

Mission

To make Chautauqua County a place where everyone belongs and has opportunities to thrive, especially those who have been historically marginalized.

Coalition Description

The CHQ County IDEA Coalition is designed to address, prioritize, and give voice to concerns of those individuals that have been historically marginalized and directly impacted by such things as racism and social injustice in our community. It serves as a bridge between impacted populations and the various organizations that provide services within the communities of the county. It is also committed to both anti-racist and broad social justice work.

IDEA COALITION BACKBONE AGENCY TRANSITION



Since 2021 United Way of Southern Chautauqua County has been the backbone agency for IDEA Coalition. In February 2024, the administrative oversight will transition to the YWCA of Jamestown. Below are Talking Points for the rationale and background for this transition.

- 1. What role has the United Way played as a backbone agency for the IDEA coalition? What have been the accomplishments of this coalition so far?**
 - UWSCC was the original convener of the organizations and companies that eventually formed the IDEA Coalition, using a collective impact model (a collaborative approach to addressing complex social issues). The backbone agency work includes administration of the coalition (hiring and paying project director and community engagement liaisons; documentation of all files and activities; primary communication and coordination for coalition meetings and public facing communication like website and social media; tracking metrics and data).
 - Coalition accomplishments include growing the coalition from 18 original members to its current 45; obtaining almost \$100,000 in grants to support the work; 6 townhall meetings/listening sessions county-wide; creating a structure and leadership for the Coalition's work; coordinating several DEI trainings. A full description of the Coalition's work since its inception under the leadership of UWSCC may be found by reading the following Progress Report found [HERE](#).
- 2. Why is the backbone agency switching from UWSCC to YWCA?**
 - Long-term sustainability of this needed work in our community means it should be embedded in an organization for whom anti-racism work is a critical component of their mission. Long-term sustainability also requires that we leverage financial and human resources that already exist in the community.
 - YWCA's existing social justice and racial equity program means they have staff already focused on equity work at a leadership level.
 - The mission of YWCA is eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. By virtue of its mission and programs, YWCA is more connected to directly impacted communities and those who have been historically marginalized. Our priority on centering the feedback of those communities means they are an organization better positioned to carry forward this value into the solution phase.
 - UWSCC's central role is to incubate critical community impact initiatives, including building a framework for change, providing initial resources and convening key stakeholders to the table. We will continue to provide leadership on the coordinating committee, as well as participation

and support at the highest levels. We will also continue our capacity in convening key stakeholders to this work and mobilizing funding to support it.

3. Why now? What is the timeline of this change?

- a. We are moving into the solutions phase of the IDEA Coalition's work, and it is a natural transition point from problem-focused/structure-building to solution-focused/implementation.
- b. The plan is for the transition to happen by February 15, 2024. Our goal is to spend the next 3 months connecting with community members and coalition members so we can both finalize solution teams, inform them of the change in leadership, and provide them with training that will ground solution implementation. We will also intentionally build a leadership transition with a "warm hand-off" between project directors. The new project directors are currently actively involved with major leadership decisions, co-working with Bishop Clarke.



4. Will there be a change in leadership for this project? Who are the new leaders?

- a. Project Directors will change, but their primary objective and responsibility remains the same: to continue to steward the collective work of the coalition and the feedback we heard during the townhall meetings as well as direct toward solutions.
- b. New project directors – Alize Scott-Nowell and Indo Quinones – are well equipped to do this with extensive experience and education in these areas and have been in their leadership roles at the YWCA for quite some time. See link for full bios: <https://www.ywcajamestown.com/sjstaff>
- c. Bishop Clarke's will continue to be available as needed and requested by IDEA Coalition leaders, but no longer in a director role. His service to the coalition has been tremendous and his leadership style and skillset were ideal in the first phase of the Coalition's work. The new project directors' styles and skillsets will be a strength in this solution phase of the Coalition. Bishop Clarke has been strongly committed to racial reconciliation work over his entire career and service in Jamestown and will continue to be involved as a community member and leader at his church and in the Black / African American community.

5. What is the mission of YWCA? What has the YWCA done recently in its anti-racism commitment?

- a. [YWCA Jamestown](#) is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. Recent examples
 - i. [CHQ County Book Read](#)
 - ii. [Book MARK program](#)- Reading program for youth on understanding inclusion and acceptance of others.
 - iii. Doing work within the organization to promote IDEA internally
 - iv. Creation of Social Justice and Race Equity Director (2021) and Mission and Impact Director position (2022)
 - v. YWCA Jamestown has offered training on equity and inclusion to school districts and non-profits in Chautauqua County and beyond.
 - vi. *Until Justice Just Is* Summit- Held for the first time in April of 2023. The summit included information on building a diverse workforce and the intentionality and investment needed to become an equitable and inclusive community.

6. Does YWCA have a presence in northern CHQ County? How will we ensure that north county residents will continue to have their concerns addressed?

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- a. For over 10 years, YWCA Jamestown has provided services in Northern Chautauqua County. Programs include Girls Circle in partnership with Boys and Girls Club of NCC, and Dunkirk. Additional programs are the Community Health Awareness Team ([CHAT/CAPP](#)) health education classes provided in Brocton, Westfield, Fredonia and Dunkirk. CHQ Book read has had reading options in Westfield, Chautauqua and Dunkirk.
- b. As many are already aware, YWCA does not have a physical location in Dunkirk; however, our programs do serve the entire county.
- c. The IDEA Coalition remains 100% committed to serving the entire county and is aware that solutions and activities may differ in the North County.

7. Are the YMCA and YWCA the same organization?

- a. No, they are two different organizations. Both serve important community needs.

8. Will United Way SCC continue to have a role in the coalition?

- a. Yes. United Way will continue to be a member of the coalition, with staff and leadership participation on solution teams and coordinating committee. We will continue investing in resources and collaborating with the YWCA

9. What will be the impact on community members from this administrative change?

- a. Commitment to involving community voices is going to be our highest priority, so we don't foresee many changes in that area.
- b. YWCA works more closely with directly impacted communities that are the focus of the IDEA coalition, so we see community members having additional opportunities for involvement in these efforts.

10. How will this administrative change impact the work of the coalition and its member organizations?

- a. The description of the Project Director will mostly stay the same. We don't anticipate any major changes. Any changes that happen are going to reflect the new phase of our coalition's work.
- b. Members should anticipate continuing to meet four times a year in-person.

11. How will this administrative change impact funding for this project?

- a. This change is going to increase the sustainability of the IDEA coalition because the YWCA has already created positions to do this work.
- b. This will enable both YWCA and United Way to work together to fund the coalition work, with anticipated grant support from local, regional and national foundations.