

## Webster Five Celebrates Women's History Month Profiling Women's Accomplishments in our Community



### Deborah Hall, CEO, YWCA Central Mass.

Debbie Hall has dedicated her entire career to helping families and addressing pervasive issues surrounding racism, inequality, homelessness and substance abuse. She was named CEO of the YWCA of CM in 2021 after running the organization's domestic violence services and admits that taking the reins during a pandemic has been challenging. Her energy, focus, belief in the mission and prioritization of employees' wellbeing is an inspiration as is the work she did founding The Worcester Black History Project and all the time she puts in serving on community boards. We celebrate Debbie during this Women's History Month by sharing what inspires, challenges, and uplifts her.

#### What inspired you to take on the role of YWCA CM CEO?

I was inspired to become the CEO of YWCA Central Massachusetts because of the mission of the organization. The YWCA CM is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. I was also inspired by events in our country during the last couple of years. Disparities were amplified during the pandemic and the injustices faced by different groups in our society made me want to do more, to give more and become part of the solution in the battle against inequities.

#### What is the biggest challenge you've had to overcome?

I transitioned into the role of CEO at YWCA CM in July of 2021. The biggest challenge I've faced is navigating COVID-19, particularly as it relates to employees. We have been challenged with ensuring employees are provided with mental health supports, maintaining quality programs for the community, and thinking about what the workplace will look like moving forward. I have a great team and know we need to stay open to all possibilities. I'm learning that I do not have to know everything immediately because I have great people on the team who are experts in their respective roles.

#### What is your mantra?

"If your dreams don't scare you, they aren't big enough." This reminds me to stay open to possibilities and remember that nothing is out of reach.