



YWe Do the Work

FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER

LAS Graduates Spread Their Wings



We are proud to celebrate our 2021 graduating class of Latina Achievement Support (LAS) students who are pursuing their post-secondary education this fall. One of these students is Itsel Martinez, who graduated from New Vista High School in May and just started classes at CU Boulder. We had a chance to catch up

with Itsel recently on her experience with LAS over her entire four years of high school. “I decided to get involved with LAS because they would support me through my academic year at school,” she said.

“They offer a lot of support and resources for literally anything, from how to take care of yourself, resumes, scholarships, volunteer work and more,” Itsel recalls. “I have memorable experiences from when I was involved in LAS. I enjoyed it a lot when speakers taught us different things... Another memorable experience was the field trips we took as a group, like [going to] a museum, pumpkin patch, and

touring universities. They were wonderful.”

This additional support helps the students overcome the systemic barriers which face many first-generation Latina college students. For Itsel, “my goals for the future are studying and graduating from college, being an example for other Latinas who might have had a more difficult time than me and helping them out. During my participation in LAS, I have learned that there are many other people like me, who look for support and struggle,

“I am not alone in whatever I am going through ... because there is a huge support system that is right there to help us.”

but do their best. I am not alone in whatever I am going through ... because there is a huge support system that is right there to help us.” Congratulations and best of luck to Itsel and all our LAS graduates!

Equity in our Schools

As most kids head back to school in-person this fall, YWCA Boulder County is excited to be able to, once again, deliver programming to Boulder County students. Whether it’s through our STEM E3 program geared towards 5-8th grade girls of color, our high school mentoring program Latina Achievement Support (LAS) or our celebrated Reading to End Racism program in elementary schools, YWCA Boulder County’s Racial Justice & Equity Education programming makes a direct impact in combatting racism and offering new opportunities to students of color. This year our work deepened to strategically identify barriers in our educational systems, and in partnership with the NAACP Boulder County, we are working with each school district to address the challenges and lack of support students of

color and their families experience.

Last semester, YWCA Boulder County was part of a coalition with the NAACP Boulder County and Showing Up for Racial Justice Boulder in planning an important community discussion, “Solidarity to Safety: Race and Belonging in St. Vrain Valley School District”. More than 160 students and parents shared racist incidents and possible solutions they wanted addressed by the school administration. As part of this coalition, YWCA Boulder County and other community partners are working together to ensure there is accountability and meaningful action from the school district to support greater diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for all students.



Persimmon Early Learning Celebrates Grand Opening

On Saturday, August 21, we were delighted to welcome over 50 donors, families, board members and friends to the grand opening of Persimmon Early Learning of YWCA Boulder County. The unveiling of our recently rebranded and expanded facilities was the culmination of a two-year project to increase our child care capacity, which we were able to finish in the midst of the pandemic. The festivities included tours of our newly renovated first floor comprised of our lobby, three previously existing classrooms, our brand-new commercial kitchen and two new classrooms. Remarks from our CEO, Debbie Pope, and Boulder County Commissioner, Marta Loachamin, were held in one of our three newly designed Outdoor Learning Environments and included recorded remarks from Representative Joe Neguse and Governor Jared Polis, who were unable to attend in person.

If you missed the event, please visit our Persimmon Grand Opening page on our website to view the recorded remarks and see photos of the renovation. We are so thankful to our donors who helped make this dream project a reality. We are currently enrolling kids ages 8 weeks to 6 years old at Persimmon Early Learning.

If you're in need of child care, please visit our website at persimmonearlylearning.org to fill out an interest form and someone will contact you shortly.

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YWCA BOULDER COUNTY
PERSIMMON
EARLY LEARNING

PERSIMMON GRAND OPENING WEBPAGE

ywcaboulder.org/persimmon-grand-opening/

A MESSAGE FROM DEBBIE



A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us for our grand opening of Persimmon Early Learning last month! And as proud as we are about the expansion of Persimmon Early Learning, it doesn't stop there. We provide a continuum of care for members of our

community, starting with early childhood education and child care, and stretching into adulthood with our advocacy and volunteer opportunities.

As you know, our mission is to eliminate racism and empower women, and we work to advance individual and systemic change for greater equity, justice, empowerment, and inclusion for all. And though we primarily engage children from infancy through 12th grade and families seeking child care to pursue economic opportunity and self-sufficiency, our programs and outreach efforts offer age-appropriate resources as well as a pathway to spark academic growth, physical and mental wellness, and economic advancement.

Our Racial Justice & Equity Programs work toward a future where economic opportunity and career access are accessible to all. Starting in elementary school, Reading to End Racism (RER) engages elementary students by bringing the topic of racism out in the open and empowering students to act with kindness.

YWCA Boulder County's STEM E3 (Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship) program offers

middle-school students of color an opportunity to learn more and engage in activities to build interest and knowledge in STEM-related careers.

Our Latina Achievement Support (LAS) Program provides Latina high school students a safe, culturally responsive environment to address factors that might prevent graduation from high school and pursuit of post-secondary studies, paving the way to greater economic opportunities. YWCA Boulder County also works with the local NAACP to make Boulder County school districts accountable for systemic changes needed in response to incidents of racism and/or bias.

Our organization's advocacy and social action are the cornerstones of YWCA Boulder County. We conduct local advocacy efforts with the help of YWCA Board Members' Advocacy Committee and other organizations to advance racial justice and women's empowerment, and we offer educational opportunities about pressing issues impacting our community.

I'm so proud of the continuum of care YWCA Boulder County provides to our community. We will get up and continue to do the work until injustice is rooted out, until institutions are transformed, and until the world sees women, girls, and people of color of all ages the way we do:

EQUAL. POWERFUL. UNSTOPPABLE.

With Deepest Appreciation,

Debbie
CEO, YWCA Boulder County



**Mark your calendars for Colorado Gives Day—
Tuesday, December 7!**

You can schedule your donation in support of YWCA Boulder County starting November 1.

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December 7, 2021

ColoradoGivesDay.org

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Boulder County

2222 14th Street, Boulder, CO 80302

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YWCA'S MISSION TO
ELIMINATE RACISM
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