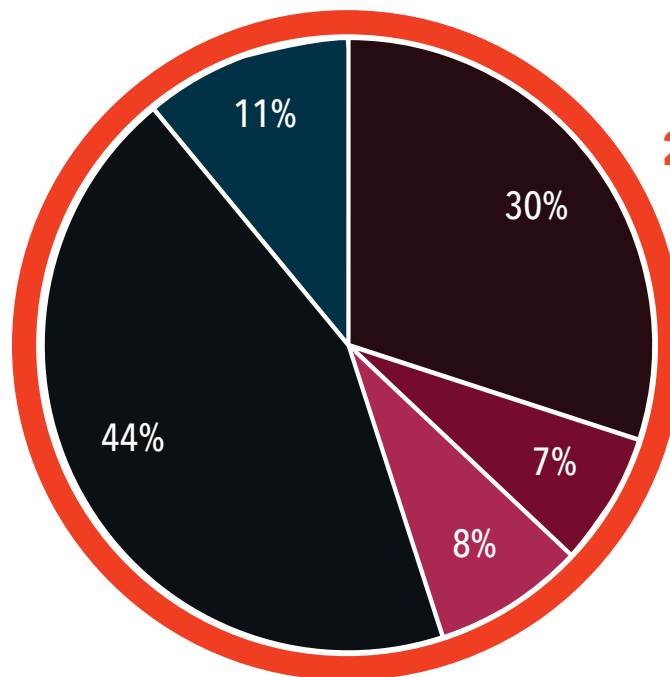
2025 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

YW Boston continues to rely on a mix of contributed and earned revenue to advance our mission. In 2025, total operating revenue reached \$4.56 million, exceeding expectations and reflecting the strength of our diversified funding model.

Support from individuals, corporations, and foundations remained essential to our work, even as giving trends across the sector continue to shift. At the same time, our program revenue reflects the ongoing evolution of demand for equity-centered services in a changing landscape.

Strong investment performance helped offset these challenges and positioned us to close the year with a \$283,000 operating surplus, allowing us to reinvest in our programs and strengthen our long-term sustainability.

We are deeply grateful to our community of supporters whose continued commitment makes this work possible. Together, we are advancing our mission to eliminate racism and empower women.

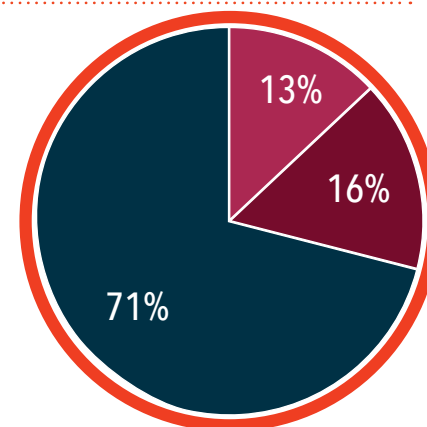


2025 OPERATING REVENUE

- FOUNDATION AND CORPORATE
- GOVERNMENT FUNDING
- INDIVIDUALS
- PROGRAM REVENUE
- SPECIAL EVENTS NET OF EXPENSES

2025 OPERATING EXPENSES

- FUNDRAISING
- MANAGEMENT, GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE
- PROGRAM





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BOARD MEMBERS

YW Boston is proud to report that our 2025 board was 76% women, 82% people of color, and 70% women of color.

Alona Abalos
Associate General Counsel and Vice President
for Governance, Blue Cross Blue Shield of
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2025 DONOR LIST

A Note on Donor Recognition

YW Boston applies an equity lens in recognizing donor giving to avoid perpetuating a system that reinforces the idea that people who give more are better than those who give less. Individual donors are listed alphabetically. Persimmon (\$1,000+/year) and multi-year supporters are highlighted given the importance of their gifts to sustaining our operations. Thank you to all of the donors and organizations featured in this list. Your steadfast support allows us to deliver meaningful programming all year long and makes Boston a better place for us all.

PERSIMMON SOCIETY MEMBERS

Omari Aarons LB'20	Ellen LaPointe ^ *
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2025 DONOR LIST

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Kevin Cherry LB'16 AWA'25
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