

For Immediate Release

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Ophelia Chambliss to be Honored by YWCA York

York, PA – (August 10, 2021) YWCA York announces Ophelia Chambliss as the Dorrie Leader Advocacy Award honoree for 2021, as selected by the board of director's advocacy committee. This award is sponsored by Stock and Leader Attorneys at Law. Chambliss will be recognized at an upcoming luncheon.

In 1995, YWCA York created the Dorrie Leader Advocacy Award to recognize women advocates for their work on social issues. The award honors community volunteer achievement and celebrates women who are champions for equity, and embody YWCA's mission of peace, justice, and dignity for all people. Each honoree receives a framed copy of the poem *Watcher of the Skies* which was particularly important to Dorrie Leader.

Chambliss was selected by YWCA York for her significant body of work as an artist and being an activist for change. She has created notable art exhibits including a 2017 social networking series titled *Contiguous* that recently added a second installment called *Contiguous 2*. The impetus behind these exhibits was to create an opportunity for diverse dialogue through art showing we share more in common. *Contiguous* also refers to the style of drawing, where Chambliss used one point of contact to create her portraits. Chambliss also exhibited a 2018 visual representation of Black History titled "Casting Shadows." Artwork highlighted personal accounts throughout York County from emancipation through the civil rights era to the present day.

Says Chambliss, "I use my art as a tool to advocate for my community, whether it be people of color, the youth, or women. I believe it to be part of my personal mission to create things that form a sustainable, and accurate historical record, as well as prompting people to think about where we want to lead in the future."

Chambliss, originally from Chicago, Il., moved to York in 2000 for a new job. The job didn't work out as planned, but she sees the move as a blessing in disguise. Her background is in educational publishing and the pedagogy behind how people learn. Chambliss uses her design and publishing background along with degrees in communication, to engage, connect and build a stronger community.

The award Chambliss is receiving was established to honor Dorrie Leader's dedication to fight for civil rights, the empowerment of women, and advocating for social justice. Mrs. Leader served as YWCA York's president in the early 1950s before going onto serve on the National Board of YWCA from 1958 to 1976. She was present in 1963 at the March on Washington, accompanied by her two oldest daughters, to hear Dr. Martin Luther King speak of his dream for America. She shared that dream, and was steadfast in her commitment to help achieve it nationally and here in York. Her fierce advocacy for racial justice

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undoubtedly laid the groundwork for YWCA's prioritization of the elimination of racism as national mission work.

Jean Treuthart, YWCA York CEO, says, "I can imagine the conversations Ophelia and Dorrie would have had about our York community and the need to elevate underrepresented voices. Both women continue to be examples of how we can hold higher visions of equity for our community."

ABOUT YWCA York

YWCA York is a nonprofit organization with the mission of eliminating racism and empowering women. Chartered in 1891, YWCA York has a long and rich history of creating opportunities for women's growth, leadership and power through a common vision: peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. Over 21,000 people are served during a typical year through the programs and services offered throughout York County. Worldwide, the YWCA impacts more than 25 million people in over 120 countries. For information about the YWCA York, visit our website, www.ywcayork.org.

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