

Announcing YWCA Toronto's 2026 Distinction Award Recipients

Dedicated to advancing lasting change

TORONTO, March 17, 2026 – YWCA Toronto is excited to announce our 45th Distinction Award [formerly Women of Distinction Award] recipients who are extraordinary champions of gender equity, social justice, and inclusion. This year's distinguished recipients are: [Jenny Ahn](#) (Labour), [Sara Asalya](#) (Immigration), [Kehkashan Basu](#) (Young Leader of Distinction), [Juana Berinstein and Ellen Kanika Tsi Tsa Blais](#) (Health), [Chinyere Eni](#) (Corporate Leadership) and [Janice Rubin](#) (Law). To learn more about each recipient, click the links to their bios above.

YWCA Toronto is also thrilled to reveal our new Presenting Sponsor, and an event name change—**YWCA Toronto's Distinction Awards, presented by Elmwood Spa and Bangkok Garden.**

“The United Nations’ 2026 International Women's Day campaign theme, ‘**Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls,**’ is a powerful call to action to dismantle systemic inequalities and take action to end gender-based and intimate partner violence,” says YWCA Toronto’s Chief Executive Officer, Heather McGregor. “As Toronto’s largest multi-service organization serving nearly 13,000 people annually, we remain committed to a radical transformation of society, where all women, girls, and gender diverse people can thrive. Our vision is reflected in this year’s Distinction Award recipients who are dedicated to advancing lasting change in our communities. And, we extend a heartfelt ‘thank you’ to Elmwood Spa and Bangkok Garden, for their ongoing and generous support of YWCA Toronto and our award ceremony.”

Quote from Elmwood Spa and Bangkok Garden:

“As YWCA Toronto marks the 45th year for the Distinction Awards, Elmwood Spa and Bangkok Garden is honoured to once again lend our support in celebrating this year’s inspiring award recipients. For over 40 years, Elmwood Spa has been a welcoming space for women in the heart of Toronto, rooted in a legacy of care and community. With generations of women walking through our doors, we deeply value the importance of creating spaces that support meaningful change for women, girls, and gender diverse individuals throughout Toronto.”

YWCA Toronto’s Distinction Awards, our largest annual fundraising event, funds vital YWCA Toronto programs and services which help women, girls and gender diverse people flee violence, secure housing, find jobs and transform their lives. This year, the event will be held on Thursday, May 28 at the [Carlu](#).

Award recipients are available for exclusive interviews through YWCA Toronto's office.

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