



Young

Women

Empowered

Y-WE at A Glance

A photograph of two women, one with curly brown hair and one with dark skin and curly hair, both smiling and holding up a large banner. The banner is divided into three colored sections: red, orange, and yellow, with the words 'Who', 'We', and 'Are:' written in white. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Who We Are:

Our Mission

Y-WE cultivates the power of diverse young women* to be creative leaders and courageous changemakers through transformative programs within a collaborative community of belonging.

Our Vision

We envision a society rooted in social justice, where all young women* live their truth, achieve their dreams, and change our world.

**Y-WE centers the experiences of BIPOC women. Our programs (radically) welcome folks assigned female at birth and those who self-identify as girls, women, trans, and nonbinary people.*

A Community of Belonging

Y-WE is a collaborative organization that strives for justice and liberation. Our programming supports young people from all backgrounds - centering BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ youth who often experience society's greatest inequities. Y-WE is a place to be ourselves as we learn, grow, and thrive in community.

In our work towards a more equitable world, we provide an environment for our participants to find their voices, and therefore - their power.

Thank you for empowering us to do this work!

Our Model

Because Y-WE is a majority women-of-color-led organization, we have collective lived experience to bring to our programs. **We are creating the community and programming that we wish our teenage selves had.** This enables us to listen carefully to the needs of our youth, and advocate for what we see and hear from them. That is why our programming focuses on:

- **Belonging** - making sure that each youth can find a community where they KNOW they are centered. Our programs have BIPOC facilitators, teachers, and mentors who believe in our mission and often identify with our youth's backgrounds. We also provide affinity spaces for our most marginalized youth.
- **Wellness** - ensuring each youth has access to mental health care and advocating for their basic needs. We always have a social worker and a nurse available at every camp to offer the safest, healthiest experience possible.
- **Thriving** - we want to eliminate obstacles and provide the tools young women* need to be empowered as leaders of our community. We have low-barrier programs that offer no-cost camps, transportation assistance, snacks and meals.



Youth Leadership Council

The Youth Leadership Council (YLC) is for participants who have completed a previous Y-WE program and would like to deepen their leadership in the Y-WE community.

Participants become stewards of the Y-WE culture by:

- Contributing ideas for the direction of the organization
- Building their skills as facilitators and leaders
- Becoming ambassadors of Y-WE in their own communities

This year, YLC leaders: hosted a workshop for Health Day, planned and hosted a Black Girls Matter Day of Wellness, a Muslim Girls Day of Wellness and Y-WE Iftar. They also helped plan a Black Queer Prom, and recorded and produced a podcast called Y-WE Radio that aired on KVRU low power FM in the Rainier Valley. Their leadership projects focused on a range of topics including food insecurity, the school to prison pipeline, Disney and feminism, racism in healthcare, climate change, and more.

*"YLC has helped me form
into an impactful leader. I've
learned how to enter a space as
my authentic self."
-YLC Youth*





Y-WE Tech

In Y-WE Tech, youth explore ways to use technology tools for learning, career success, self-expression, social change and the history of women in technology.

Participants gain experience with:

- Coding and digital technology
- Different methods of project management
- Ways that they can keep growing creatively through technology
- Leadership development

This year in Y-WE Tech, youth learned about the ins and outs of 3D printing, user experience design, taking apart tech equipment, CAD (computer aided design), and AR (augmented reality). They also visited the Van Gogh Art Experience, a hands-on experience with VR (virtual reality). As a leadership experience, the youth also helped our staff to coordinate and host STEM Day, which is a public event featuring career professionals in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

"The Tech program has been amazing and I'm really thankful for it. The mentors always make sure we are comfortable with what we are doing." -Tech Youth Participant



Nature

Connections

Youth in Nature Connections experience the power of Nature as sanctuary and teacher while exploring the Shores, Trails, Lakes, Rivers and Mountains of our northwest home. By engaging with and learning about these unique and expansive outdoor spaces, youth practice connecting deeply with themselves, each other, and our plant and animal neighbors. They also learn how to be responsible stewards of our natural systems, engage in environmental justice topics, and learn about local ecology. All activities are designed to be accessible without any previous experience, and participants build skills to be successful and safe in the outdoors.

This year in Nature Connections, youth:

- Supported with restoration projects at the Indigenous Cultural Center
- Learned about plant anatomy and identification on a scavenger hunt at the Washington Park Arboretum
- Joined the Mountaineers for outdoor rock climbing
- Went tidepooling and connected with water at Dash Point State Park
- Camped on the Olympic Peninsula, gazed at the planets through telescopes, and saw bioluminescence in the Pacific Ocean
- Learned survival fire making, went gravel biking, painted landscapes in watercolor, and paddle boarded on the Snoqualmie River



"I got to experience and learn so many things I would've never experienced or seen myself doing." -Youth Participant

Y-WE Grow

In Y-WE Grow at Marra Farm, we connect with the Earth in a reciprocal relationship, gain practical gardening skills, and grow fresh, culturally-relevant produce. We also learn how to disrupt the racist and unjust food system dominant in the U.S. through investing in food sovereignty and access locally.

This year in Y-WE Grow, youth:

- Developed technical skills such as gardening, woodworking, plant medicine, food preservation, chicken-care, fruit tree-care, creek restoration, and more
- Grew fresh, culturally-relevant food and engaged in mutual aid by sharing it at El Mercadito farmer's market
- Hosted a Spring Celebration and Container Garden Giveaway for the entire Y-WE community
- Collaborated on a "Why We Grow" zine celebrating our time at Marra Farm this season
- Built raised beds for the farm and container gardens to give away
- Participated in a paid Summer internship, where youth developed green jobs and professional skills, supported other urban and rural BIPOC farmers, and advocated for food sovereignty and soil remediation in the City of Seattle's Food Action Plan

We are grateful to connect with each other, community, and our environment on the ancestral lands of the Duwamish, Muckleshoot, Stillaguamish, Suquamish, and Coast Salish people in South Park, Seattle.



Y-WE Lead



Y-WE Lead offers youth the opportunity to explore their leadership through various workshops on art, skill-building, health, and wellness. Together we co-create an intergenerational community of diverse youth and mentors committed to supporting one another and healing our communities.

This year in Y-WE Lead, we split our programs into two sessions. Each session, we offered multiple cohorts on a variety of subjects for youth to choose from. This way, young people and mentors were able to connect in smaller groups and dive into topics most interesting to them.

"I really liked the skill building and encouragement to take risks and try new things."

-Journey Into Jewelry Participant

FALL COHORTS

- Let's Play
- We the Podcasters
- DIY Healing
- Journey Into Jewelry



"The best part about this program was the authentic vulnerability everyone felt comfortable to share."

-DIY Healing Participant



WINTER/ SPRING COHORTS

- We the Podcasters II
- Theater of the Empowered
- Healthy Boundaries



"I learned to always create space & take time for myself: whether it be through meditating in nature/ doing breath work, or through various creative mediums I've learned during this program"

-Let's Play Participant



Black Girls Matter Mentorship

The Black Girls Matter Mentorship Program is a new intergenerational affinity space. This program was created by Black folks, for Black folks in order to facilitate community and connection for Black girls, women, gender fluid, trans, non-binary, or gender expansive people. Mentors and Mentees are paired by common interests then meet one on one once a month and as a sister circle community once a month. There are also optional group excursions for folks wanting to connect more frequently.

Activities/outings included:

- A trip to the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival, with a Tea Party
- Manicures & pedicures
- Attending Fannie, a play about Black female activist and farmer
- Fannie Lou Hamer at the Seattle Rep theater
- An abstract art workshop with local artist Perri Rhoden
- A joy workshop with joy consultant Nacala Ayele



T*Parties



Our T*Party program is for LGBTQ+ identified youth, alums, and mentors. Anyone in the Y-WE community, 13 and older, is welcome. Having a non gender-specific space is beneficial for our nonbinary and trans participants who may feel uncomfortable or unseen in other spaces. The goals of this intergenerational affinity program are to:

- *Tune into the needs of our bodies, minds, hearts and spirits as we explore our intersectional identities
- *Tell & listen to stories of LGBTQ+ activists, artists, business leaders & community members.
- *Transform our relationships with ourselves & others, developing healthy boundaries & self care practices
- *Thrive in a supportive intergenerational queer & trans community of belonging

This year, participants drank tea, decorated T Boxes, reflected on and shared about their personal journeys as queer folks, celebrated Pride Month by making their own pride flags, and attended the Seattle Pride Parade together.

Y-WE Create

Y-WE Create 2022 focused on discovering ways to create and experience narratives of joy. We learned about how our creativity can build a practice of tending to ourselves and our communities. We tried different techniques for grounding with intention and connecting with our somatic experiences. We explored different artistic modalities for storytelling, play, and reflection as an avenue to cultivate joy in our lives.

Cohorts included:

Intro to Mural

Facilitated by Perri Rhoden

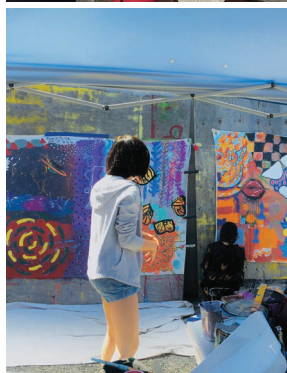
Where The Wild Things Grow

Facilitated by Melanie Granger

Let's Sew

Facilitated by Jackie Amatucci

"[A favorite memory I am taking away from camp is] Seeing the youth respond positively to the stress reduction practices and engaging with the youth as they learned new skills with plants, herbs and nature." -Y-WE Create Mentor



Y-WE Write

This year's theme at Y-WE Write was **"Writing in, out, around, and through the body."** Different types of writing can help realign us with our bodies, our dreams, our creation, and our joy. Youth met daily at the Seattle Public Library and learned from Hedgebrook authors to create original works that they shared at our open mic at the end of the week.

Cohorts included:

"Write It Down, Act It Up":

Screenwriting

Facilitated by Rose McAleese

Embodied Odes & Other Love Spells:

A Poetry Playshop

Facilitated by Jessica Bergamino

Songwriting

Facilitated Grace Love

"I love writing, but it never felt like something I could really pursue. After one week I feel like I really could become the director and screenwriter I've wanted to be since middle school. And I made friends that really believe that too!" -Y-WE Write Participant



Black Girls/NB Summer

***Carefully Curated All Black Healing Spaces.
For Us. By Us. With Us.***

This summer, we took our affinity programming to the next level and inundated Seattle with all Black everything. We offered a range of drop-in activities and week-long camps. Youth could sign up to participate in as many programs as they wanted. The goal was to provide joy, wellness, activities, vibes, and an opportunity to simply be in community.



COHORT OPTIONS

- Book Club
- Wellness drop-ins*
- Black Queer Prom
- Biking
 - In partnership with Bike Works
- Black Mermaids
 - In partnership with Oshun Swim School
- Hiking
- Horseback Riding*
 - In partnership with Legends Ranch & The Buffalo Soliders of Seattle

**open to all BIPOC youth*

*"What I liked best about the program was the sense of belonging and safety. I'm grateful for the girls I got to meet."
-Black Girls/NB Bike Participant*



*"I'd never ridden horses before so learning was super fun. Archery was amazing and I definitely want to try it again in the future."
-BIPOC Horseback Riding Participant*

Alum Programs

Y-WE's alum programs are for young adults over 18 who previously participated in any of Y-WE's programs. Y-WE's alum community continues to grow each year. One Alum coined the term "home organization" when referring to Y-WE because it is a place where she and others return as mentors, staff members, board members, public speakers, and advocates for the next generation of Y-WE youth. We do our best to show up like family for our alums and offer them the consistent care, financial and mutual aid resources, professional development opportunities, internships, and ongoing mentorship that they need as they transition into adulthood.

This year, we connected with our alums by:

- Piloting our "Boss Up" program, which focuses on job readiness, skill building, leadership development, and more
- Offering monthly check-ins for mental health support as well as one-on-one coaching
- Sharing job, internship, & scholarship opportunities through monthly newsletters
- Hosting a weekend retreat on Whidbey Island

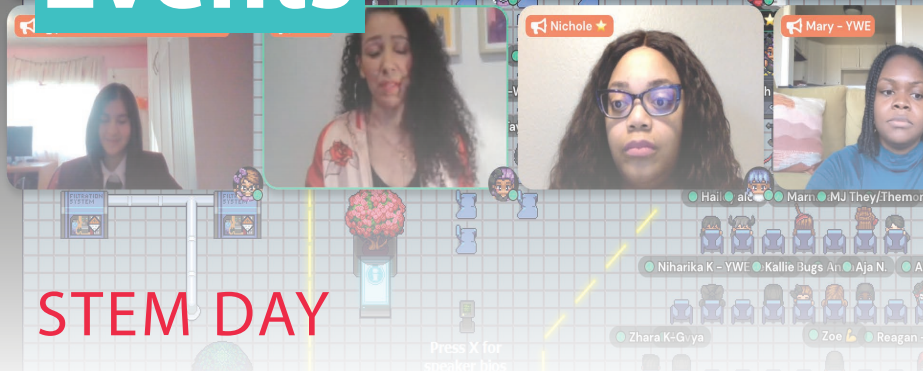
We also provide financial support to alums through our Dream Fund, which is available to all Y-WE Alums as well as graduating seniors. They can use the funds for college tuition or other educational pursuits, starting a business, or anything else they need to cultivate their dreams. **This year, we were able to provide 44 scholarships for a total of \$61,500.**



"Y-WE is amazing people that tells you it's ok to fail, it's ok to make mistakes. And it's ok to dream big, and it's ok to ask for the stars. And Y-WE will be there, support you, no matter what you choose and no matter what you go through."

-Y-WE Alum & Mentor

Community Events



STEM DAY

This year's virtual STEM Exploration Day took place on gather.town, which was a creative, interactive way to explore workshops, panels, and educational information through virtual reality technology.

Workshops included:

Diverse Careers in STEM Panel

Featuring a Video Game Writer, UX Designer, Tech Recruiter, & STEM Educator

Q&A about Y-WE Tech

Facilitated by youth in Y-WE Tech

COVID 19 Vaccines & Infectious Disease

Featuring an Infectious Disease professional

"Something I liked about the event was the interactive rooms. It is very fun and interesting to learn about different careers and jobs." -STEM Day Participant

HEALTH DAY

Health Day 2021 was a hybrid event organized in collaboration with our Youth Leadership Council. We started off the morning with a live streamed panel, "In Pursuit of Equity in Healthcare: Strategies for Navigation," featuring a variety of healthcare workers. We then learned about creating Self Advocacy toolkits. For our in-person afternoon session, we had a conversation about mental health, options for yoga/ meditation, watercoloring, and journaling, and a sex, sexuality, and gender Q&A.

CAREER DAY

Y-WE's annual Career Day creates unique opportunities for girls, young women, and adults to connect with leaders in various professions. Our virtual Career Day 2022 took place on gather.town. This year we focused on skills building, diverse career stories, values mapping, and visioning. Youth and adults who attended heard from our inspirational panelists and workshop facilitators from a wide variety of backgrounds including a Documentary Filmmaker, Events Manager, Career Coach, Tech Recruiter, & Human Resources Manager.

"What I liked best about Career Day was meeting amazing new people." -Career Day Participant





DAY OF WELLNESS(S)

This year, we hosted three wellness days. Centering mental health and wellness is a big part of our programming that is continuing to grow with the addition of our full-time Community Wellness & Mental Health Specialist.

- Our first Day of Wellness event consisted of a conversation about transformative justice, a seed-planting activity, & stations on physical care, mental health care, & community care. One of our facilitators, Mari Shibuya, created a mural based off a group discussion at the event.
- We also hosted a **Black Girls Matter Day of Wellness**, co organized by three member of our YLC, for Black-identifying youth and mentors, which consisted of a resource fair, a sound healing meditation with Tai Mattox, a zumba workout class, deep conversations about mental health with therapist Rian Roberson, brunch, and self care time.
- Two youth in our Youth Leadership Council also planned and hosted a **Muslim Girls Day of Wellness**, centering important conversations about what it's like to be young Muslim women* in today's society.

"The vibes were amazing and I just felt so comfortable as soon as I got there." -Muslim Girls Day of Wellness Participant

As part of our Spring campaign, **Y-WE Bloom**, we interviewed the young leaders in our community. You can check out the rest of the stories (videos included!) on our Blog.

AWATE BENEA

Q: What does Y-WE mean to you?

A: Y-WE is a program that helped me get out of my shell. I don't know, it just helped me become a better person. No matter who you are, you have a family at Y-WE.

Q: What makes you feel powerful?

A: I feel most powerful when I'm heard, when my voice is out there. When people can listen to my opinion.

Q: What does liberation look like?

A: I feel like liberation looks like people coming together either for a common cause or for reopening a community. For example, Black liberation. People want Black people to come together. Even though like a lot of stuff has happened within the Black community, the way they want us to like liberate is by like putting most of our differences aside and coming together as a whole.

Q: How do you Bloom?

A: The way I bloom is by making a change, trying something new, discovering new things. I feel like we won't get anywhere if we don't help others expand their mind.





SYD WALTER

Q: What does Y-WE mean to you?

A: Y-WE to me means a collective breath. Y-WE is a space where we can be without trying to be bought or sold and yet we are perfect and brilliant in our own little ways. And even though I may not know everyone, it always feels like home.

Q: What makes you feel most powerful?

A: I feel most powerful when I'm just seen. When I'm called by my name, when someone asks me my ideas, or when someone laughs at my jokes. I feel the most seen when I'm most empowered, and that to me is what Y-WE is a space to do, and be seen, and be empowered to be yourself and everything that you maybe can't be in the world around you.

Q: What does liberation look like?

A: Liberation to me looks like walking alone on a cold night, and I'm looking at the lake, and the stars are reflected in the water and so are the city lights. And neither of them outshine one another. They coexist equally and they are shining both brightly. And I look into the water and I see my face and I am defined by the edgeless reflection in the water. And together we're all coexisting. And that is liberation.

Q: How do you Bloom?

A: I Bloom through my words. Each word that I construct, each sentence that I say, whether that's written or spoken, I feel is like a petal on my blossom.

Y-WE

Fundraising

COLLABORATE, BLOOM, SHINE

This year, we hosted several online campaigns as well as our first in-person fundraising event since the beginning of the pandemic. Y-WE Collaborate took place in the Fall and focused on building a community of donors that is deeply rooted in Y-WE's community, beyond financial contributions. In the Spring, we ran a video-based campaign called Y-WE Bloom, which shared the voices and stories of many powerful Y-WE youth, alum, and staff. We were honored to create these videos with a team primarily composed of BIPOC women*. In early Summer we hosted Y-WE Shine, an in-person event that celebrated & honored our leadership transitions, and brought our community back together again. **Together through these campaigns we raised over \$400,000 in critical funds that will allow us to keep growing and providing transformative programs.**



A NEW ERA OF Y-WE

Y-WE has been steadily growing and continuously transforming for over 12 years and we are becoming a mid-sized, “teenage” non-profit. We are looking forward to a year of restructuring and recentering as we work to stabilize and prepare for the future. Over this past year we have been building a five-year strategic plan that will guide us through our leadership transitions, programmatic changes, and more.

We are also excited to plant roots at our new headquarters in Hillman City! Throughout the pandemic we have not had a place to call home, and we are thrilled to be hosting programs, events, and working together in a fresh, beautiful space. We hope that everyone who walks through our doors will feel the magic of Y-WE, and we look forward to hosting you in our new home.

WAYS TO GIVE

Are you ready to deepen your commitment to Y-WE? Support in a way that is accessible to you whether through a

- Monthly donation
- Stock
- Planned giving
- One-time gift

Donate today and help raise vital funds to support young women’s leadership!

y-we.org/donate



Community Champions,

Sponsors

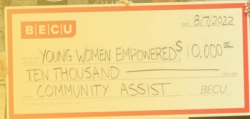
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Schmidt Family Foundation
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Executives of King County
Seattle Foundation
Starbucks Foundation: Neighborhood
Grants Fund
Starfish Foundation via Seattle
Foundation
Tides Foundation - Jubilation
Foundation
Upswing Fund
WA State Recreation & Conservation
Office - No Child Left Inside Grant
WEND II, Inc.

We Thank You!



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A Sacred Passing
African American Health Board
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Buffalo Soldiers of Seattle
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Cultivate South Park
Coyote Central
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Hedgebrook
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La Matriarca Woodworking
Legends Horse Ranch
Marra Farm Coalition
Mountaineers
Na'ah Illahee Fund
Oshun Swim School
Percussion Farms
Resistencia Coffee Shop
Salsa de la Vida / Villa Comunitaria
Sea Potential
Seattle Astronomical Society
Seattle Girls School

Seattle Parks and Recreation
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Seattle Department of Neighborhoods
Solid Ground
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Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
UW Bothell
UW Othello Commons
Wa Na Wari
Washington Nonprofits
Washington Trails Association
Whidbey Institute
Yes Farm

**If we've inadvertently misspelled or left out your name, please accept our heartfelt apology and deep gratitude for your support. Send corrections to development@y-we.org*

Connect with Y-WE Online!
@YoungWomenEmpowered



Mentoring

at Y-WE

A special thank you to all of our 2021-2022 mentors!

Aisha Al-Amin

Akshi Vaidyanathan

Alyssa McLaughlin

Ami Njadoo

Anika Jackson

Anna Cechony

Annette Anderson

Annie Graham

Anusha Rangaswamy

Becky Leung

Cambrie Nelson

Chevon Powell

Devon Little

Drisana Malaambo

Elena Van Gaver

Elise Dorvallias

Em Wright

Emilie Grant

Henrylyn Kauae

Kailina Mastroianni

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Lena Kabeshita

Leslie Rowans

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Lulu Carpenter

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Melia Paguirigan

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Mirna Mujacic

Nacala Ayele

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Namaka Auwaee-Dekker

Nancy Huizar

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Paula Johnson

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PJ Bergstrom

Ri'Chara Mitchell

Rowan Schaberg

Samantha Pak

Savannah Blackwell

Shannon Mitchell

Shukri Olow

Sierra Arlidge

Skye Levari

Soraya Ayoubi

Stanlie James

Tamara Mecham

Trinity Covington

Tynishia Walker

Ysabel Diaz

Y-WE primarily uses a group mentorship model that allows youth to get to know a wide range of positive role models who can offer personal and professional support. By participating in all the program activities alongside our youth, mentors help them develop their leadership abilities; define and achieve their personal goals; explore career and college opportunities; and more. We extend immense gratitude to all the volunteer mentors for being present, authentic, and creating a space of belonging for Y-WE youth to develop their passions and find their power.

2021-2022 Staff

Reagan Jackson *Co-Executive Director*

Rose Edwards *Outgoing Co-Executive Director*

Silvia-Giannattasio-Lugo *Incoming Co-Executive Director*

Victoria Santos *Senior Advisor*

Cheryl Delostrinos *Community Partnerships, Development, & Events*

Emma Miller *Marketing & Communications Associate*

Karisa Morikawa *Programs, Outreach, & Advocacy Manager*

Marie Bolla *Donor Relations Manager*

Mary Hall-Williams *Events & Programs Coordinator*

Neli Jasuja *Environmental Justice Programs Manager*

Peter Blaustein *Grants Manager & Organizational Writer*

Rae Parks *Program Operations Manager*

Shaena Spoor *Community Wellness & Mental Health Specialist*

Sophia Pingul *Operations & Finance Manager*

Tayah Carlisle *Y-WE Grow Program Coordinator*

Robin Hall *Alum Programs Intern*



**YOUNG WOMEN
EMPOWERED**

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Through centering the leadership of young women*, Y-WE plants the seeds of equity, compassion, and courage. Together we cultivate a diverse intergenerational community of belonging.



Young Women Empowered

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