



WEEK WITHOUT VIOLENCE

OCTOBER 16, 2019

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Capitol Visitor Center, Room SVC 212-10
US Capitol Building, 1st Street, NE

“Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Domestic Violence and Trauma”

Agenda

Opening Remarks

Alejandra Y. Castillo, Esq., CEO, YWCA USA

Featured Speakers

Arelis Gandarilla, Director of Community Based Domestic and Sexual Violence Program Operator, YWCA of Northeastern Massachusetts

Dr. LaRhonda Magras, CEO, YWCA Central Alabama (Moderator)

Katie Parent, Crisis Services Program Manager, YWCA New Hampshire

Linh Tran-Phuong, Crisis Intervention Manager, YWCA Silicon Valley (California)

Melissa White, Staff Attorney, YWCA Annapolis and Anne Arundel County (Maryland)

Policy Recommendations

Catherine Beane, Vice President of Public Policy and Advocacy, YWCA USA

Audience Questions

Honorary Congressional Host Committee:

U.S. Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. (D-PA), U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD), Rep. Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI), Rep. Katie Porter (D-CA), **Co-Chairs, Bipartisan Task Force to End Sexual Violence:** Rep. Ann McLane Kuster (D-NH), Rep. David Joyce (R-OH), Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), Rep. John Katko (R-NY), **Co-Chairs, Bipartisan Working Group to End Domestic Violence:** Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI), Rep. Debbie Lesko (R-AZ)

Featured Speakers

Alejandra Y. Castillo, CEO of YWCA USA, has over two decades of professional experience in Washington, D.C., having served in senior leadership in two presidential administrations. In 2014, Alejandra was appointed by the Obama Administration to serve as the national director of the Minority Business Development Agency, becoming the first Hispanic American woman to lead the agency. Alejandra holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook in economics and political science; a Master of Arts degree in public policy from the Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin; and a Juris Doctorate from American University, Washington College of Law. Alejandra is an active member in various civic and professional organizations, and currently serves on several boards.

Areliis Gandarilla serves as the Director of Community Based Domestic and Sexual Violence Program Operator at YWCA Northeastern Massachusetts. In addition to overseeing the domestic and sexual assault programs, Mrs. Gandarilla also oversees the Teen Parenting Program. Mrs. Gandarilla began her career with the YWCA as an intern in 2006 as a Teen Educator Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Counselor in which she provided invaluable services to hundreds of clients for 7 years. After obtaining her Masters in Social Work in 2015 Mrs. Gandarilla was promoted as Co-Director of Domestic Violence Programs, then as Director of Community and Residential Programs prior to obtaining her current position.

Dr. LaRhonda Magras brings over 20 years of leadership to the YWCA Central Alabama as Chief Executive Officer, where she continues her work on behalf of marginalized populations. Dr. Magras, a native of Chicago, has extensive experience in several mission environments, including affordable housing, domestic violence, social justice environments, and the empowerment of women. She received her BA from Chicago State University and earned an MS from Spertus College. She received her doctoral degree in Education from Trevecca Nazarene University in 2018. Magras' passion for working on behalf of marginalized populations began in Chicago as a case manager with the Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights. It took her to Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona, the Women's Coalition of St. Croix, and Martha O'Bryan Center in Nashville, Mayors' Office of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County. She joined the YWCA Family at the Nashville and Middle Tennessee affiliate as the Senior Vice President of Program Operations before coming to Central Alabama.

Katie Parent is the Crisis Services Program Manager at YWCA New Hampshire. She received her Bachelors of Science in Social Work at the University of New Hampshire. Katie began working at YWCA NH as an intern and then served for a year as an AmeriCorps member through the AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program (AVAP) before being hired to stay on as staff. She started as the Community Education Coordinator, and in 2019 became the Program Manager.

Linh Tran-Phuong, Crisis Intervention Manager at YWCA Silicon Valley, is a passionate anti-violence advocate. She entered the field by volunteering as a hotline counselor before transitioning to in-depth case management with YWCA Silicon Valley. She currently oversees YWCA's in-person crisis response services to sexual and domestic violence. Throughout her career, Linh has supported over 200 survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking in their journey of healing and their search for community. In 2017, Linh was chosen as a fellow for the California Women's Policy Institute, where she wrote and lobbied for Assembly Bill 2413, The Right to a Safe Home Act. The bill was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown in 2018 and it ensures that victims of crime cannot be evicted or penalized for calling emergency services. Linh also chairs Santa Clara County's Sexual Assault Response Team committee, where she facilitates conversations among partner agencies on how to better respond to instances of harm. The SART committee recently finalized the county's first ever Sexual Assault Response Protocol.

Melissa White serves as Staff Attorney with the Domestic Violence Legal Services at the YWCA of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County, Maryland. She currently represents victims of domestic violence in civil peace and protective order hearings. Over the past five years, she has represented hundreds of victims of domestic violence in obtaining orders to assist them in escaping their abusers. Ms. White began her career with the YWCA during her last year of law school in 2013, first as a legal intern, then a part-time legal advocate, before her current role as Staff Attorney. Ms. White graduated with a B.A. in Conflict Analysis and Dispute Resolution at

Salisbury University before completing a dual degree program, earning her Masters of Science in Negotiations and Conflict Management and Juris Doctorate at the University of Baltimore, School of Law.

Policy Recommendations

YWCA recommends the following policy solutions to ensure that women, children, and families seeking safety and opportunity in the U.S. can arrive and live without fear, harm, or discrimination:

Reauthorize and fully fund the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

On April 4, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1585, a reauthorization of VAWA. VAWA authorizes prevention programs and protections for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. Full funding and a robust reauthorization that improves and protects vulnerable populations is crucial to supporting survivors and preventing gender-based violence. YWCA urges the Senate to pass a reauthorization bill similar to H.R. 1585 and invest in these critical programs.

Reauthorize and fully fund the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)

Bipartisan legislation has been introduced in the Senate as S. 2259 to reauthorize and improve FVPSA. Congress should take action to reauthorize FVPSA, which provides vital emergency shelter and assistance to children and families affected by domestic violence. In addition, Congress must fully fund this program at \$175 million, as was included in the House passed FY20 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill.

Cosponsor and pass the Resilience Investment, Support, and Expansion (RISE) from Trauma Act

Survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) more often experience negative long-term physical and emotional health outcomes. YWCA urges Congress to fund the trauma provisions to help child survivors included in last year's opioid bill and pass the bipartisan RISE from Trauma Act (S. 1770/H.R. 3180) that addresses the intergenerational cycle of violence and addiction.

Week Without Violence is part of a global movement with YWCAs across the country and around the world to end violence against women and girls. YWCA is on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women, stand up for social justice, help families, and strengthen communities. For more than 20 years, we have set aside one week in October as a Week Without Violence – a week to raise awareness and engage action to end the broad spectrum of violence – as part of a global movement with World YWCA to end violence against women and girls.

At YWCA, we know that not all violence is acknowledged or responded to equally and that some victims go unrecognized altogether. That's why, for the last five years, we have focused on ending gender-based violence, including domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, trafficking, and harassment.

We invite you to join us from October 14 – 18 as we share information, elevate stories, talk with policymakers, and raise awareness with a common goal in mind: together, we can end gender-based violence.

For more background resources and local impact stories, visit ywcaweekwithoutviolence.org/policyresources

