

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

### **DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT**

**16 JULY 2021**

#### **GOVERNANCE**

YAWC advanced its mission this fiscal by working towards a resilient and robust community by empowering Indigenous women, gender diverse people, and their families through culturally inclusive advocacy, healing, learning, and sharing while celebrating success.

YAWC had a membership of 50 Indigenous women from across Yukon and northern BC this fiscal, including 9 board of directors who worked collaboratively and provided guidance, advocacy and leadership to the Executive Director and the organization. Board members came from Watson Lake, Ross River, Carmacks, and Whitehorse. Board members met for quarterly and other general virtual meetings and corresponded via email and phone to help advance the 2020-25 Strategic Business Plan and make informed decisions on issues affecting the direction of YAWC and the impacts on our clientele and partners.

Board terms of reference and job descriptions were completed to further support clarity around board guiding principles and roles and responsibilities. The board has two working groups that include the ISET Selection Committee and the Resiliency Centre Committee.

#### **ADMINISTRATION**

YAWC increased staff numbers to 13 this fiscal, with 10 on salary and 3 on contract (2 Elders and 1 certified counsellor). Given the nature of non-profit organization operations, positions are made a year term to the end of the fiscal funding agreement. Long-term or core funding agreements would increase job security and support employee recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction, and increase sustainable program development and service delivery.

With increased staff, the basement floor of the office building in Whitehorse was rented in addition to the main floor, providing a suitable space for meetings, drop-in, and other group gathering activities. The challenges surrounding the pandemic were addressed by creating a supportive office system that promoted the COVID-19 Safe 6+1 principles and where everyone shared the

responsibility of staying safe, working from home when needed, and keeping a respectful workplace for staff and clients.

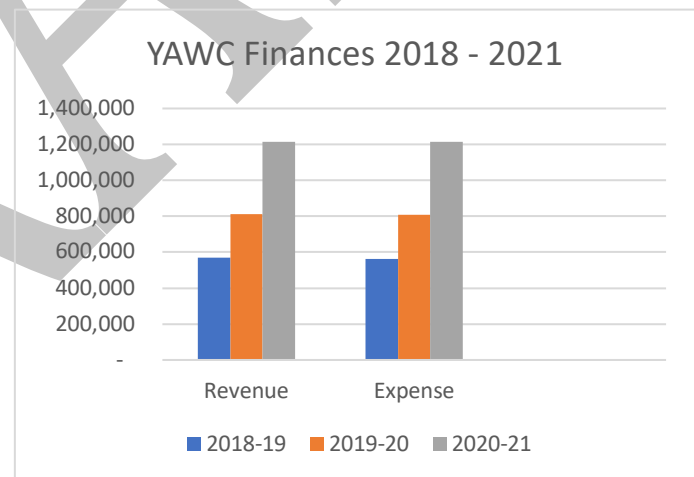
## Resiliency Centre

Work began on developing the Resiliency Centre concept to support the increasing demand for YAWC services. The Centre will consist of 3 main components:

1. A wellness and learning facility located in the rural Whitehorse area, to offer land-based prevention, healing, and training programs for YAWC clientele and their families. The facility will also offer transportation services and temporary accommodations for program participants.
2. A main office in downtown Whitehorse. This facility will provide administration oversight to all YAWC programs and services and support to staff, board of directors, walk-in clientele and inquiries, and funder and sponsors.
3. Hub offices in each of the communities in Yukon and northern BC. These hub facilities will be the centre of communication between the Whitehorse office and land-based facility, offering community clientele the support they need.

## Finances

YAWC experienced a sharp increase in financial and operational activity this fiscal compared to past years. The total revenue was \$1,212,856 and total expense was \$1,216,127, with a net loss of \$3,270. New revenue came from COVID-19 emergency recovery funding (20% of total revenue), new government program funding, and an increase to existing government program funding. Funding came primarily from government. A total of 19 contribution agreements were administered including 2 for core operations, 5 COVID-19 emergency recovery operations, 2 research, 3 strategic and investment planning, 3 long-term programming, and 4 short-term programming.

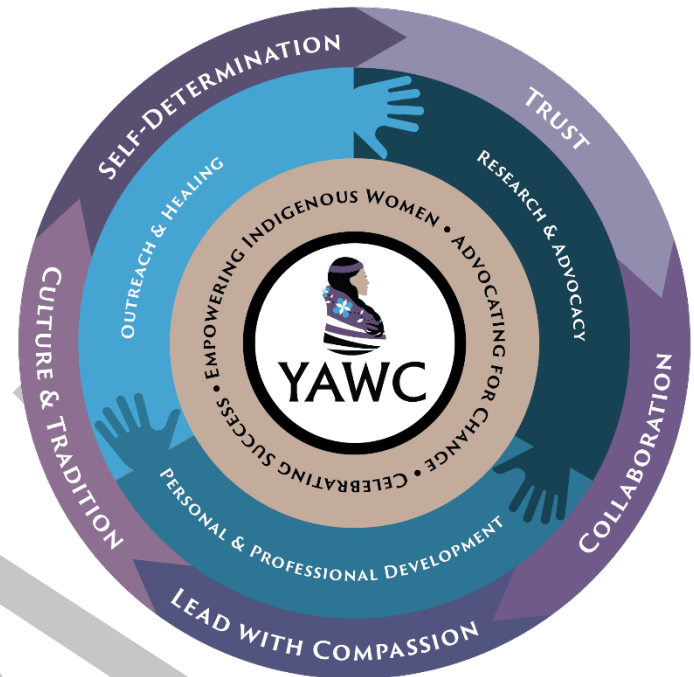


YAWC initiated the application for non-profit charity status to increase YAWC's financial accountability, diversify its revenue streams to also include NGO foundations, corporations, and private donations, and issue tax receipts.

## SERVICES

YAWC's service delivery is built on core pillars that appeal to both clientele and supporters and are used throughout operations. Pillars include Research and Advocacy, Outreach Prevention and Healing, and Personal and Professional Development.

YAWC aims to create the best possible outcomes for our clientele and supporters. By meeting each client where they are currently at, considering their life skills, healing, and crisis, focusing services on the concept of addressing problems, and understanding partner expectations, YAWC will ensure that the necessary needs are met and that the journey is set to succeed.



## Communications

The newly launched website is YAWC's biggest communications asset. It has created a space to build and share information about YAWC services, partnerships, and new ideas moving forward. The YAWC Facebook page was also very active to reach out to current and new members, clients, and general supporters of YAWC. YAWC also has 2 other Facebook pages dedicated to MMIWG families and participants of the Elders in Residence program. YAWC also went through a rebranding exercise that resulted in new colours and logo to reflect the history and future work of YAWC.

## Research and Advocacy

YAWC actively collaborated with key partners by sharing information and holding each other accountable for proposed actions that promise to effect positive change on the lives of Indigenous women and their families.

### *Committees/Working Groups*

YAWC representatives sat on 5 committees and working groups including:

- Community Advisory Board on Homelessness
- Yukon Advisory Committee on MMIWG2S+ Strategy
- Local advisory Committee on the MMIWG Commemoration Project
- Medicine from the Land Working Group
- Native Women's Association of Canada Board of Directors
- Yukon Women's Coalition and Together for Safety Working Group

### *Advocacy Initiatives*

YAWC participated in research projects and advocacy initiatives. They include:

- Resource Development, Violence Against Indigenous Women, & Environmental Assessment in Yukon research project with the purpose to build capacity in Yukon to present the perspectives of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people and increase their participation in environmental assessments, by using a gender-based analysis plus approach. YAWC is leading this project, ending March 2022.
- Information and Communication Technology for Indigenous Women with the purpose to create an international partnership of individuals and institutions with expertise in ICTs, gender, communication, and Indigenous ways of knowing to support the efforts of Indigenous women's civil society organizations to develop gender-responsive ICTs. This is a 3–5-year project. YAWC is supporting this project.
- Whitehorse taxi safety issues, including rider and driver education and awareness and city vehicle for hire bylaw amendments input.
- Mental health and addiction initial discussions with the Mental Health Commission of Canada and Yukon Liquor Board.

### *Yukon Sisters in Spirit Vigil and Red Dress Campaign*

YAWC delivered this advocacy project a bit differently given the pandemic. YAWC cancelled the walk portion of this event and merged the vigil aspect with the red dress campaign. On Oct. 2, YAWC encouraged every government, business, and individual in Yukon and northern BC to participate and hang a red dress on their premises in solidarity and at noon drum 42 beats for each Indigenous woman gone. YAWC will also displayed 42 empty red dresses in trees along 2nd Ave and Robert Service in Whitehorse. Forty-one dresses represented those Indigenous women in Yukon and northern BC who have been murdered or have disappeared. One dress symbolized the next vulnerable target.

## **Outreach Prevention and Healing**

### *MMIWG Outreach Program*

This program has about 60 active family members of MMIWG which YAWC offers support through on-the-land healing camps, community outreach support circles and on-going communication and traditional and compassionate care. YAWC delivered 2 on-the-land healing camps to families and youth of MMIWG and victims of violence on Champaigne/Aishihik First Nation and Ta'an Kwachan Council traditional territories. Three outreach support circles were delivered in Whitehorse, Ross River and Watson Lake with an additional aftercare on-the-land mini circle in Watson Lake.

### *Elders and Counsellor in Residence Program*

YAWC initiated this program which has been a huge success. 2 Elders offer in-house traditional teachings and cultural support to drop-in clients through sewing and other engagement projects. The certified counsellor offers mainstream and traditional counselling support through appointments. These services are also offered to board and staff.

### *MMIWG Commemoration Project*

YAWC is leading this project, in partnership with the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, Liard Aboriginal Women's Society, Kwanlin Dun First Nation, Teslin Tlingit Council, and MMIWG family members. The purpose is to leave a lasting monument/memorial in Yukon that will raise the on-going issue of MMIWG in Yukon and northern BC and honour the victims and their families. Family engagement has been on-going to inform the design and build of the monument and commemoration expected to be unveiled in September 2021.

### *Emergency Supplies and Services*

With the COVID-19 recovery funding, YAWC partnered with the Whitehorse Food Bank to support bagged lunches to vulnerable populations and food for the community backpack program. YAWC also piloted the Christmas hamper project Board members distributed 60 hampers filled with food, clothes, PPEs, and toiletries to the most vulnerable in Carmacks, Ross River, and Watson Lake. YAWC also purchased a cargo trailer to facilitate deliver of emergency supplies and support community-based events.

## **Personal and Professional Development**

### *ISET (Indigenous Skills, Employment and Training) Program*

YAWWC delivered the ISET Program for Indigenous women and gender diverse people in Yukon, so they can gain meaningful and lasting work by increasing their skills levels, increasing employment outcomes, and meeting current client, employer, and consumer needs. YAWWC focused on financial assistance to clients for skills enhancement through training, with some new partnerships with employers for clients to gain meaning work experience.

ISET client needs are diverse. Some training areas included: Nursing, Business Administration, Indigenous Governance, Health & Safety training, Driving School, University Access Pathways Training, Addictions Studies (Prevention, Concurrent Disorders, Adolescents & Addiction, Drugs & the Brain, Addiction & the Family, and Addictions Overview), Office Administration, Introduction to Carpentry, and First Nations Art, and Heavy Equipment Operator training.

### *Life Skills to Leadership Employment Training Program Project*

YAWWC is leading this research project with the purpose to develop a competency- and mentorship-based, training program that is culturally relevant and inclusive in supporting Indigenous women and gender diverse people in Yukon and northern BC and applying the life skills needed to gain meaningful employment. The project also aims to support their personal and professional development to resiliency and leadership positions in society. The project ends in September 2021.

### *Medicine from the Land Teaching Module Project*

YAWWC is leading this project to create a tool that will help YAWWC staff deliver to clients, healing services that are land-based and culturally informed and relevant. The project was piloted this fiscal in Tagish by Carcross Tagish First Nation members and a framework was developed which will be reviewed by the working group and implemented by staff.