



LEADERSHIP PROFILE



Chief Executive Officer YWCA Central Alabama Birmingham, AL

"We work every day to bring women, children and families in crisis to wholeness."

THE ORGANIZATION

Since its founding in 1903, YWCA Central Alabama has provided hope and healing to thousands of women, children and families. Some of these come to the YW at the lowest point of their lives, perhaps fleeing an abusive relationship or simply looking for a safe, affordable place to call home. Others may be seeking a strong foundation for their children or a way to help make their schools and communities more inclusive and fair for all.

Regardless of how they arrive, these women and families soon experience what the larger community has known for years: YWCA Central Alabama is a consistent, caring and dependable resource for women and children in crisis.

Some examples of services provided and people helped in 2018 alone:



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- [Affordable housing:](#) 86,000 nights of safe, affordable housing were provided to 318 elderly, disabled or homeless individuals in transition, plus nearly 66,000 nights of permanent rental housing provided for 229 residents
- [Domestic violence services:](#) The YW responded to nearly 1700 calls to the Crisis Hotline¹ and provided over 10,000 nights of safe shelter for nearly 450 women and children seeking refuge from abusive environments. Additionally, YWCA provided over 4000 units of court advocacy services for victims of domestic violence.
- [Social justice programs:](#) 40 AmeriCorps members contributed over 63,000 hours of service to the YWCA, its 17 partner agencies and the larger community, part of the YW's larger commitment to social justice, as both partner and advocate.
- [Child development programs:](#) The YWCA provided over 14,000 days of care to children in the Calico Corner and KIDS Korner programs and 4800 days of academic and enrichment activities to children in after-school and summer programs.

These services are made possible by an extraordinary staff of 125,² a number of whom were once clients themselves. The staff is reinforced by a cadre of committed volunteers, a deeply engaged board of directors and an unfailingly supportive community. In addition, the YW and its 17 program partners benefit each year from a 40-person contingent from AmeriCorps, an important relationship for the past decade.³



The YWCA is based in downtown headquarters it has owned since 1948. The downtown facility is home to the YW's nationally-accredited child development program⁴, 64 apartments for homeless and working poor women, and administrative offices. In the Woodlawn section of Birmingham, the YWCA owns

¹ (205) 322-4878

² Of the 125 staff members, about 100 are full-time and 25 are part-time.

³ In September 2018, the YWCA's AmeriCorps program, "Building Communities, Bettering Lives," was honored to be named the 2018 Outstanding Service Program by America's Service Commission, the national peer network supporting more than 40,000 AmeriCorps members across the country.

⁴ The YWCA Child Development center is accredited by NAEYC, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the gold standard for early learning programs.

and manages a neighborhood center and 58 housing units for women and children; elsewhere, the YW operates two confidentially located shelters for women and children fleeing abusive environments.

Revenues for 2018 were \$8.6 million, slightly higher than the budgeted \$8.3 million. Government and agency grants accounted for over a third of the total; contributions, donations and special events, just under a third; United Way, a key partner for many years, 18%; and program revenue about 12%. The YW benefits from an externally managed endowment fund of \$2.4 million and another \$1 million in designated funds held at the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham.

YWCA Central Alabama is governed by a 50-person board, all of them women; about 15 of these constitute the executive committee. Long a source of pride, the board consistently attracts the area's most sought-after leaders from civic, business, academic and philanthropic circles. The Junior Board is made up of a similar number of emerging leaders.

Since inception in 1903, the YW has had just five CEOs, an exceptional record of stable leadership that has yielded many benefits (and the occasional challenge). Following its most recent CEO's retirement late last year, the board has launched a nationwide search for a proven leader who can build on the YW's considerable legacy while ensuring the strategy, staff and resources to address the needs of some of Central Alabama's most vulnerable people.



THE OPPORTUNITY

YWCA Central Alabama has been one of Alabama's premier nonprofits for many decades. The finances are stable, the programs well established, and the staff well prepared to meet the daily challenges they face. That said, however, the period of transition between CEOs has highlighted the opportunity for greater focus in the agency's strategy, more cohesion and collaboration between and among departments, and an ethos of leadership willing to marry tough decisions with the tenacity and accountability that thoughtful execution requires.

Because the YWCA does not wish to take its success for granted, this is an excellent time for a new leader to address the questions that will help ensure this

thriving organization is even better positioned to serve its mission. Some of the questions deserving attention:

- What role should advocacy play in our work?
- Should we both own and manage our housing stock, or might others be able to provide services more cost-effectively?
- Are we supporting our own staff with the same care and respect we show our clients?
- What changes might we anticipate in our funding streams, and what changes should we initiate?
- What would constitute exceptional success for YWCA Central Alabama five or ten years from now? How might our current approach need to evolve to realize that success?
- In service to our mission of “eliminating racism, empowering women,” what should we do more of? What should we let go of?
- Our people know their stuff and are quite good at championing our programs. What opportunities might be available if we had the cohesive vision to promote the agency and not just individual lines of service?



THE MANDATE

The YWCA Central Alabama is at an exciting time in its evolution as the premier regional nonprofit serving women and children in vulnerable situations. In framing expectations for the CEO who will lead the organization through the next decade and beyond, the CEO search committee, in consultation with staff and stakeholders, has framed several overlapping priorities:

1. *Strategic and operational clarity.* The CEO sets the tone for the entire organization. Even as basic questions and assumptions are being revisited, it is important that the CEO model a leadership style that is simultaneously inquisitive, collaborative and yet decisive. While people drawn to work in social service agencies welcome the opportunity for discourse, they also welcome clarity, direction and accountability for goals. Without a clear framework within which to operate, the organization cannot harness the best that its people have to offer.
2. *Stewardship—of finances and staff.* The work of the YWCA is enormously gratifying, but it is also hard. There is real joy to be had in service to clients, but the demands of that service lead to neglect of the classic

question, “Who’s taking care of the caretaker?” Raising money is always a priority in such entities, but the CEO of the YW must be equally attentive to her own team, in both managerial and human terms, with special sensitivity to those struggling with change.

3. *Management.* In addition to having a big heart, the YW is also a fairly big business, and the 24/7/365 nature of the work magnifies the demand on both people and systems. The CEO should have proven, broad-based business acumen, ideally informed by experience in a significant nonprofit enterprise.
4. *Innovation.* Just as the needs of the market evolve, so too must the organization adapt and innovate to perpetuate an impactful future. With so much justifiable pride in its successes over the years, the YW deserves a leader who can keep the learning curve steep and the aspirations high.

THE RELATIONSHIPS

The CEO reports to	Board of Directors, YWCA Central Alabama
and leads a staff of ~165 (including 100 f/t, 25 p/t and 40 AmeriCorps members) through four direct reports	Chief Operating Officer Chief Program Officer Chief Financial Officer Chief Public Relations Officer (currently vacant)
while stewarding other important relationships, such as	Key stakeholders, donors and program partners Leaders of civic, governmental and nonprofit entities with intersecting missions or constituencies Peers in other YWCA agencies as well as YWCA USA , the national organization

THE LOCATION

The YWCA is headquartered in downtown Birmingham, AL, and serves a metropolitan area with approximately a million residents. The service footprint encompasses the Greater Birmingham area and includes Jefferson, St. Clair, Blount, Shelby and Walker counties.

THE CANDIDATE

The CEO of the YWCA Central Alabama will be a proven leader passionate about the agency's core mission, "Eliminating racism, empowering women."

The search committee is open to a variety of career paths and experiences. The strongest contenders are likely to have honed their skills in a multifaceted, high-touch environment with multiple programs and stakeholders. Subject-matter expertise in one or more of the YWCA's four program areas is *not* a prerequisite, but the best candidates will have had a demonstrable impact in a comparably complex context involving women and children.

Competence: We expect to hire...

- A board-savvy leader with the proven aptitude for strategic thinking, intentional relationships and nuanced people development
- An executive who complements a true affinity for the mission with the determination to pursue bold goals and the management acumen to realize them
- An experienced manager able to attract, develop, retain and deploy the staff and resources necessary to meet ambitious strategic goals
- A persuasive, articulate communicator at ease with modern media and diverse audiences
- A politically-savvy coalition builder who attracts/builds strong subordinates and insists on delegating to them
- An effective advocate who models a caring, inviting and yet decisive management style
- A self-aware, authentic, inquisitive CEO who is equally at home with clients, colleagues and community leaders
- An innovative leader who respects stability while promoting a learning environment that prides excellence in all things.



Culture: We expect to attract...

- An inspiring, visionary, focused CEO who knows how to get things done
- A manager unafraid of difficult conversations and tough decisions
- A leader who embodies a spirit of joy in her work; someone who derives fulfillment from the YWCA's work while elevating aspirations and expectations
- A forward-thinking risk-taker invested in issues of race, gender and equity

- A colleague who combines the welcoming attitude for which YWCA is known with the clear decision style the organization deserves
- An executive who fosters an environment of candor, trust and shared commitment to clearly framed goals
- A leader ready to ***“engage, inspire, enable and evolve.”***

**For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect,
please email**

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**or call Laura Lovelace or Sam Pettway at
404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392)**

