

eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

North Central Washington

**YWIRE**

MARCH 2016

**YWCA  
IS ON A  
MISSION**



## The YWCA Celebrates Women's History Month

### A Message from our Executive Director

This month is a particularly special month for YWCA's around the globe.

For many years, YWCA's all over have been at the forefront of social change and more specifically, women's social, economic and domestic equality.



As March draws to a close, we also bring to an end our celebration of Women's History Month. While there are so many incredible examples of admirable women throughout history, there are many women and their stories who throughout time have gone unnamed, unsung, and unknown.

One of those women, who you will have the opportunity to read more about later on in this month's newsletter is Kim Gun-Ja, a South Korean women who was forced into prostitution and is now one of only 55 registered South Korean women who were used as sex-slaves by the Japanese during World War II. Her life may not hold shining milestones for womankind, yet her story is an important one to tell. Her struggles are important to recognize for the future of womankind.

During the rest of Women's History Month, I invite you to reflect on the women in your own lives whose stories, struggles, and character inspire you. I invite you to celebrate and recognize these women not only during the month of March, but every day.

Speaking of celebrating others, In April I invite you to join us at our 2nd Annual Stand Against Racism Day! We will join YWCA's across the United States in creating awareness in communities' nationwide. We are very excited about this year's Stand Against Racism festivities which will be located on the Campus of Wenatchee Valley College. This event is free and open to the public! On behalf of the YWCA Staff and

Board of Directors, we look forward to seeing you there!

**Save the Date: April 28th, 2016 9 am-1 pm**

In Gratitude,



## **Women's History Month 2016: Celebrating The Nameless, The Faceless, The Invisible**

**By Yumhee Park**

**Program Assistant for the Health and Reproductive  
Rights Department, National Women's Law Center**



Kim Gun-ja, comfort woman survivor

Which of these is not like the other?

Amelia Earhart, aviator.

Virginia Woolf, novelist.

Frida Kahlo, artist.

Kim Gun-ja, comfort woman.

While the first three women have been recognized for their achievements, oftentimes, women like Kim Gun-ja are left to fade as sad stories of women who have been subject to patriarchal violence. But why should their story and voice be any less important and recognized while we celebrate Women's History Month? March marks Women's History Month and the theme is a celebration of women of character, courage, and commitment. Many times, we are eager to recognize those who have achieved major milestones for women, but leave reports or stories of survivors of indescribable violence to find their place in posts dedicated to sympathies. Women survivors of violence deserve recognition and their heartbreaking stories should serve as a reminder that these are crimes against humanity. Unfortunately, instead of being recognized, some such victims are being systematically forgotten.

I remember being in my early teens when I first learned about how Korean, Chinese, and other Asian women were used as "comfort women" during World War II for the Japanese army. I was in my mother's childhood home when my mom and aunts first taught me the terrible atrocities the Japanese army inflicted on these women. No names were mentioned; these women were rendered nameless, faceless, and invisible by their aggressors.

The story of Kim Gun-ja is one just recently reported. She lives in a nursing home created for South Korean women who were forced into prostitution. The reporter writes about a picture she has taken (a gift from a local company) with a wedding dress and flowers that holds more bitterness than fondness for what might have been her life.

Too often, though, stories like hers are just passing ones, saturated with bitterness and anger - women continue to be left nameless and faceless, the way their aggressors meant for them to be. With only 55 South Korean women left as registered former sex slaves from the war, their voices will soon fade into a sad part of South Korean history, with not much global recognition of them as courageous women who had to endure such long periods of trauma. Kim laments and asks, "Once the victims are gone, who will step in and fight for us?"

Instead of respect and apologies, women like Kim Gun-ja are met with deplorable remarks from Japanese politicians. In 2013, Toru Hashimoto, mayor of Osaka said, "In the circumstances in which bullets are flying like rain and wind, the soldiers are running around at the risk of losing their lives . . . If you want them to have a rest in such a situation, a comfort women system is necessary. Anyone can understand that." Then, earlier this year, a Japanese government spokesman stated that there was a need to re-examine the Kono statement, an apology from Japan acknowledging that it's Imperial military had indirect involvement in sexual slavery during World War II, to reevaluate the background and evidence of statements made by comfort women. Finally, Gawker came under fire for making a tasteless joke comparing a dating website to Imperial Japan and their use of comfort women, which fueled a new hashtag #GawkingAtRapeCulture.

All these responses indeed fuel rape culture and serve to belittle the experiences of these women while keeping them invisible and voiceless.

As March comes to a close, I would like to celebrate and recognize the comfort women of World War II. The countless girls who have endured gang rapes in India. And all victims of sexual assault for their hardship and their courage to continue on and their commitment to their lives. These women are examples of pure strength within terrible circumstances and deserve praise as well as compensation and apologies for all the trauma endured. This Women's History Month, let us not only celebrate the famously influential women throughout history, but also the invisible survivors, such as Kim Gun-ja, and remember to continue persevering for a world that may one day be free of senseless violence.

The logo consists of an orange square with the words "STAND AGAINST RACISM" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The text is arranged in three lines: "STAND" on the top line, "AGAINST" on the middle line, and "RACISM" on the bottom line.

**STAND  
AGAINST  
RACISM**

## **Save the Date: Stand Against Racism 2016!**

Stand Against Racism is a signature campaign of YWCA USA to build community among those who work for racial justice and to raise awareness about the negative impact of institutional and structural racism in our

communities. This campaign is one part of our larger national strategy to fulfill our mission of eliminating racism.

In 2015, over 750 locations hosted Stand Against Racism events across 44 states! YWCA NCW was one of those locations, where we took a stand in front of the YWCA

Store, located at 231A N. Wenatchee Avenue.

Sadly, institutional and structural racism is ever present in the Wenatchee Valley and surrounding communities. Many times it goes unnoticed or its existence is denied. We invite you to Take A Stand With Us, and raise attention and awareness among our community.

This year, Stand Against Racism 2016 promises to be amazing event here in North Central Washington. This years stand will feature a FREE Bar-B-Que sponsored by WVC Senate, a variety of speakers, a selfie station for social media fun, voter registration, and much more!

Where: Wenatchee Valley College-Van Tassel Hall

When: Thursday, April 28th 2016

Time: 9am-1pm

What: FREE & Open to the Public!

For more information or if you want to learn more on how to participate in this year's Stand Against Racism event please contact:

**Alyssa Garcia**

**509.662.3531 ext.115**

**[Alyssa@ywcancw.org](mailto:Alyssa@ywcancw.org)**

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## Beyond the Orange Doors

Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the YWCA's iconic orange double doors?

Interested in getting a firsthand look at our facilities, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and learning about the life changing work that happens within our walls?



SIGN UP today for our "**Beyond the Orange Doors**" luncheon tours! We will provide you with a light lunch and refreshments, an "inspirational" tour, and an opportunity to learn what YWCA NCW is all about!

These short 50 minute lunch events are absolutely **FREE**, and there will be no soliciting of any sort. We encourage individuals, community groups, clubs, as well as service organizations to attend. The following tour date is currently available\*:

- Wednesday, April 13th, 2015 at 12 pm

To sign up or for more information about "Beyond the Orange Doors", please contact:

**Alyssa Martinez**

YWCA NCW Community Relations Manager

**Phone:** 509.662.3531 ext. 115

**Email:** [alyssa@ywcancw.org](mailto:alyssa@ywcancw.org)

*\*Dates & times may be subject to change*

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## Chris's Story:

**YWCA NCW** is **On A Mission:** to empower women and families through assistance, support, and education. Chris is just one of many inspiring examples of this mission being accomplished right here in our community. Here is his story:

*"My name is Chris, I'm 33 years old, and a single father of 2 children whom I have custody of. I have been back and forth between Walla Walla and Wenatchee the past 10 years. My children and I moved back to Wenatchee last year to be closer to family.*



*I was having trouble getting any call backs or interviews, and so I went to Service Alternatives and was able to get an interview and a job because of the YWCA's Job Training Program. Before working with the YWCA, I had issues talking to new people, and difficulty with starting conversations. I also had self-esteem issues which I was able to overcome while working here.*

*I am proud of this organization and all of the help they offer to women and underprivileged families. I just want to say Thank You to the YWCA for giving me an opportunity to better myself, and for giving me motivation and new found hope.*

Chris is just one of the many individuals who walk through our orange doors just needing someone to believe in them, someone to support and encourage them on their journey, and who find the support and resources they need to put the pieces of their lives back together again. This is what we're all about here at YWCA NCW. We're in the business of changing lives.

If you or someone you know has a story about someone whose life has changed because of YWCA NCW, or if there is someone that changed your life or empowers others, we want to know! Please email us any stories and/or pictures to [Alyssa@ywcancw.org](mailto:Alyssa@ywcancw.org) or send them by mail along with your contact information to:

YWCA NCW  
Attn: E-News  
212 1st St.

[Find out more about our programs here](#)

## YWACT Advocacy Corner



### Advocacy Works!

*Written by Denise Miller,  
Firesteel Advocacy Manager*

The 2016 state legislative regular session wrapped up last week. Thanks to those who took part in some form of advocacy, we had some important victories!

#### **FAIR TENANT SCREENING AND EVICTION REPORTING**

Advocates have been working for years to make the tenant screening process more transparent and fair. This year, a bill passed that will require landlords to disclose whether they will accept a reusable tenant screening report. This means that soon, people who are looking for housing can pay just once for a report and share it with multiple landlords who accept the reusable report. The new system will potentially save tenants hundreds of dollars.

The same law will also help ensure that screening reports do not unfairly reflect eviction proceedings. It will prohibit a tenant screening company from reporting an eviction that did not actually become an eviction. For example, in cases where a tenant prevailed in court or if an eviction was filed without cause, it will not be reported. Currently, even evictions in which a tenant "won" is listed as an eviction. This law will help ensure a more fair and just way of reporting.

Advocates sent lawmakers hundreds of messages that really made a difference this winter. Not every item on our legislative agenda passed, but everyone's advocacy efforts contributed to educating elected officials about policies that will help our communities.

**LAWMAKERS ARE STILL IN OLYMPIA, AND WE STILL NEED YOUR ADVOCACY**  
When the regular session ended on March 10, Gov. Inslee quickly called a 30-day special session for legislators to work out a final budget. Passing a budget that invests in affordable housing and programs is crucial; please continue to follow the action and advocate with our partners at the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance.

## Babies on Board!

You can help make a difference in the lives of women and children in our community *right now!* YWCA NCW is in urgent need of various items for Emogene's Emergency Shelter and New Bridges Transitional Housing. We have more than one infant in the shelter now, and as a result are in great need of various items. Items can be dropped off at **212 1st St. in Wenatchee, Monday thru Friday from 10am to 3pm.**

- New or gently used baby blankets
- Bassinet sheets
- Unopened packages of pacifiers
- Baby Powder
- Baby Shampoo/Wash
- Baby food and Formula



## Volunteer Your Time & Talents Today!

Make the decision TODAY to make a difference In the lives of others. How can you do this? It's simple: volunteer with YWCA North Central Washington Today! We have a vast array of opportunities available for volunteering:

**\*\*We are seeking handy volunteers who are in the know about building maintenance. If you have an hour or two to spare, we could use some occasional help in the following areas:**

-Changing lightbulbs

-paint touch up

-basic plumbing (leaky faucets, slow to go sinks).

-This is a great idea for service clubs, church groups, and youth looking to gain service badges and experience!

We also are looking for community members to join in one (or more) of our standing committees!

1. Community Engagement & Advocacy
2. Fundraising & Development
3. Finance & Sustainability
4. Nominating & Personnel

**For more information or to fill out a volunteer application, please visit our website: [www.ywancw.org](http://www.ywancw.org) or come see at 212 1st St. in Wenatchee, Monday thru Friday from 10am to 3pm.**

## Save the Date: 2nd Annual Hallow-Queens Drag Show!

Mark your calendars! The 2nd Annual YWCA Hallow-Queens Drag show is set for Saturday, October 29th 2016 at the Numerica Performing Arts Center in downtown Wenatchee!



Don't miss out, this year's show is going to be spectacular!

Stay Tuned for Ticket Information and Show Times!

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for the latest updates or visit our website: [www.ywancw.org](http://www.ywancw.org)

[View our calendar here!](#)



## YWCA & Fred Meyer Community Rewards!

Support the YWCA NCW just by shopping at Fred Meyer with your Rewards Card! Fred Meyer donates \$2.6 million each year - up to \$650,000 each quarter - to local schools, community organizations and nonprofits: including YWCA! All you have to do is link your Rewards Card and scan it every time you shop at Fred Meyer.

You are now able to ***link your Rewards Card to the YWCA NCW by following the link below.*** Whenever you use your Rewards Card when shopping at Freddy's, you will be helping the YWCA earn a donation from Fred Meyer. If you do not have a Rewards Card, you can sign up for one at the Customer Service Desk of any Fred Meyer store.

[Link your rewards card to YWCA NCW Now!](#)



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