

# YWCA IS ON A MISSION

WINTER 2024



eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

Charleston, WV

## Turning Pain Into Purpose

**Women of Achievement honoree Tiffany Crum shares her story of empowerment in her own words.**

We all know something about pain, loss, abandonment, fear, and powerlessness over something. In my life I have experienced all of the above. However, they gave me a beautiful, chaotic story that will hopefully encourage the next person going through a similar situation.

My name is Tiffany, and I am 33 years old. I was born in Cleveland, OH and lived there until my family moved to Morgantown when I was in middle school, then to Weston during my high school years. I now live in Charleston and work as a Supportive Counselor for people who are trying to overcome substance use disorder.

I think it's pretty amazing how the one thing that almost took my entire life away from me is the one thing that allows me to actually succeed in my position. I like to use the phrase, "*Pain to Purpose.*" That statement describes my entire life in a nutshell.

I am a recovering addict and have been sober for the last two years. I am working diligently on myself and my recovery daily. I attend church regularly, as well as a 12-step Life Group called "Stepping into Freedom." I also sometimes get to help Spirit Life fellowship do Street Ministry with another wonderful mentor.

I am a mother to three amazing, handsome, sweet boys. I love being a mom. My children have been my strength in more ways than one. I know that may sound cliché to say, but considering where I used to be in life compared to now, I can honestly say that my children impacted my growth the most. In order to love them the way they deserved to be loved, I had to take care of myself.

I was released from jail in 2019 and entered into a recovery program for substance use disorder, which is what brought me to Charleston. Unfortunately, I didn't get to graduate because I was kicked out of the program. I didn't have anywhere to go, so I started living under the bridge at Magic Island. Thankfully, I found YWCA Sojourner's Shelter in October of 2019 and stayed there off and on until April of 2021.

I love Sojourner's. I never knew a place like that existed. It was structured, safe, and warm, and I was so thankful to just to be able to shower. The staff there gave me a list of things I needed to do to become self-sufficient, and at first, I must admit I didn't think I would ever reach where that list was supposed to take me.

I worked on things very slowly. I was able to get my ID, birth certificate, and social security card, and I remember beginning to feel like a person again. I was able to get clothes, and most importantly, I had a bed. Those were huge to me during those times. I kept listening to what was suggested to me by staff, and I was finally able to get my own place and have a stable living situation. I now have my family, my car, my job and so much more!

I am honored to be the recipient of the 2024 Women of Achievement Encova Empowerment Award, and I am thankful for the YWCA programs available to women in Charleston and surrounding areas. I am one of many women who have faced difficult life situations and risen from them. Life can get tough, but so are you!

*The Encova Empowerment Award is given to a former YWCA Charleston client who was empowered to overcome poverty, addiction, abuse, and/or homelessness. Proceeds from the Women of Achievement event benefit all YWCA programs, including Sojourner's Shelter for Homeless Women and Families.*

**Check inside to read about all 2024 Women of Achievement honorees!**

## Woman to Watch



**Olubunmi "Bunmi" Kusimo-Frazier, Esq.** is an experienced trial lawyer, leader, and public speaker with a proven track record of developing winning strategies in fast-paced, multi-faceted environments. Her practice focuses on product liability defense. Prior to joining Thomas Combs & Spann, Bunmi was employed with the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals, where she served as a Deputy Counsel. At the Supreme Court of Appeals, Bunmi ultimately served as the Director of Magistrate Court Services, supervising the largest court system in the State of West Virginia, and leading the operations of more than 450 employees in 55 county magistrate courts. Bunmi previously served on the Criminal Justice Act Panel for the Southern District of West Virginia, representing indigent defendants, and represented individuals as retained counsel in criminal matters in federal, state, and municipal courts, and in administrative hearings. She started her career as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Kanawha and Jackson counties. She has served as a Commissioner for the West Virginia Juvenile Justice Commission since 2019. Bunmi is married to Stuart Frazier, and they have one daughter, Naomi.

## Woman of Achievement

**Jamie Tridico, PT/DPT** is the owner of Advanced Physical Therapy in Charleston, voted Best Physical Therapy in the Valley for the last eight years. She has worked in various clinical settings throughout her career including, St. Francis, CAMC General, and Teays Physical Therapy with per-diem work in nursing homes, home health and hospice care. Jamie finds the physical therapy profession rewarding and is continually looking for ways to grow professionally and give back to the community. Jamie is the vice president elect of the American Physical Therapy Association West Virginia and has served on several boards for various organizations in the Charleston area. She brought the *Delay the Disease* exercise program to Charleston in 2013 and the *Rock Steady* boxing program in 2016, which have made significant improvements in the lives of those with Parkinson's disease. She is adjunct faculty at Marshall University and has also assisted Child Law Services with developing the *Girls on the Run* program for girls in grades 3-8 to inspire confidence, learn important life skills, and understand the importance of physical and emotional health.



## Lifetime Achievement



**Virginia Slack, CPA** has been a Charleston resident for 45 years. She earned her CPA license at 25 and began working for Arnett and Foster. In 1984, after the birth of her first daughter, she formed her own sole-practitioner accounting practice and worked from her home – a move that was almost unheard of at the time. She had two more daughters and gracefully balanced motherhood with her thriving accounting practice of over 100 clients. She has maintained her practice for over 40 years. Virginia is part of the West Virginia Society of CPAs and was named the chairperson of the Small Practitioner Committee in 2010. She initiated regional meetings being held annually in Wheeling, Parkersburg, Lewisburg, and Charleston to benefit small practitioners statewide. In 2011, she joined the WV Society of CPAs Board of Directors, where she progressed through until she was named the 98th President of the Society (the 5th woman to hold that position) in 2016. In 2022, Virginia was appointed by Governor Jim Justice to serve on the West Virginia Board of Accountancy, which oversees the licensing of CPAs in the state. In June 2023, she received a Life Membership award for her dedication to the Society and the accounting profession.

Join us in celebrating these inspiring women on Friday, March 8 at 12pm-1:30pm at Embassy Suites!  
Visit [ywcacharleston.org/woa](http://ywcacharleston.org/woa) to purchase tickets.

# YWCA RACIAL EQUITY & INCLUSION PROGRAM

upcoming events:

eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

Charleston, WV

## CONSIGN ON A DIME FASHION SHOW

Scan the QR Code  
to buy your ticket!

January 27 | 4-6 p.m.

The Xinos & Kudos Epsilon Chapter are hosting a benefit fashion show with runway looks purchased from YWCA's Past & Present Gently Used Clothing Store! YWCA Racial Equity & Inclusion Director, Shante Ellis, is the emcee for the event. The show will be at West Virginia State University's Davis Fine Arts Building. Tickets are \$10 for students and \$20 for general admission.



## TOGETHER WE RHYME (POETRY FOR THE

February 9 | 6-8 p.m.

In honor of Black History Month, join us for an evening of poetry and reflection at the YWCA Center for Racial Equity & Inclusion, featuring the works of Pam Valentine, Jamela Brown and Theresa Galloway. Our emcee for the evening is YWCA Racial Equity & Inclusion Director, Shante Ellis. Admission is free, and refreshments will be provided.



## VOLUNTEER *spotlight*

### KIRSTEN MORK

Kirsten Mork is known for her volunteerism and service in the community. She and her husband, Kyle, began volunteering at Sojourner's before they were married. The two found so much joy in giving back to the program that in lieu of gifts at their wedding, they asked for their guests to make contributions to Sojourner's instead.

Kirsten reinvigorated YWCA's traditional Thanksgiving dinner fundraiser by turning it into what is now known as "Foodie Feast." She previously served as the chairperson for Foodie Feast and is a former member of the YWCA Board of Directors.

She is very passionate about YWCA Charleston's mission and programs and has proven her dedication through her continued service and commitment to the organization.

*Kirsten, thank you for the difference you make to YWCA Charleston and our community!*



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## SAVE THE DATE

**THURSDAY, APRIL 25 | 4 PM**

CULTURAL CELEBRATION  
& PACKET PICK-UP

YWCA Center for Racial Equity & Inclusion

**SATURDAY, APRIL 27 | 9 AM**

5K RUN/1 MILE WALK

Kanawha Boulevard West

<https://ywca.org/race>

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2024 *Leaders*  
**FOR CHANGE**  
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*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.*

**peace**

TRUIST

**encova**  
INSURANCE

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**TC Energy**

**freedom**

**Charleston Area Medical Center**  
Vandalia Health

**Bailey & Slotnick**  
PLLC  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

**KOMAX**  
Business Systems

**dignity**

City National Bank  
Greylock Energy  
United Bank

**2024 YWCA DATES TO SAVE**

**WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT**  
03.08.24 | Embassy Suites Hotel

**RACE TO END RACISM**  
04.27.24 | Kanawha Blvd. West

**GIRLS NIGHT OUT**  
08.10.24 | TBD

**GUYS NIGHT OUT**  
TBD | Oakes Field

**FOODIE FEAST**  
11.03.24 | TBD