

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**YWCA NORTHEASTERN NY LAUNCHES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**Schenectady, NY, August 19th, 2022** – YWCA NorthEastern NY has received a grant to implement a free professional development program, YW Strive, for the Schenectady community as part of Google.org’s \$5 million-dollar commitment to YWCA USA. YWCA NorthEastern NY is proud to be a member of the inaugural cohort of grantees across the US that are using the grant to improve job training programs and increase access to digital skills for women and underserved Americans.

“YWCA is thrilled to be able to offer this program to our community. This grant will help us provide our clients with the resources needed to succeed and this program will help so many build and expand their skills. It will be amazing to see Strive at work through our clients in our community,” said **Farrah Foreman, YWCA NENY’s Economic Empowerment Counselor**.

YW Strive is designed to help participants who face employment or underemployment barriers and will develop the professional habits and skills that are most sought after by employers. Upon completion of the program, participants will receive a Strive Professional Certificate and be better prepared to obtain a living-wage career or start their own business. Topics covered in this free program include digital skills for the workplace, essential (or soft) skills, entrepreneurship, financial independence, critical thinking, leadership and collaboration skills, presentation skills, and opportunities for education and career advancement.

“With YW Strive, YWCA NENY will be able to help remove barriers and expand participants’ professional skills,” said **Kim Siciliano, YWCA NENY CEO**. “This program will raise confidence levels and increase independence in our community. We are excited to be able to offer YW Strive to Schenectady.”

The 16-week program will include two-hour classes, Tuesdays and Thursdays and participants will also work one-on-one with a career coach to help them achieve their goals. To apply you must live in Schenectady County, be at least 18 years old, have basic English literacy and math skills, and must show a desire and ability to complete the full program. Preferred enrollment opportunities will be given to women, people of color, those who have not completed a Bachelor’s degree, and those who receive a referral through a partner agency.

The inaugural cohort will begin on September 22, 2022 and will conclude January 12, 2023. Future program dates will be announced once plans are finalized.

For more information or to apply for the inaugural session of YW Strive, please visit [www.ywca-neny.org/strive](http://www.ywca-neny.org/strive) or 518.374.3394 ext 137

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*YWCA NorthEastern NY has been supporting women, children, and families in Schenectady County for 134 years. YWCA NorthEastern NY is on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. For information on programs serving infants to seniors, please visit [www.ywca-neny.org](http://www.ywca-neny.org).*

**YWCA-NENY.ORG**