

ON A MISSION: AN UPDATE FOR YWCA SUPPORTERS



Greetings and Gratitude

Everyone deserves housing, and yet too many people are denied access to this basic necessity. While there are many factors that contribute to homelessness, our country's history of institutional racism is at the root of who ends up homeless. Because of practices and policies that exclude marginalized groups from access to housing, community support and economic opportunity, housing insecurity and homelessness disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) -- including here in Montana, a predominantly white state. In fact, BIPOC make up 33% of the homeless population and only 15% of the general population.

These disparities are even greater for homeless children in our state facing the most severe housing crises. Among the kids who are living in shelter facilities or are unsheltered, such as sleeping in a car or tent, a staggering 49% are BIPOC. In Montana, BIPOC children are five times more likely to experience homelessness than white children.

These stark disparities indicate that we have to consider racial equity and the voices of BIPOC, especially those who have experienced homelessness, in our work and in community housing policy decisions. If we are truly committed to ending homelessness, then it's how we must move forward.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Weese".

Cindy Weese
Executive Director

The Meadowlark: Look how far we've come!

Here's a quick video that shows construction progress on The Meadowlark from November 2019 to July 2020.



We're on track to complete construction in January 2021 and we're really looking forward to expanding our capacity to serve the community. The Meadowlark will provide safety, shelter, and support to all families and survivors in Missoula who need it. Learn more about the project at [SeeThemHome.org](https://www.SeeThemHome.org).

Welcome to New Staff



Sabrina Ketron is the new Emergency Housing Coordinator. She joins YWCA Missoula from 549-HOPE, where she worked closely with clients who were experiencing homelessness to connect them with community resources. Sabrina is honored to be part of the YWCA, where she found support for herself and her own children when they faced crisis and homelessness. In her free time, Sabrina tries to enjoy as much time as possible in the woods with her four amazing kids.

Lewis Black is an advocate in the Pathways domestic violence program. He has previously held many advocacy roles, from being on a homeless outreach team to working with LGBTQA youth. Lewis is currently completing his master's degree in Sociology, and is personally and professionally committed to promoting a more equitable community and country. His other interests and passions include tattoos, playing with his dog, being outside in the snow, and hanging out with his family.



Secret Seconds Wins #1 Best Thrift Store

Secret Seconds was voted #1 Best Thrift Store in the Best of Missoula awards for another year in a row! Congratulations to our dedicated store staff, and thank you to everyone for voting, shopping and donating.

Store Hours: Monday- Saturday 10AM- 6PM, Sunday 10AM- 4PM.

Find us at 920 Kensington and 1136 W. Broadway.





Volunteer with GUTS!

GUTS! will be resuming its programs this fall and we need volunteers to join us! Be a mentor to girls and gender-diverse youth, help them discover their strengths, and have a ton of FUN!

Due to the unknowns regarding schools opening, we are still working with the school districts and community partners to determine the best format for our fall groups. They may be held outside, on a virtual platform, or both.

To learn more or become a GUTS! volunteer, [email Tess](#) or call 543-6691.

Become a Crisis Line Volunteer

We're looking for volunteers to answer our crisis line and provide support to domestic violence survivors. **Volunteer training will be held September 14, 16 and 17, 5- 9 PM, on Zoom.**

To sign up for training or learn more, [email Lacy](#) or call 543-6691.

Save the Date: Women's Justice Benefit Luncheon, October 27, 2020 (Virtual)

Our annual Women's Justice Benefit Luncheon will be held on **October 27th as an online event** Due to COVID-19, we won't be gathering in person this year, but we look forward to offering a virtual event that can be attended by all. Registration info coming soon.

YWCA Missoula | (406) 543-6691 | www.ywcaofmissoula.org

Crisis line: (406) 542-1944 or (800) 483-7858

STAY CONNECTED

