

eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

Northern New Jersey

Bergen • Essex • Hudson • Morris • Passaic

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## **YWCA Northern NJ Honors Civic Leaders & Organizations that Stand Against Racism at Its 8th Annual Racial Justice Awards Event**

In observance of YWCA's annual Stand Against Racism campaign, YWCA Northern New Jersey (YWCANNJ) hosted its 8th annual Racial Justice Awards honoring anti-racist trailblazers who are working to eliminate racism and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all people. The ceremony took place at the De Hart Community Center in Maplewood on Monday, April 25.

The 2022 Racial Justice Award recipients were:

- BD: YWCA Northern New Jersey Racial Justice Advocacy & Activism Award
- Rhona Vega, Founder & CEO Parent Matterz: YWCA Northern New Jersey Theodora Lacey Award
- AAPI Montclair: YWCA Northern New Jersey Pastor Johnson Award
- Laila Jeffries-El, Student, Bergen County Academies High School: YWCA Northern New Jersey Dr. Arnold Brown Award

“Since the start of the pandemic, our country has seen a troubling rise in racist incidents targeting marginalized communities. As a result, individuals, companies, and nonprofits have shown themselves as allies by stepping up and pushing back on those who wish to cause harm. YWCA Northern New Jersey is proud to recognize the amazing recipients who are doing incredible work ensuring and promoting racial justice in their areas of influence,” remarked YWCA Northern NJ CEO Helen Archontou. “This ceremony is a reminder to those leaders that their commitment to making our world a more just and safe place has not gone unnoticed.”

YWCA USA's signature Stand Against Racism campaign is annually observed to raise awareness about the negative impact of institutional and structural racism in communities nationwide and to build solidarity among those who work toward racial justice. This campaign was founded and pioneered by YWCA Trenton and YWCA Princeton in 2007, and later grew to national prominence in 2010 when an additional 80 YWCA local associations across the nation participated.

Sponsoring the 2022 Racial Justice Awards were, BD, Konica Minolta, and Mr. and Mrs. Roderick Thomas. Awardees were selected by the Racial Justice Awards Committee for their commitment to dismantling racism and building awareness through education and outreach.

**About YWCA Northern New Jersey**

For over a century, YWCA Northern New Jersey has improved the lives of thousands of women, girls, and families and is on the forefront of the fight against gender and racial discrimination. We work to build more just and inclusive communities through programs for women and girls, anti-racism training, and policy advocacy. We operate healingSPACE, Bergen County's only Sexual Violence Resource Center (hotline number: 201-487-2227) and provide year-round child care, and senior wellness programs. YWCA Northern New Jersey serves Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, and Passaic counties. To learn more, visit [ywcannj.org](http://ywcannj.org) and follow @ywcannj on social media.