

# **2024 Women of Distinction: Nana Becoat Gives Back at the YWCA and Beyond**

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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ALTON - For Nana Becoat, service comes naturally.

Becoat, one of the YWCA's ten 2024 Women of Distinction, will be honored at the Y's annual gala for her commitment to the community. But while she's grateful for the recognition, Becoat noted that her interest in helping others comes from a sense of duty, not glory.

"It really is an honor. I wasn't expecting it," she explained. "You're just doing things that you know are the right thing to do, just giving back and just living your life in a way that you want to leave a strong legacy, that you want people to know that you are about service and about helping others all the time. So it's just nice to be recognized for the things you do, but it's not like we do this with the intention of seeking out any sort of fame or glory. But I just feel honored for people to have noticed things that I do."

Becoat has been a high school English teacher for over 20 years. She also works as a yoga instructor, and she said she uses this position to give back to the community by helping both kids and adults on their healing journeys.

In her free time, Becoat serves as the Racial Justice Committee Chairperson at the YWCA, where she is committed to realizing the YWCA's mission of eliminating racism and empowering women. She has helped conceptualize a lot of the Y's programming, from revitalizing Hampton Garden in Alton to creating Soul Sister Saturdays.

It's no surprise, then, that the YWCA is so close to Becoat's heart. She encourages people who want to help their community to get in touch with the Y. The organization can help connect you with different nonprofits and initiatives in the area.

"This is like my home base as far as giving back to the community," Becoat said of the YWCA. "I think it's a great place to start, and the Y has so many other organizations that they're connected with. You can branch off and find your little niche and where you fit in, whether that's housing development, whether that's working with children, healthcare. There are so many different ways that you can just start here and be able to branch out. I would always say start with your local organizations and then build out from there."

Congratulations to Nana Becoat on this recognition!

*This is the first in a series of articles about the ten 2024 Women of Distinction. For more information about the YWCA's Women of Distinction Gala, visit the [official Facebook event page](#).*