

PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: VANCOUVER HOUSING AUTHORITY

In partnership with the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) and Access Architecture, the SafeChoice Domestic Violence emergency shelter is looking forward to upcoming building renovations estimated to begin in August 2019. The improvements will increase accessibility, safety, and comfort for survivors and their children escaping unsafe situations.



VANCOUVER
HOUSING AUTHORITY

The kitchen and dining spaces will be relocated to a different area of the building to allow for an accessible entry way and exit from the building, as well as increased line of sight for parents supervising children who are playing outdoors. The kitchen upgrade will include durable cabinetry, locking food storage cabinets, accessible kitchen appliances, and increased natural lighting. The backyard

renovation will include new fencing expanded to property lines to increase safe and secure recreational space for residents, as well upgraded commercial playground equipment for children. The indoor playroom will serve as a safe place for parents to play with their children and for facilitation of our Children's Advocacy Program (CAP).

For more information regarding our partners and shelter improvement projects:

Affordable Housing Fund – <https://www.cityofvancouver.us/ced/page/affordable-housing-fund>

Access Architecture – <https://www.access-arch.com/about> <https://www.access-arch.com/ywca-shelter-renovation>

VHA and the City of Vancouver have proven to be strong supporters of SafeChoice shelter programming by dedicating VHA funding, City Community Development Block Grant and City Affordable Housing Funds to the shelter improvement projects to address health, safety, and livability challenges. In collaboration with VHA and Access Architecture, SafeChoice leadership has had the opportunity to reimagine the shelter's community living and outdoor recreational spaces, keeping in mind trauma-informed design practices, accessibility, recreation, and security measures.

The project will include renovation of the community kitchen and dining room, an accessible restroom, indoor children's playroom, backyard expansion, and playground.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to the following recent grantors, whose generosity is helping thousands overcome violence and oppression in Clark County. To see an extended list of charitable partners please visit our website at ywcaclarkcounty.org.

- Wells Fargo Foundation
- Vancouver Metro Sunset Rotary
- Wheeler Foundation
- Bank of America
- Autzen Foundation
- Banner Bank

VOLUNTEER

Join us in our mission! Apply to volunteer at ywcaclarkcounty.org or call 360-906-9112.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS SUMMER?

Upcoming YWCA of Clark County events:

Saturday, June 15 at 9:00am Youth of Color Summit

Saturday, June 15 at 11:30am Tenant's Rights workshop at the Bridgeview Resource Center

Saturday, June 22 at 1:00pm Val Joshua Racial Justice and Youth Social Justice Awards

Saturday, June 29 at 10:00am Queer 'Couve Youth Summit

Monday, July 8 at 6:00pm CASA Information Night

Wednesday, July 17 at 12:00pm CASA Information Night

Tuesday, August 13 at 6:00pm CASA Information Night

Wednesday, August 14 at 4:00pm Tenant's Rights workshop at YWCA Clark County

Wednesday, August 21 at 12:00pm CASA Information Night

Thursday, September 12 at 11:00am Empower Luncheon

Follow us on Instagram @ywacc and @ywcaccprevention for ways to participate in our programs.

ywcaclarkcounty.org

ON A MISSION: KEEPING YOU INFORMED

SUMMER 2019

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
Clark County

VAL JOSHUA AWARDEES INSPIRE US ALL

Each year, we recognize two people in our community who are working toward ending oppression. We are proud to announce: Abbie Bambilla will receive the **2019 Val Joshua Racial Justice Award** and Asante Jackson will receive the **2019 Youth Social Justice Award**.

Abbie Bambilla

Abbie Bamilla's work with diversity and political advocacy is being recognized. As a leader in the community, Abbie has worked on making spaces and organizations more inclusive and welcoming people of color.

Abbie's efforts have been directed at eliminating racism — as an intern in the Sexual Assault Program at YWCA Clark County, a volunteer in the SafeChoice Domestic Violence Program at YWCA Clark County, and as a student leader at WSU Vancouver.

Abbie continuously acts in ways that ensure the voices of marginalized communities will be the loudest and most represented. Abbie regularly analyzes and engages in discussion around how to advocate for, support, and prioritize marginalized communities with intention and mindfulness.

Abbie will also be facilitating a workshop at our **Youth of Color Summit**.

Asante Jackson

Asante Jackson will be recognized for his determined actions and leadership in bringing awareness to diversity, especially through a high school project that promoted peace and highlighted racial injustice.

Asante, a senior at Henrietta Lack High School, received approval to complete a project for Black History Month to be presented at an assembly. The school administration said the project was too political. Asante removed what he thought was political and re-submitted it, but the administration said it focused too much on Black culture to the exclusion of others.

So Asante made a video of students at his high school sharing their personal heritages. Despite the administration again dismissing his work, Asante continues to produce media that promotes peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all people.

You can help support our work by visiting ywcaclarkcounty.org and clicking "DONATE" today!



Abbie Bambilla



Asante Jackson

Eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

SUCCESS STORY: CASA JIM HELPS MICHAEL NAVIGATE CHANGE

Michael was a typical 10-year-old. He loved being active and participating in many sports—from hockey, to wrestling, to skateboarding—he loved it all. He also enjoyed art and music and loved being creative.

What most people didn't know is that Michael's mom suffered from mental health issues. After she attempted suicide, Michael was removed from their home due to neglect. Jim entered Michael's life as his CASA. It was Jim's responsibility to be Michael's voice and advocate for him in an overburdened foster care system.



Michael moved in with his sister and her fiancée. Things started fairly well, as he now had a positive male role model and was no longer dealing with his mother's mental health instability. But the change was difficult. The longer Michael was away from his mom, his behavior became more difficult. After 15 months, Michael was moved to a different placement.

Sometimes the only constant in a foster child's life is their CASA. Their CASA stays with them the entire case. Jim was there

for Michael as he transitioned into his second placement.

Michael moved in with a family friend who became his foster parent. Initially, things went very well, but after a few months Michael began exhibiting increased behavior -- first at school, and then at his foster home. His foster family struggled to deal with the difficult behaviors. The social worker connected them with Family Preservation Services to help them learn strategies to manage difficult behaviors. The situation

did not improve and after almost 16 months, Michael was removed from his second placement.

Now, more than three years in the system, Michael was entering his third placement. Due to his behaviors and the ongoing lack of foster homes in the area, the social worker was not able to find a new placement locally, so Michael was moved to an Aberdeen foster home for three months. He was moved to his fourth placement after he got intoxicated with some friends and

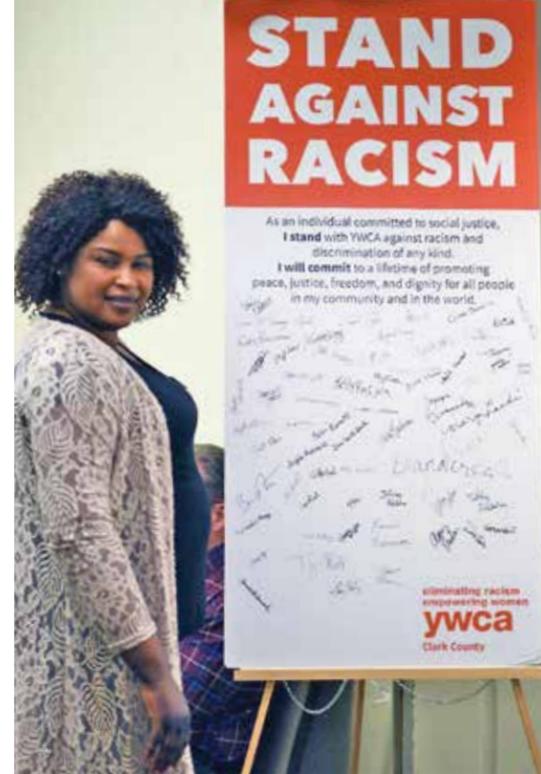
did not return to the foster home. Law enforcement was called and he was located, but the foster home did not want to keep his placement.

CASA Jim continued to be the constant in Michael's life. Regularly making the road trips up north to see Michael, Jim was the voice of reason and ensured that the court didn't see Michael as a teenager with an attitude problem, but as a child growing into a young man who felt he had no control.

Around this time, Michael's mother came back into the picture. She was engaged in mental health services and motivated to have Michael returned to her care. The barrier she was facing was finding affordable housing.

Michael's fifth placement, a group home in Tacoma, offered 24-hour supervision. Michael's escalated behaviors continued, but he soon identified the motivation he needed to correct them: sports. Michael was not in general education due to his behaviors, making him ineligible to participate in sports. He made a plan with his CASA Jim and his teacher so he could be in mainstream classes to join sports. Things were turning around for Michael.

A year later, Michael's mother obtained housing, and they were reunited. Through Michael's four years and five placements, his constant was his CASA Jim. Michael is attending middle school and works hard to keep good grades that allow him to participate in sports. This year, he participated in club wrestling and basketball. Michael is happy to have a permanent home with his mom and a new group of friends.



STAND AGAINST RACISM

On April 25, 2019, YWCA Clark County held its annual Stand Against Racism event. Community partners, panelists, and 130+ attendees from a variety of different backgrounds, races, and religions, came together to speak on a common goal: Working together to support justice, safety, and opportunity for all communities throughout Clark County. Panelists provided intimate stories and experiences, along with powerful and valuable suggestions of the steps we can all take to change and demand immigrant and racial justice.

Haddy Jobe, Director of Volunteers, gathers signatures on the 2019 pledge board.

THANK YOU CLASSIC WINES

We're so grateful for 10 years of support, totaling more than \$4 million from the Classic Wines Auction! Their generosity ensures we can do so much for the #ClarkCounty community.



Board President, Sherri Falkner (l), swears in newest board member, Alex Pierce.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER

We welcome our newest board member, Alex Pierce! Alex was inspired to join YWCA after seeing the impact our programs have in the community. She says she was fortunate to be a 4-H member for 9 years, which allowed her first hand experiences in serving the local community. Alex takes great pride in knowing that she was able to help others through difficult situations and impact their lives in positive ways.

Two fun facts about Alex:

1. She enjoys life on her mini farm with seven animals.
2. She enjoys anything that gets her outside in the great Pacific Northwest.