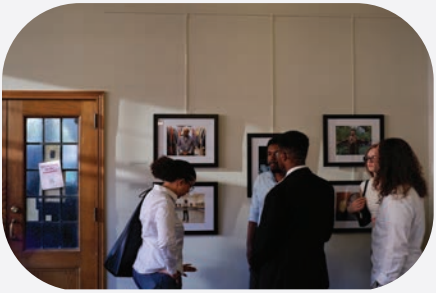
UNIVERSITY YMCA
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



ANNUAL REPORT 2025–2026









FOR THIS MOMENT

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OPENING STATEMENT

There is a rhythm to life at the Y, a pulse of days and weeks spreading over months. Welcoming students to campus, residents to the third floor, and immigrants to our community. Seeing student organizations burst into action. Celebrating new Bailey Scholars with their family and friends. Board and committee meetings. Friday Forum and Art @ the Y programming that stirs our imagination and calls us into service for the things that matter. Potlucks. Y-Thai lunches. Meetings with friends and supporters. Workdays in the garden beds around the building. The mundane but necessary tasks that keep the lights on.

And then someone approaches the front desk, or finds us in our office, or pulls us aside at an event.

This moment is the one that matters.

The University Y has touched their life at just the right time. A moment of hopeful searching for community. A moment of need. A moment of anger and frustration that spurs them to act. A moment of invitation to partner on an initiative. A moment of surprise that a place like this exists – right here – inviting them to be a part of something.



Y Staff at the Welcome Back Open House.

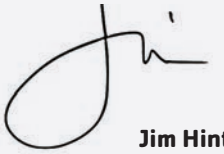
I've come to understand how profoundly important the University Y has been to so many over our 153 years. How we have been an unexpected discovery at just the right moment in their lives. How we have become an unwavering source of support and leadership for work that seeks just and equitable change that improves lives, protects our planet, and strengthens our communities.

The political, social, and cultural changes of the past few years have tested us — much like our student leaders over sixty years ago when told they were living in a time of crisis marked by 'insecurity, confusion, frustration, and cynicism.' We remain undaunted, focused on mission. As we were then, we were made for this moment.

As you enjoy this year's report, you can be certain of three things about your University Y:

We are needed now. We know how to do this work together. We know why it matters.

With continuing gratitude,



Jim Hinterlong, Ph.D
Executive Director
Member since 1988

2025–2026 STAFF

Aeraena Yang
Korean Community Worker, NAWC

Amy Whelpley
DOJ Accredited Representative, NAWC

Andrea Arciniegas
Intake Specialist, NAWC

Andrew Tao
Chinese Community Worker, NAWC

Ann Rasmus
Associate Director

Belinda Guillén
Immigrant Family Services Manager, NAWC

Daniela Vergara
Associate Director & DOJ, NAWC

Esther Asandjo
Francophone Community Worker, NAWC

Francisco Baires
Director, NAWC

Huiqing Zhang
Grants Finance Manager (Former), NAWC

Isaac Ackerman
Resident Director

Jennifer Romine
Office Manager (Former)

Jim Hinterlong
Executive Director

Joel Diaz
Legal Assistant, NAWC

Jonathan Alday
Paralegal/DOJ Trainee, NAWC

Kevin Hines
Custodian

Marc Alexander
Director of Development & Membership

Martice Hawkins
Building Staff

Mymy Gnahoré
Immigrant Family Services Coordinator, NAWC

Paola Aguilera
Intake Specialist, NAWC

Roger Master
Building Superintendent

Rosa Ibett Garcia de Colina
Latine Community Worker, NAWC

Sherry Lorton
Business Manager

Sophia Beltran Puig
Intake Specialist, NAWC

Sydney Curts
Director of Student Leadership & Engagement

Yazmin Fernandez Morales
Latine Community Worker, NAWC

Student Assistants and Interns

Aarushi Mittal
Immigrant Family Services Intern

Alexziah Hagler
Student Assistant

Amelie Dall'erba
Special Projects Intern

Ani Apresyan
Student Engagement Intern, Democracy Fellow

Ashley Kim
Legal Services Intern

Ashley Eve Lulkin
Legal Services Intern

Bryana Perez
Immigrant Family Services Intern

Carlos Hernandez
Legal Services Intern

Cassie Lopez
Legal Services Intern

Emma Fahnestock
Graphic Design Intern

Erika Templeton
Immigrant Family Services Intern

Fabi Vega-Sanchez
Special Projects Intern

Faith Ezeanyim
Student Assistant

Gitsselle Hernandez
Immigrant Family Services Intern

Hannah Castro
Legal Services Intern

Julian Padilla
Student Assistant

Kiara Barragan
Legal Services Intern

Lizela Figueroa
Student Assistant

Maiah Cabral
NAI Legal Services Intern

Manny Santos
Student Assistant

Murphy Foster
Student Engagement Intern

Salvatore Romero Estrada
Student Assistant

Sandy Lechuga
Student Engagement Intern

Yeimi Alday
Student Assistant

OUR BOARDS

Board of Governers

Nathan Alexander
Chair

Monica Scott
Vice-Chair

Linda Matkowski
Treasurer

Lily Rybka
Secretary

Angela Segura

Ani Apresyan

Anna Tsai

Babatunde Amao

Belinda De La Rosa

Betoel Escobar

Charlynne Ligo

Jacqueline Aguayo Sánchez

Jennifer Bergmark

Joe Chamley
Past Chair

Kev Murphy

Kirsten Schaefer

Leah Robberts-Mosser

Ross Wantland

Sarah Lira

Steve Rugg

Valerie Sivicek

Thank you to those whose service ended during 2025–2026

Eric Vargas

Faizi Tofighi

Maya Moloney

Nina Stepaniants

Ria Bawiskar

Sophie Chiewtrakoon

Tracy Dace

Board of Trustees

Lauren Haynes
Chair

Ryne Dionisio
Vice-Chair

Jay Corwin
Secretary

Aditi Singh

Anne Robin

Cassie Carroll

Darrell Hartweg

Debbie Rugg

Diane Pearse

Ellen Dahlke

Gloria Gleave

Greg Lindsey

Jack Lavin

James Young

Julia Kellman

Mary Beastall

Naomi Jakobsson

Philip Martin

Quintin Anderson

Rebecca Guyette

Ron Hoffman

Scott Herrick

Scott Peters

Tom Seals

Willard Broom

Emeritus Trustees

Arthur Wyatt (Deceased)

Glenn Stout (Deceased)

Ralph Davis (Deceased)

Richard Hutchison (Deceased)

Thomas Latzer (Deceased)

Walter McMahon (Deceased)

William Browder (Deceased)

Student Board

Jacqueline Aguayo Sánchez
President

Sarah Lira
Vice-President

Lily Rybka
Treasurer

Kirsten Schaefer
Secretary

Charlynne Ligo
Membership Director

Adrian Vargas

Angela Segura

Ani Apresyan

Elena Jackson

Gianna Camacho

Izzy Wilder

Jania Pitchford

Jovany Vazquez

Lauren Sikma

Tara Briann Gutzmer

ART @ THE Y

continues to bring in thought-provoking art exhibitions, attracting new and familiar faces to the Y.



Jameel Bridgewater's DEEP END reflected on water as a form of bound freedoms. It situated personal and collective memory within larger historical frameworks, including the politics of public pool segregation, the preservation of familial archives, and the legacies of Pan-Africanist thought.

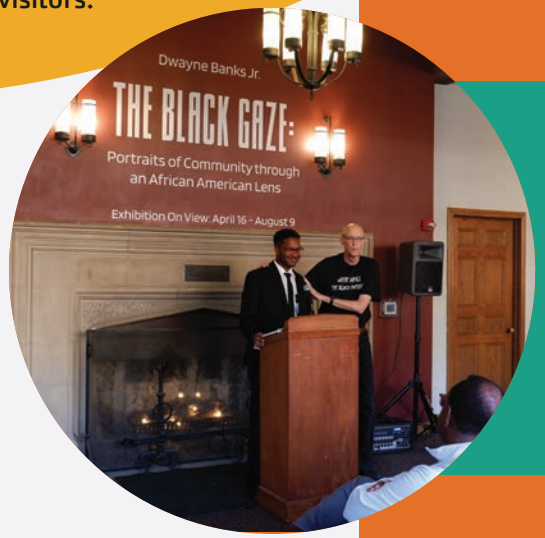
Emmy Lingscheit exhibited **Contingencies: Navigating a World of Accelerating Change** at the start of the Fall semester. This print show explored how social justice and ecological justice are inextricably linked.

Stacey Robinson organized **BLXCK UNCANNY: Tales of the Black + the Weird**, showcasing the work of Oriana Crutcher, Elias Finkelman, Patrick Earl Hammie, and Black Kirby. Collectively, the work in this show explored the idea of race and a response to its future impact.

Curated by **Shannon Percoco** and **Katie Snyder, Art of the Resistance** brought together 25 community artists advocating for local change, supporting marginalized communities, and using their work as a form of resistance.

REGENERATION: Painting the Prairie's Renewal by **Kim Curtis** celebrated the ongoing processes of destruction and restoration in our grasslands, forests, and wetlands.

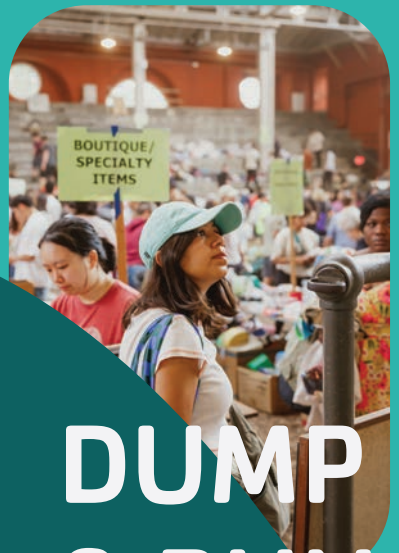
The academic year concluded with **Dwayne Banks Jr.'s** photography exhibit, **THE BLACK GAZE**, featuring 30 local Black leaders from the Champaign-Urbana community. The work aims to challenge prevailing stereotypes, contribute to the ongoing visual legacy of African American photographers, and help define the meaning of "Blackness" within the context of a small Midwestern town in the early 21st century. Murphy Gallery has been a popular meeting point for group discussions and has received a lot of exciting press and many visitors.



"Banks documents people like Winslow, Davis, and Starks not as archetypes, but as specific, breathing entities. The range of expressions throughout the exhibit embodies the stoic, joyful, and determined, and serves as a refusal to let some monolithic 'Black experience' flatten the individual. He recognizes and celebrates their vulnerability and their power simultaneously."

-Amy Penne, Smile Politely

Scan to read full article!



DUMP & RUN 2025



On a Saturday morning in August, over 600 students and community members lined up outside the UI Stock Pavilion, waiting to participate in one of the Y's signature sustainability programs, Dump & Run®.
Since 2001 this program has collected reusable goods from campus and community members, and repurposed them into the homes of students and others at low cost, through the Big Sale over move-in weekend in the Fall.







This year saw record numbers since returning from hiatus in 2020, with highs in collection dropoffs, furniture pickups, and sale attendees. An estimated 4,000 individuals came through the Stock Pavilion.



Dump & Run is also one of the Y's biggest volunteer opportunities! 110 volunteers (and one dog!) worked over 1,000 hours during August, from high school and college students, to young professionals and retirees. Thanks to their efforts, the program was able to continue to repurpose literally tons of potential waste from clothing and books, to kitchen and household items, to electronics and furniture. The Big Sale continues to be an important resource of low cost goods for returning, incoming, and international students.

Proceeds from the Big Sale cover the cost of the program, support the general operations and programming of the University Y, with a portion going directly to the Y's Student Board and Residents Funds.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT
RUTA RAUBER

"Every August, that neon green t-shirt has come out of the dresser drawer for another round of action in the Stock Pavilion. It's been my uniform that I have worn proudly these many years. It has been an honor and a privilege to be a part of the University Y."



Since 2005 Ruta Rauber has been a fixture at Dump & Run®. One of our program's longest serving volunteers, she has spent countless hours helping sort items during collections, and prepare them for the Big Sale. In recent years she served as the coordinator for the kitchen and household departments, two of the largest areas for (re) usable goods. As Ruta became more involved in Dump & Run, she also became more committed to the Y, serving on the Annual Dinner & Auction planning committee, and from 2021-2024 on our Board of Governors.

This year Ruta announced her "retirement" from the program, as she and her husband Bob moved to Houston to be closer to their grandchildren. Her time as a volunteer is a great example of how Dump & Run can impact individuals in our community. We're grateful for Ruta's many years of service, and all of the volunteers that make Dump & Run happen each year!

1,041
DUMP AND RUN VOLUNTEER HOURS ACROSS ALL VOLUNTEERS

FRIDAY FORUM
+ CONVERSATION CAFE

Friday Forum + Conversation Café remains a vital program for the campus and community to hear thought-provoking discussions. The University YMCA continues to partner with Diversity & Social Justice Education, and consistently draws 100+ attendees weekly.

Throughout the academic year, we brought in diverse voices and topics related to the mission of the Y. Alumnus Robert F. Case shared his experience and photographs from the early 1970s campus activism. Emile Suotonye DeWeaver discussed prison justice and activism. Urbana Mayor DeShawn Williams gave a community-focused address. Leaders from the Macon County, Champaign County, and Cairo, IL African American Heritage Trails shared the history and future of their organizations.

1,693
FRIDAY FORUM ATTENDEES



Sam Smith presents at FF+CC.

INTERFAITH

Monthly First Tuesday Dialogues have continued to rotate throughout the community's places of worship. These gatherings create shared space for conversation, reflection, and learning across faith traditions.

The 2026 Annual Illinois Interfaith Conference hosted Rev. Ciera Bates-Chamberlain from Live Free Illinois and Dr. Rami Nashashibi from the Inner-City Muslim Action Network.

Their keynote address, Politics of Love: Interfaith Organizing for Democracy, emphasized the importance of bridge building in the current political climate. Conference attendees also volunteered at Sola Gratia Farm in Urbana.

The University Y partners with the Interfaith Alliance of Champaign County, the Religious Workers Association, and the Interfaith in Action student group. This work would not be possible without these partnerships.





Interfaith Conference 2026.

DEMOCRACY

We welcomed Ani Apresyan as our Democracy Fellow to help brainstorm potential programs and create a student-focused lens for this work. She was invited to participate in a small group discussion in DC, led by Harry Boyte. The group participated in structured dialogue about what civic careers look like in a polarized era. The conversation included students from Georgetown University, George Washington University, American University, and Towson University.



Democracy Fellow, Ani Apresyan, with organizer, Harry Boyte.

NEW AMERICAN WELCOME CENTER

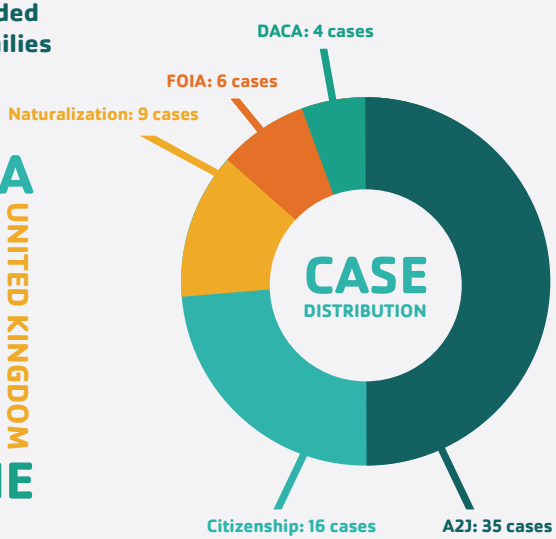
Continuing to help immigrants flourish through services and programs.



Y Board of Governors and Staff at NAWC offices.

The Legal Services Team provided support to individuals and families originating from 15 countries and territories:





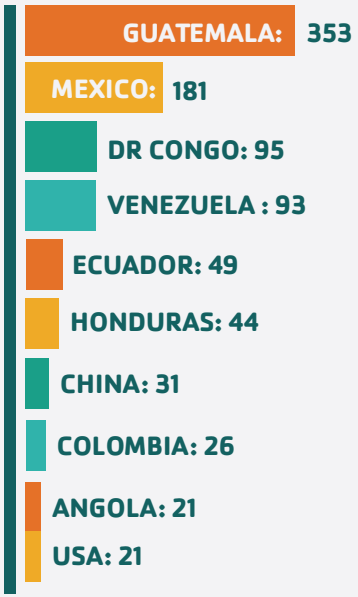
Our Legal Services Team conducted 165 legal consultations and supported 70 active immigration cases. Services included citizenship applications, DACA renewals, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, Certificates of Naturalization, and broader Access-to-Justice (A2J) support. Clients reflected both the diversity of our community and the growing need for trusted, culturally responsive immigration legal services. Through consultations, case management, and legal advocacy, we helped individuals and families navigate complex immigration processes while strengthening long-term stability and belonging.

Our Family Services Team provided direct support to 110 families and 1,059 individuals representing more than 60 countries and territories. Through case management, resource navigation, and emergency assistance, we distributed $94,875 in direct financial assistance, helping families maintain housing stability, meet basic needs, and navigate unexpected crises. Rent assistance represented the largest area of support.

We also strengthened community connections through 255 workshops, presentations, and outreach events that engaged 6,590 community members. Our multilingual helpline served as a critical entry point into services, generating 1,437 contacts through phone calls, WhatsApp messages, web forms, and in-person connections. Together, these efforts advanced family stability, increased access to resources, and ensured immigrant and refugee families continue to have trusted pathways to support and belonging.

TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

The Family Services Team supported individuals and families representing more than 60 countries and territories.



COMMUNITY ACCESS & ENGAGEMENT



COMMUNITY ACCESS DISTRIBUTION:

Multilingual phone and WhatsApp access remain the primary pathways through which community members connect with services and support.

EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS



1,225+
INDIVIDUALS SERVED

165
LEGAL CONSULTATIONS

70
LEGAL CASES

110
FAMILIES SUPPORTED

$94,875
OF DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE DISTRIBUTED

1,437
HELPLINE CONTACTS

6,590
COMMUNITY MEMBERS REACHED



STATEMENT OF GRATITUDE FOR NAWC

My name is Carmen Reyes. I came to the United States in 2023 with my husband and children, and we settled in the city of Champaign. A few months after arriving, I found myself in need of help because I had to travel to Chicago for an ICE appointment, and I didn't have the money or transportation to get there. I was first told to contact The Immigration Project, but at that time they couldn't help me and referred me to the New American Welcome Center (NAWC). That's how I first learned about this organization.

Since then, I have stayed in contact with NAWC because they have always given me guidance and support whenever I needed it. In October 2025, I went through a very difficult situation when a pipe in my mobile home broke and caused flooding. The floor and especially the bathroom were badly damaged. I used the little money I had to try to fix it, but the person I hired made things worse and damaged the pipes even more, leaving the bathroom almost unusable.
On top of that, expenses kept adding up, and I was unable to pay the rent for the land where my mobile home is located, as well as the utility bills. Because of this situation, I reached out to NAWC again to ask for guidance and support.

Rosa, a staff member of the organization, supported me throughout the whole process of looking for financial help. She referred me to RPC, specifically to the LIHEAP program, to help with utility bills, and she also opened and followed up on my case at NAWC.

Thanks to her support, I was able to receive financial assistance to cover both rent and the necessary repairs for my mobile home. During that same time, which was during the winter, Rosa also invited me to take part in the Piñata Party that NAWC organizes every year. At that event, my family and I received four jackets to help us stay warm. She also helped me enroll my children in the Salvation Army program, through which they received toys during the holiday season.

More recently, in March of this year, I had a dental problem that required medical care. After my appointment, I received a bill of around $600, which was very difficult for me to pay. I once again reached out to NAWC for guidance. Rosa referred me to Frances Nelson and Promise Healthcare, where I was able to get help reducing the bill to only $40.

I am deeply grateful to NAWC and to everyone who is part of this organization for the support, guidance, and kindness they have given me over the years. Thanks to them, I have been able to get through very difficult times and find resources when I needed them most. It is also very comforting to know that there are organizations that help people in vulnerable situations regardless of their religion, race, or immigration status. Their work has had a very positive impact on my life and my family.

KINGFISHER

On April 3, 2026, the University YMCA Student Board, representing 13 student organizations, published a public letter to Chancellor Charles Isbell Jr. in support of a new mascot for the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign: the Kingfisher.
In preparing their statement, student leaders presented their letter to the University YMCA Board of Governors. The Board unanimously endorsed the students' letter and prepared its own behalf of the entire University YMCA. Both statements recognize the University YMCA's unique relationship with the University's prior mascot, and responsibility to help establish a new mascot that serves as a unifying element of campus culture and tradition.

The King's Guard, organizers of the Kingfisher movement, invited the Student Board to speak at the April 27 Faculty Senate meeting. StuBo member, Ani Apresyan, delivered remarks.

The Y excitedly worked with the Student Board, King's Guard, and local artist Leslie Kimble to proudly display a painting of the Kingfisher on our front windows.





Scan to read the letters!

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



We welcomed students back to campus at our Annual Open House where each of our student groups and tenants tabled and live music flowed through the building. The Kingfisher even showed up to help us greet people!

The Student Board hosted a retreat at Spurlock Museum. Attendees spent their afternoon developing professional skills with a workshop facilitated by Brett Dengate, and ended with team-building activities.





We were lucky to have three Student Engagement interns this year, Ani, Murphy, and Sandy. As a team, they helped with social media, campus engagement, and program support.

BAILEY SCHOLARS

$211,000 in scholarships given | 46 Scholars and Fellows
11% International Student Scholars



Hannah McGee, Leadership Awardee, presenting at the Bailey Symposium.



2025-2026 Bailey Scholars at the Fall Awards reception.

Since 1957, the Bailey Scholarship program has supported students' education and community leadership. All Bailey Scholars receive financial support, but many find more at the Y.

By attending our previous programs with organizers Harry Boyte and Marie-Louise Ström, Vijay Shah (Graduate Fellow) was inspired to host his own nonviolence workshops focused through a Jainism lens. After attending Vijay's series of workshops in the Fall semester, Faizi Tofighi (Undergraduate Scholar) joined him in the spring as a cohost. They extended the workshops to include both Bahá'í and Jain perspectives on nonviolence.

At the start of 2026, the Bailey Steering Committee established an emergency aid grant to support previous and current Bailey Scholars experiencing financial hardship. This aid is to be used on unexpected expenses that would otherwise keep students from being able to continue their studies at the University of Illinois. We are grateful for the generosity of the Bailey community for making this invaluable resource available to our Scholars.



STUDENT PROFILES

OLUWAKEMI ADEYEMI

BAILEY FELLOW

Oluwakemi Adeyemi was first introduced to the University YMCA towards the end of the 2023/2024 academic year through an installment of the weekly bulletin of the College of Law. He quickly connected with the University YMCA because of the enabling environment created by the University YMCA for student leadership and engagement on campus, within the larger Champaign-Urbana community and globally.

Already committed to the Champaign-Urbana community through weekly volunteering at the Hope Center, a food pantry that supports hundreds of families in Champaign, Oluwakemi saw that the University YMCA's 150+ years presence on campus had built a reputation for excellence in social justice and global engagement, areas in which he is very passionate. When Oluwakemi attended the Friday Forum + Conversation Café of February 28, 2025 anchored by Rev. Terrance Thomas of Bethel AME, he was immersed into the role of the African Methodist Episcopal church in Champaign-Urbana; a role that epitomizes the contributions of African-American churches within their communities. This conversation underscored to Oluwakemi the need to remain engaged with the community that supports him.

This conversation also influenced Oluwakemi's Teaching Assistant role as he taught on the challenges of the first set of African Americans to be matriculated in the University of Illinois to access on-campus accommodation and how members of African American churches provided them with accommodation.

Because the University YMCA emphasizes that students should continue to develop their areas of leadership interest, Oluwakemi has continued to deepen his commitment to food security by supporting the work of the Hope Center. On campus, Oluwakemi served as the vice-president of the African Students' Organization (ASO) where he helped to deepen ASO's on-campus and off-campus partnerships. Internationally, he equally supports a non-governmental organization based in Lagos, Nigeria which leverages an online video-conferencing platform to mentor teenagers across Nigeria.

Through the Bailey Symposium, Oluwakemi presented his doctoral work that examines the trans-Atlantic slave trade connections of Benin Bronzes and how these connections may affect their ownership and repatriation questions.

Oluwakemi has also been part of the organizers of the University YMCA's New American Welcome Center's Africa Day celebrations.

As Oluwakemi continues his graduate education, his commitment to service remains firm.



Oluwakemi volunteered at NAWC's Africa Day.



STUDENT PROFILES

ISABELA JIMENEZ ROMAN

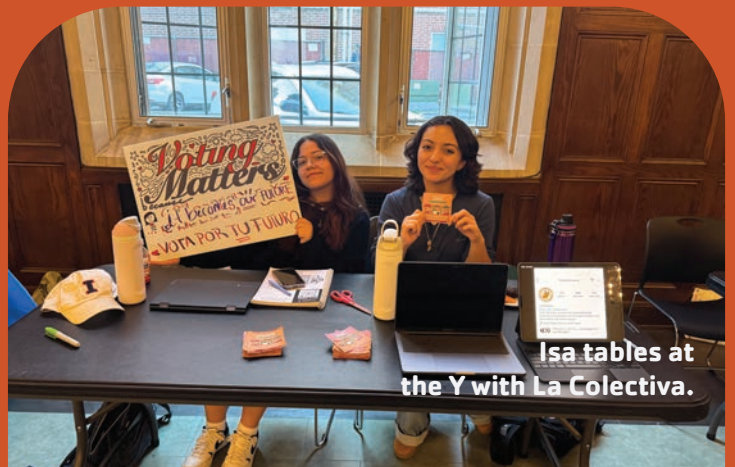
LA COLECTIVA

Throughout my four years at the University YMCA, I have grown not only as a student but as a leader and activist. What began as a place I turned to for community quickly became a foundation for my personal and professional development. The YMCA fostered an environment where I felt supported to step into leadership—not only within my organization, but within broader social justice spaces.

As President of La Colectiva, an advocacy and activism organization that promotes awareness and inclusion of Latine social and cultural issues, I have worked to create spaces that empower communities of color and challenge systems of oppression. The YMCA has been instrumental in supporting this work by providing a welcoming environment where organizing, dialogue, and action can thrive. Through its commitment to social justice and global engagement, the Y has helped strengthen my ability to lead with intention and purpose. My involvement with the YMCA also introduced me to the Diversity & Social Justice Education Center, where I served as an intern for two years. In this role, I developed my leadership skills through facilitating workshops and engaging first-year students in conversations about identity, equity, and social change. These experiences deepened my understanding of community-based education and the importance of creating inclusive learning spaces. Over the years, the YMCA has become more than just a building—it has become a second home. It is a place where I have found mentorship, friendship, and a sense of belonging. Whether through meaningful conversations, organizing efforts, or attending Friday Forum discussions with guest speakers, the YMCA consistently created opportunities for reflection and growth. During moments when marginalized communities faced heightened scrutiny, the YMCA remained a space of safety and support, providing resources and care for those who needed it most.

The University YMCA has shaped my undergraduate experience in profound ways. It has empowered me to grow as a leader, strengthened my commitment to advocacy, and connected me to a community rooted in justice and compassion.

I consider myself lucky as a first-generation student to have found a community where success is celebrated and not looked down upon.



Isa tables at the Y with La Colectiva.



STUDENT PROFILES

FAIZI TOFIGHI

STUDENT LEADER

The Y is a unique place at a unique time in the history of our world. In a time where unity is absolutely essential, the Y has brought together people and organizations of diverse purposes into the same physical space, where the proximity has resulted in all sorts of people bonding together through activities far more sophisticated than what is commonplace. These are bonds built not on everyday friendliness, or ease of access, or like-mindedness, but rather, like pieces of an intricate puzzle, individuals working together in manifold ways for the betterment of the world. Students come to the Y to eat free food, buy second-hand furniture, or hear an interesting speech, and find themselves looped into the work of helping new immigrants feel at home, providing quality education to prisoners, or learning active listening skills in an interfaith setting.

But the University Y has taken it a step further. It's tasted the secret sauce. The staff of the Y recognize that organization and unification require more than just dissemination of knowledge and getting everyone in the room together. Among several attributes, it requires love, and an appreciation for beauty. For many students, me included, the Y staff actually did feel like family. Even among themselves the relationships are strong: a number of the staff literally live on the same block and get together multiple nights a week. These are the types of relationships that are unfortunately not too common in America but crucial for the progress of a humanity, and they are characterized by a real desire to live and serve together.

Programs such as the Art at the Y not only support and highlight the efforts of local artists but allow beauty and a human touch to flourish in a society that too often focuses on efficiency, encourages putting minimal effort in to one's occupation, and pushes the requirements of our finer natures aside.

To the Y staff, students, and anyone else involved, thank you all so much! To those recently graduated, congratulations, and in these past few years I hope you grew a pair of wings that will enable you to soar!



STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Amnesty International
@uiucamnesty

SCAN @ UIUC
@scan.uiuc

Engineers Without Borders
@ewb.uiuc

Vis-A-Vis
@visavis.uiuc

I-CAUSE
@icauseuiuc

Philippine Student Association
@psa_uiuc

Project 4 Less
@project4less

La Colectiva
@lacolectivauiuc

Interfaith In Action
@interfaithinaction

Alternative Seasonal Breaks
@uiucasb

RASI
@rasi.uiuc

SECS
@secsuiuc

1873

- **Students for Environmental Concerns** Affiliated 1968
- **Vis-A-Vis** Affiliated 1981
- **Alternative Seasonal Breaks** Affiliated 1989
- **Philippine Student Association** Affiliated 1998
- **Amnesty International** Affiliated 2001
- **Engineers Without Borders** Affiliated 2007
- **Interfaith In Action** Affiliated 2010
- **La Colectiva** Affiliated 2010
- **Save the Children Action Network** Affiliated 2022
- **I-CAUSE** Affiliated 2022
- **RASI** Affiliated 2022
- **Project 4 Less** Affiliated 2024

2026

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



CATHERINE KEMP

B.S. '16

My freshman year roommate brought me along to a Green Observer meeting in fall 2012, which kicked off a terrific four years at the Y – a place that became one of my homes away from home while I was at UIUC and introduced me to some of my closest friends.

I wrote for the Green Observer for all four years, becoming co-editor-in-chief with my best friend Jess Tang by senior year. I was invited to be our Student Board representative during my sophomore year and served on StuBo until graduation. Being involved with StuBo introduced me to the beautiful broader world of the Y: I got to know the other student groups and ended up going on ASB trips to Memphis, TN and Bloomington, IN; tutoring with Vis-A-Vis; attending SECS and BikeFace; attending Friday Forum;



and more. Serving as a student member on the Board of Governors gave me insight into nonprofit management, and my leadership roles tested me and built my confidence.

Growing up, I was not really surrounded by many people who were politically or civically engaged. To be steeped in an environment where everyonewas committed to social and environmental justice was one of the most valuable parts of my time at the Y. While I appreciated my environmental science classes, my experiences at the Y gave me a different lens on environmental issues and helped me explore how to tackle them through multiple channels.

After graduation, I worked for a few years on sustainability at the Municipality of Anchorage, AK and eventually pursued a master's degree in urban planning, where I focused on climate adaptation and resilience. Today, I work for the Great Plains Institute, a nonprofit based in Minneapolis, where I get to work with local governments across the Midwest to advance their climate and clean energy goals.

My time at the Y helped me build a foundation that informs my personal and professional life to this day and I remain incredibly grateful for the support I received there, from staff and fellow students alike.

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Gifts made from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Thank you to all of our members, grantors and sponsors for their support.

Scan the QR code to make a gift to the Y, a specific program, or an endowed fund.

GIFTS TO ENDOWED FUNDS

Our Endowment provides resources for general operating expenses and specific programs. Through socially responsible investing, our endowment aligns with our values. We gratefully acknowledge members who made a gift to an endowed fund this year.

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The Heritage Circle is a critical part of building long-term financial stability for the University YMCA. Members are those that have either designated a planned gift to the Y, or made an outright gift of at least $5,000 to any fund within the University YMCA Endowment. We gratefully acknowledge our Heritage Circle Members, and the impact their commitments have for generations to come.

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BEQUESTS RECEIVED DURING FY26

Dr. Walter W. McMahon · Hugh A. Tyndall

LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Each year, the University YMCA honors individuals who positively impact the Y and the Champaign Urbana community. Award recipients are recognized for their commitment to service, and to our Association and mission. We are pleased to present our 2026 recipients.



Pastor Kris Light
Distinguished Service Award (Non-Student)

Jacqueline Aguayo Sánchez
Distinguished Service Award (Student)

Sarah Lira
Distinguished Service Award (Student)

Lauren Haynes
Gerald Brighton Young Alumni Award

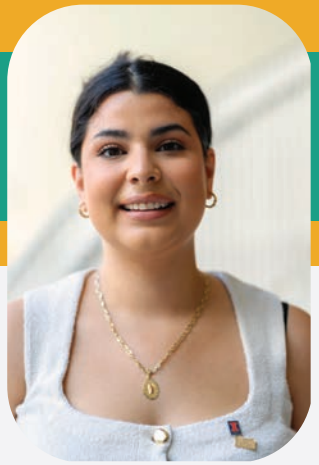
Lily Rybka
Harold W. Colvin Award for Undergraduate Leadership

Yingman Tang
J. Frederick Miller Award for Volunteer Service

Rachael Dietkus Miller
Edward Nestingen Distinguished Alumni Award

Rory Presto
John W. Price Award for Volunteer Service to International Understanding

A LETTER FROM OUR STUDENT PRESIDENT



To our chosen family at the University YMCA,

It is with great pride that we provide an update on the Student Board's achievements over the past academic year. When our organization was founded in 1873, it was comprised of a small cohort of individuals of that era. Today, in 2026, more than 1,000 students from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences call the University YMCA home.

Grounded in the Y's pillars of Social Justice, Environmental Protection, Interfaith Action, Global Engagement, and Democracy & Citizenship, we continue to foster a home away from home, just as we have for more than 150 years. With a legacy rooted in these pillars, the University YMCA is proudly affiliated with 12 Registered Student Organizations. This is something our Board holds close to its heart. Together, we embody what it means to respect and care for one another, provide support to those in need, and remain grounded in the values and history that brought us here.

The 2025–26 academic year came with many challenges. Yet, despite the political and social climate our nation endured, we stood grounded in our values and beliefs. We hosted a fall retreat with more than 30 attendees and collaborated on over 10 solidarity events across different organizations. I-CAUSE and Amnesty International reminded our community that immigration policy is fundamentally a human rights issue. Students for Environmental Concerns' Spring Rally brought together organizations ranging from Project4Less to La Colectiva and welcomed more than 100 attendees.

Regardless of the cause, our students continually showed up, spoke out, and made their voices heard.

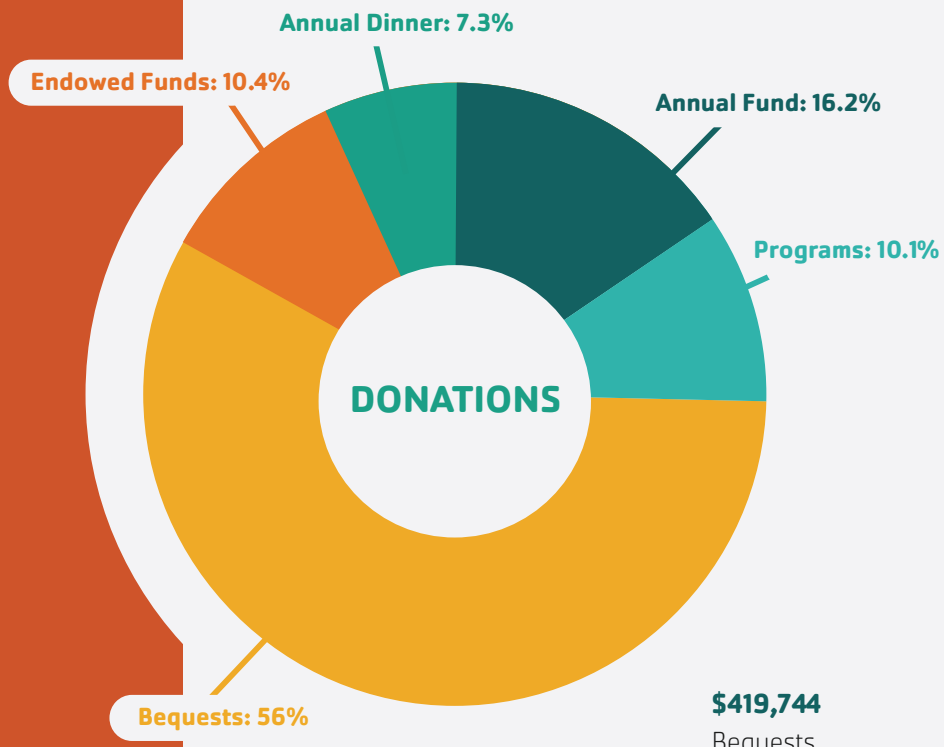
One of our proudest accomplishments this year was the growth of our partnerships and our collaboration with a new student movement on campus. Driven by our mission to foster a positive and representative campus culture, the Student Board wrote to Chancellor Isbell Jr., urging the University to officially adopt a new school mascot. In drafting this letter, we partnered with the King's Guard, a newly established student organization advocating for this effort. After sending the letter to Chancellor Isbell Jr., we shared it on our social media platforms. The overwhelming engagement the post received reflected the strong support for an official mascot and demonstrated our community's commitment to strengthening campus identity; an effort that has a long history with our University YMCA.

As the future of this Board continues the work of this past year, we are reminded that this journey did not begin with us. We simply continue the legacy of those who came before us manifested through a labor of love.

In solidarity,
Jacqueline Aguayo
Student President
2025–2026



FINANCIALS



$419,744
Bequests

$121,258
Annual Fund

$75,526
Programming

$78,128
Endowed Funds

$54,622
Annual Dinner

$749,278 **Total Donations**

KEY NUMBERS FOR 2026

18 FRIDAY FORUM SPEAKERS

206 ATTENDEES AT DINNER & AUCTION

40 YEARS OF Y THAI

16+ STUDENT STAFF

41 HERITAGE CIRCLE

55 MONTHLY RECURRING DONORS



Dinner & Auction attendees sign the time capsule.

UNIVERSITY YMCA

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