

# A Message from our Chair

*This past year, YW Calgary completed an ambitious strategic plan, envisioned the road forward, advanced efforts to be a consistent and trusted voice for women and their families, and furthered work to ensure the long-term stability and strength of the organization.*

## Board Chair Letter:

For over six years it has been my pleasure to be part of YW Calgary's Board of Directors. As I complete my first year in the role of YW Calgary Board Chair, I look back on what has been a remarkable and definitive year for the organization.

You may have already seen elsewhere in this Impact Report that YW supported nearly 10,000 individuals in 2024, an increase of 25% over the previous year. This growth was largely seen in areas that were driven through the organization's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, which rolled out during a global pandemic and successfully wrapped up this year.

YW has continued to utilize the organization's expertise in areas of domestic violence while bringing focus on prevention-based service delivery and expansion in areas of economic prosperity and mental health. This intentional work in 2024 saw YW launch new, innovative programs, many growing out of community partnerships that enhanced YW's ability to help women, and their families build healthy relationships, increase financial and economic skill development, and achieve entrepreneurial dreams.

Another key part of this plan was to enhance financial sustainability through the adoption of a comprehensive investment strategy. Implementation of such a plan needed to be timed appropriately to ensure availability of funds to bridge cash flow and avoid debt/interest during the YW Crisis Shelter Redevelopment Project. Leading up to completion of the Project, an extensive Request for Proposal process was undertaken to select investment managers. This process resulted in the appointment of two reputable investment managers, one focusing on equity and bond investments and the other offering unique alternative investment products and experience.

YW Calgary's Board approved its enhanced Investment Policy Statement (IPS) during the year ended March 31, 2024, with active investing through YW Calgary's newly appointed investment managers starting in December 2023 and continuing through the year ended March 31, 2025. Substantially all liquid assets in the Board Restricted Sustainability Fund are now invested through the investment managers under the new IPS, with related investment earnings providing a sustainable source of revenue for operations.

In the fall of 2024, the organization began the process of developing its next strategic plan which will take YW to 2030. The Board of Directors were thrilled to participate in visioning and planning sessions with a core group of YW leaders as the next evolution of YW Calgary takes shape.

**Every path begins  
with a first step.**

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A significant component of these conversations is particularly exciting to myself and my colleagues on the Board as YW continues the work to adapt to an ever-changing world, increasingly impacted by geo-politics. The efforts to grow YW's agility to action evidence-based advocacy, particularly in social justice areas that impact women, their families, diverse populations and newcomer communities is key to the organization's position in community, their profile, reputation, and ongoing relevance.

I look forward to the year ahead as YW continues to evolve their programs, services, operations, and advocacy, all in support of their mission and vision. I am filled with great respect for the amazing leaders and employees at YW who strive to provide exceptional services to women and families as well as gratitude for my colleagues on YW Calgary's Board who generously contribute their time to support an organization who has been focused on women's equity, safety, and opportunities for nearly 115 years.



**Aalia Ratani**  
Board Chair

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