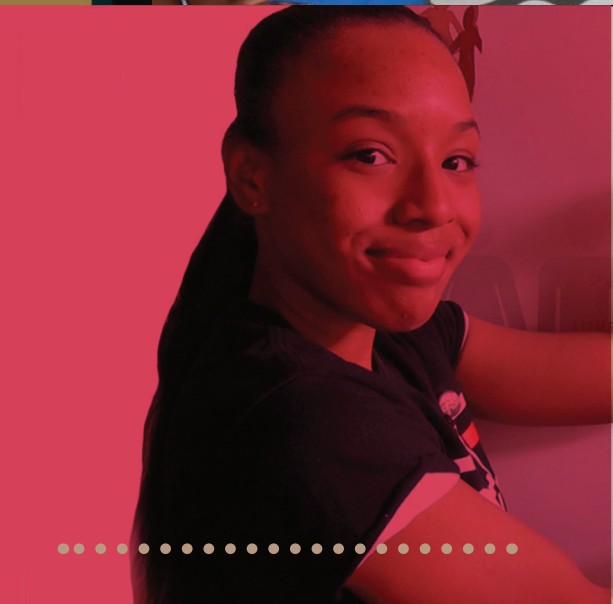


LIFE CHANGING RESULTS OF

# YWCHAC

YOUNG WOMEN OF COLOR  
HEALTH ADVOCACY COALITION



# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24



Evaluation & Report by SEED Impact

Addressing women's health and structural barriers for young women of color

# A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CO-FOUNDER



It is an honor to co-lead the Young Women of Color Health Advocacy Coalition. Over the past 18 months, we continued to confront stigma, dismantle barriers, and advocate for policies prioritizing youth health and well-being. We also turned inward to re-articulate our big dream. Our leadership team came together in 2022 to refresh our long-term vision and gathered for a series of conversations in 2023 to clarify short-term goals aligned with our vision and values. We built a regular practice for ongoing team reflection and intention-tracking—to ensure our goals and vision are realized.

This report focuses primarily on our internal capacity gains. SEED Impact has guided our leaders in a series of reflection activities to supported clarity of vision and define priorities in this time of significant change, world crises, and ongoing transition. Over a two-year period, the SEED Impact team offered a series of capacity-building activities and coached the leadership team to assess, vision, innovate and plan together in ways that have measurably improved our organizational sustainability. We addressed shared leadership development to ensure steady hands and developed a more expansive, inspiring presence of the organization.

We are extremely proud of this work and grateful to our foundation and corporate funders, especially The New York Women's Foundation, The North Star Fund and the AIDS Institute Women Informing Now (WIN) Micro Grant. Their crucial financial support further allowed YWCHAC to hire staff, expand our social media reach to New York City women and girls, and serve as a resource for other youth-serving organizations: Our WE SPEAK Advocacy Institute enabled 500 young women and girls to recognize the power of their voices through empowerment and advocacy training.

Leaders all, YWCHAC members represent a powerful movement for change, united to uplift, educate and empower one another. Standing together, we are able to recognize our resilience, hope and determination, and move closer to achieving our noteworthy mission.

YWCHAC's mission remains straightforward: To empower young women of color to lead healthy, fulfilling lives free from the impact of Health Advocacy.

In Solidarity and Gratitude,

Kymsha Henry, MSA, CHES  
Co-Director  
Executive Leadership Team

# THE YOUNG WOMEN OF COLOR HEALTH ADVOCACY COALITION

## WHO WE ARE .....

**YWCHAC** is dedicated to empowering young women of color through advocacy and organizing. We provide essential skills and resources to help young women of color thrive and make a positive impact on their communities.

## OUR MISSION .....

To address the increasing rates of HIV infection and its structural causes impacting young women of color ages 13- 24.



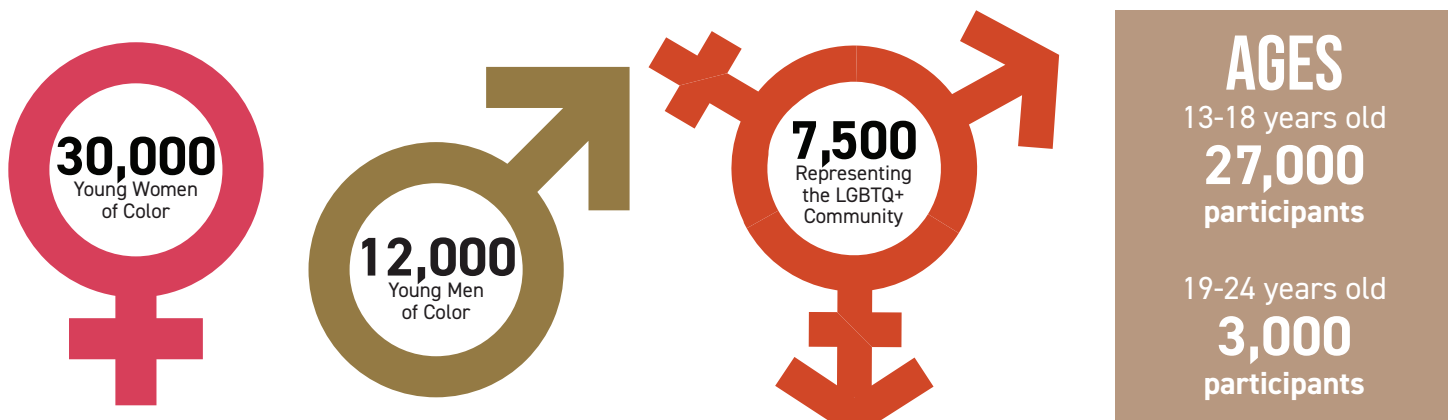
## YWCHAC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (since our 2005 inception):

YWCHAC's ever-increasing engagement is a testament to participants' experience of value derived from their participation.

Through events that YWCHAC held or participated in, such as WE Speak, Safer Sex Education Parties, Tea Parties, Health Summit/Film Festival at Tribeca Theater, yearly collaboration with organizations, including Art is Love Fashion and Artistic Show, Women's Day, we have touched approximately:

“ I owe my career to YWCHAC. I learned about advocacy and public policy while at YWCHAC. It is what drove me into public policy and working with the New York City Council. ”

-YWCHAC Alum



## OUR IMPACTFUL HISTORY

Established in December 2005, the **Young Women of Color Health Advocacy Coalition (YWCHAC)** began as a response to the alarming rise of HIV infections among Black and Latino youth in New York City. Over time, statistics revealed a concerning trend: **22 percent** of new HIV infections in 2009 affected individuals aged 13-29. Even more alarming was the disproportionate impact on Black and Hispanic women; despite comprising only **32 percent** of New York City's female population, they accounted for over **80 percent** of women living with HIV/AIDS.

With a fierce determination to confront this crisis, YWCHAC expanded beyond HIV/AIDS education to address the multifaceted challenges faced by young women of color. Our efforts include tackling incriminating policing policies, strained youth-adult relationships, and limited financial literacy. With an emphasis on underlying causes, we aim to ensure that every young woman has the knowledge, resources, and support to make informed decisions, leading to a healthier, more empowered life.



## OUR PROGRAMS

Community outreach and advocacy skills are essential in addressing health issues affecting youth. YWCHAC principal programs are based on three pillars: Community Involvement, Activism, and Mentorship / Education.

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Quarterly Youth Networking

### ACTIVISM

WE SPEAK  
(Women Empowered Support Protect Advocate and Know)

The Advocacy Institute

### MENTORSHIP / EDUCATION

Quarterly Youth Networking  
Safer Sex Education Parties

Health Summit / Film Festival

[Read more about our programs](#)

# YWCHAC'S THEORY OF CHANGE



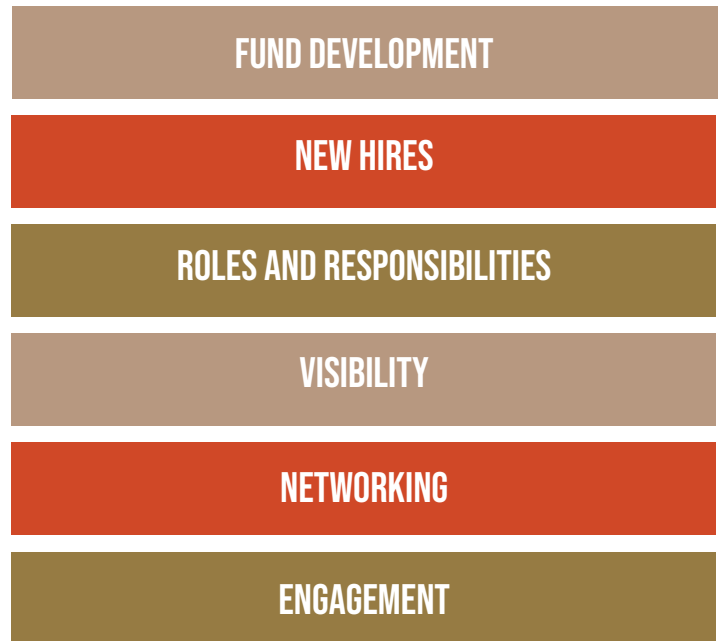
Working with SEED Impact and utilizing their Theory of Change on Its Feet™, the YWCHAC leadership team (including young women and seasoned mentors) defined a shared vision and set goals targeting internal capacity development. This report includes numeric and narrative data captured throughout the year as we met regularly to assess progress and meet our goals.

**The Theory of Change on Its Feet™** approach focuses on three main components:

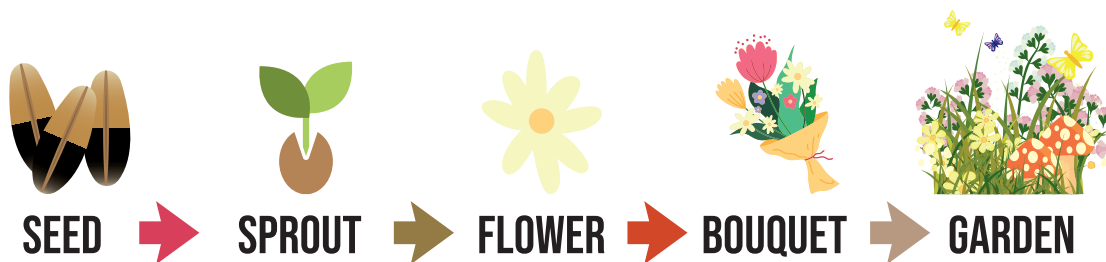
- **Process:** Implementing efficient and adaptable systems and processes to support the goals of the organization
- **Programming:** Developing strong, shared leadership and collaboration among team members to drive change
- **Product:** Ensuring the organization's products or services make a meaningful difference and that results are credibly reported

This year YWCHAC intentionally focused on process outcomes to build organizational capacity. Implementing the Theory of Change on Its Feet™ framework bridges the gap between our goals and real-world impact.

Our **Theory of Change on Its Feet™** tracking system was customized to reflect these priority areas for focused creative attention:

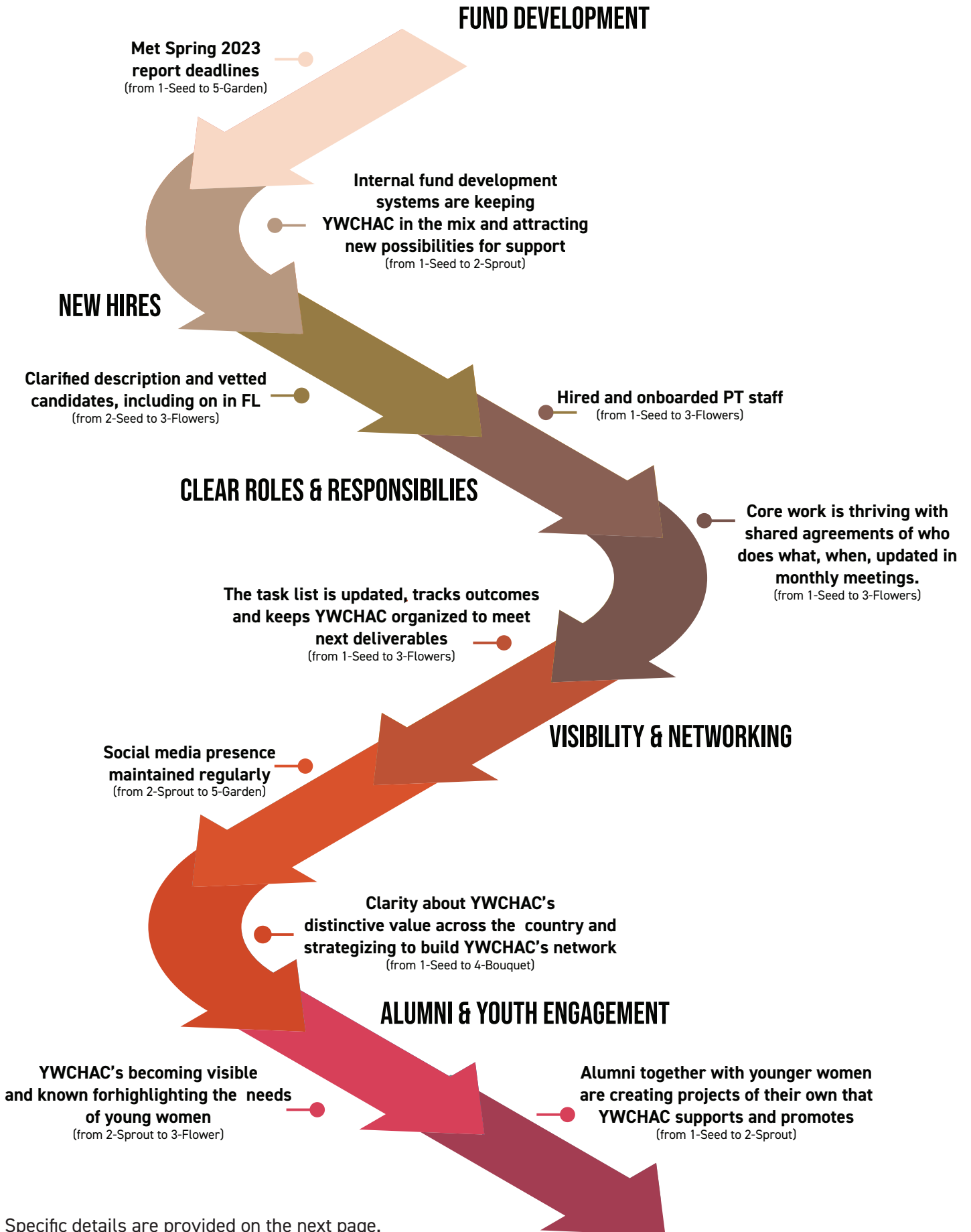


We tracked progress using this rating scale:



YWCHAC continues to use this helpful framework. By closely monitoring our indicators, we deepen our understanding of our impact and better serve young women of color, empowering them to lead healthier, fulfilling lives.

# SUMMARY RESULTS



Specific details are provided on the next page.

# JUNE 2023 - OCTOBER 2024 OUTCOMES



**FUND  
DEVELOPMENT**  
**20% Gain**

Progress in fund development included meeting Spring 2023 report deadlines. Despite initial funding challenges, our determination led to successfully securing the necessary resources, which we allocated diligently to optimize benefits for programming initiatives. Recognizing our Steering Committee members' full-time commitments, we balanced individual responsibilities and infrastructure development. Moreover, we demonstrated adaptability, compassion, and unity when prioritizing support for our Founder, Claire Simon, during her health concerns, underscoring our commitment to our goals amidst adversity.



**NEW HIRES**  
**4% Gain**

We realized a small amount of progress on our new hires' goal. Once we identified staffing needs, we leveraged the diverse expertise of our Steering Committee members, who effectively balanced this task alongside their full-time commitments. This collaborative effort enabled us to create a comprehensive job description for a part-time Program Assistant aligned with our organization's goals and priorities, setting a clear path for future progress.



**CLEAR ROLES &  
RESPONSIBILITIES**  
**34% Gain**

YWCHAC was able to make notable progress in our clear roles and responsibility goal. Gains were noted in all objectives, most notably in implementing and continuously updating our task list, tracking outcomes, remaining organized to meet deliverables, and maintaining regularly updated shared agreements of work responsibilities.



**VISIBILITY &  
NETWORKING**  
**52% Gain**

YWCHAC was able to make strong progress in our visibility and networking goal. Sizable gains were realized in all objectives, most notably regularly maintaining our social media presence. Prominent gains were also noted in our objective to update our website, as well as clearly define our distinctive value across the country and strategized building our network.



**ALUMNI & YOUTH  
ENGAGEMENT**  
**18% Gain**

YWCHAC made moderate progress in our alumni and youth engagement goal. Modest gains were realized in all objectives, except our efforts for alumni leaders to engage younger women (age 25-35) in leadership roles. Recognizing the underserved demographic of asymptomatic, HIV+ young women of color aged 25-35, we've made a strategic commitment to cater to this often-overlooked group by actively pursuing funding opportunities and developing tailored programs that address their unique needs. Our focused efforts will foster increased engagement and support for these young women, helping to close the gap in services and empower them to thrive.

## AS YWCHAC FOCUSED ON INTERNAL PROCESS GAINS, PROGRAMMING DID NOT STOP!

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Our *Quarterly Meetings* unite youth service providers across NYC to tackle critical issues affecting young women of color. We foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing, ultimately spurring the development of impactful programs and policies. These gatherings strengthen partnerships between HIV and non-HIV agencies, highlighting the intersection of youth services and HIV/AIDS prevention. We address diverse challenges such as:

- Recidivism
- Teen pregnancy
- Improving graduation rates

Partnering with the **Legal Action Center**, YWCHAC's mapping project reveals

- Overlapping hotspot zones with high rates of Stop & Frisk incidents
- Low high school graduation rates
- Increased HIV infections.

This mapping data emphasizes the urgent need for a more comprehensive approach to promoting the health and safety of our youth:

- Social programs
- Advocacy training
- Prevention workshops

### MENTORSHIP / EDUCATION

#### *The Safer Sex Education Parties:*

We create safe spaces for young women to discuss:

- Safer sex techniques
- Negotiation skills
- Access HIV testing

During these events, multiple youth-serving agencies come together to share valuable information and offer essential services to attendees. Youth-serving agencies set up tables, providing resources and connecting young women with accessible services.

**Health Summit/Film Festival:** To mark National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, we host an event where WE SPEAK members, committee members, and general members discuss Health Advocacy and its effects on young women of color.

This supportive and informative collaborative gathering addresses essential topics:

- Educational opportunities
- Financial literacy
- Health concerns



# ACTIVISM

**WE SPEAK - (Women Empowered Support Protect Advocate and Know):** the Peer Education Component of the Coalition for Young Women of Color was formed with 25 young women of color from the five boroughs.

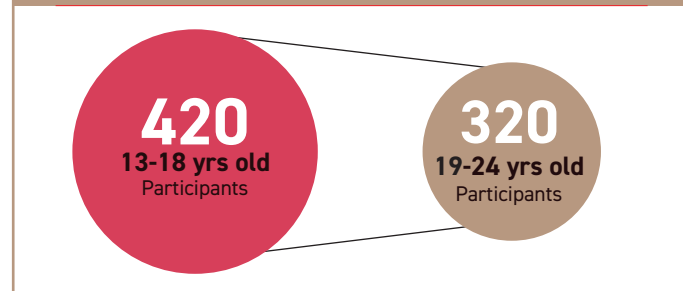
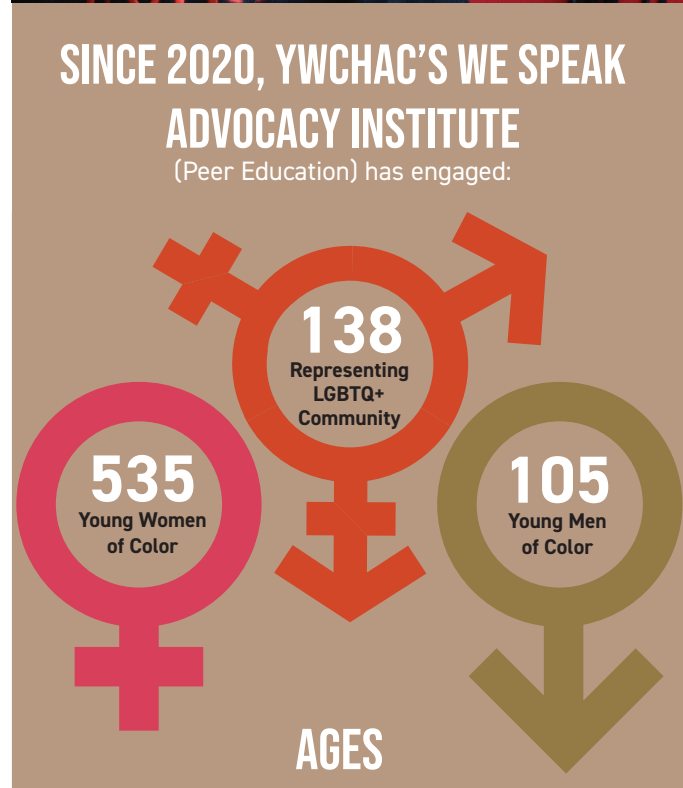
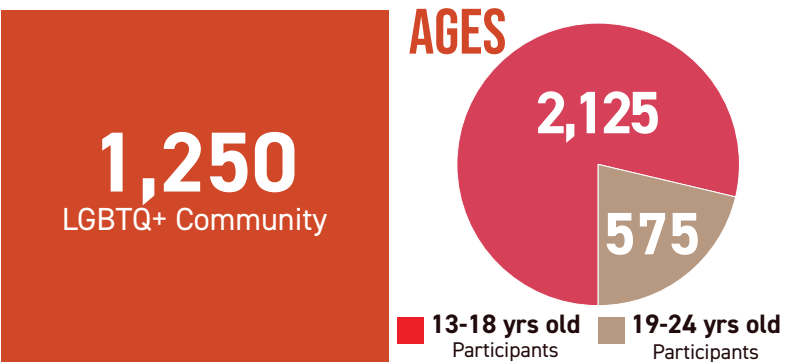
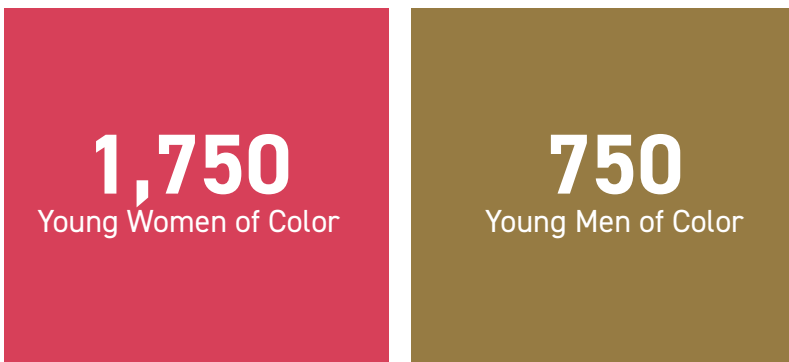
This eight-week program consists of both HIV-positive and HIV-negative young women. They gain the skills and knowledge to lead HIV prevention and advocacy campaigns in their communities. Their commitment extends beyond the program as they make a difference throughout the year.

The **Advocacy Institute** is a six-session program designed to equip young women of color with the skills necessary to mobilize their peers and speak out on issues impacting their communities.

Through training in advocacy skills and techniques, members learn to create engaging campaigns that empower their peers in both educational and advocacy efforts.

Following the program, participants develop campaigns or community service projects addressing the issues raised during the Institute.

Since 2005, **WE SPEAK Women Empowered Support Protect Advocate and Know Institute** engaged:



“YWCHAC met us where we were and gave us voices and taught us about advocacy.”  
-YWCHAC Alum



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND CHANGE LIVES!

As we advance, your active participation is vital to the success of our coalition. As we advance, your active participation is vital to the success of our coalition. Let us continue to uplift one another and create a lasting impact in the lives of young women of color. With our collective strength, we can pave the way for a healthier, more equitable future. I encourage you to join us in:

- **Amplifying Our Voices:** It is crucial that we share our stories and experiences with policymakers and healthcare providers to ensure our needs are recognized and addressed
- **Education and Empowerment:** Equip our members with comprehensive sexual health education, tailored HIV prevention resources, knowledge and tools to protect their health
- **Building Strong Communities:** Cultivate a sense of belonging, connection, support and open dialogue among our members
- **Advocating for Justice:** Promote equitable access to healthcare, mental health services and social support, ensuring that every member of our community receives the care they deserve

**Join us in making a difference in the lives of young women of color.** Your support can help us expand our reach, enhance our programs, and create lasting change. Together, we can empower these young leaders and build a brighter future for all.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO YWCHAC FUNDERS & DONORS

The Young Women of Color Health Advocacy Coalition (YWCHAC) wishes to thank our foundation and corporate funders, whose generous support makes the work we do possible:

- The New York Women's Foundation
- The North Star Fund
- AIDS Institute-Women Informing Now (WIN) Micro Grant

Thanks to your generosity, we have hired additional staff, reached more young women and girls in NYC through social media outreach, and served as a resource for other youth-serving organizations. Your investment in our mission means the world to us and those we serve.