



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT COAST YMCA PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

cccymca.org

FALL 2016

ALL TOGETHER BETTER

Dear Friends,

2016 has been a year full of new ideas and political rhetoric regarding how it is that we are going to treat those living in the United States, especially those different than ourselves. While the presidential campaigns and recently enacted state laws have heightened our national conversation, our YMCA has taken pause to reflect on how we embrace diversity and inclusion. Our first step was to begin a process through which we can develop a better understanding and awareness of the qualities of diversity and inclusion. The YMCA of the USA offered excellent resources allowing us to more fully understand the many dimensions of diversity and to assess our ability and attitude towards inclusion. I would like to share that I have learned a great deal in this process. Frankly, my view of diversity was somewhat narrow. Through the initial phase of this process, my eyes were more fully opened about the many forms of diversity in the communities that we serve. More importantly, we have begun a dialogue within our Y family of volunteers and staff about how we currently welcome kids, families, and adults to our organization, and how we support their participation in the Y's many programs and services.



David Stevenson
President & CEO

True to our practice of solid group work, our Board of Directors and staff leaders came together to talk about how we can make sure that everyone entering one of our Y branches or participating in a program or service feels welcome, warm, and safe. Our first formal step was to state our intent as a matter of policy. And at their July 28, 2016 meeting, the board developed and adopted the following Statement of Diversity and Inclusion:

The Central Connecticut Coast YMCA is an inclusive organization open to all. The Y believes that in a diverse world we are stronger when we are inclusive, when our doors are open to all, and when everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. At the Y, we welcome all people regardless of dimensions of diversity including race, faith, color, national origin/ancestry, sex, gender identity, marital status, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, disabilities, or socio-economic status.

I would like to thank our board and staff for their excellent work and commitment to building a stronger, more diverse, and more inclusive YMCA.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy fall season!

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BRANCH LOCATIONS

Alpha Community Services YMCA Bridgeport
Bridgeport YMCA
Elm City YMCA New Haven
Fairfield YMCA
Hamden/North Haven YMCA
Lakewood-Trumbull YMCA
New Haven YMCA Youth Center
Ralphola Taylor Community Center YMCA Bridgeport
Soundview Family YMCA Branford
Stratford YMCA
Valley YMCA Ansonia
Woodruff Family YMCA Milford
YMCA Camp Hi-Rock Mt. Washington MA
Association Office New Haven

OUR MISSION - To put Judeo-Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

TOGETHER WE BUILD A BETTER US

Before we finish the year, we want to salute you, our donors, for all you give to improve the lives of families in our School-Age Child Care programs.

You give a single parent peace of mind that their child is in a safe place with positive role models.

You give a child struggling to keep up with his peers the extra help he needs to be successful at school.

You raise the trajectory of children's lives so that they become healthy, successful and compassionate teenagers and adults.

You make it possible for everyone to be a part of the Y. You create the kind of community you want our children to grow up with. Your support creates a better future for all. Your support builds a better us.

GIVE at cccyymca.org or <http://tinyurl.com/q3gdk5u>

GIVE TODAY. FOR A BETTER US.

WITH GRATITUDE

Having served as the Chair of the CCCY Board of Directors for the past two and one-half years, we would like to extend our deepest thanks and appreciation to **Dan O'Donnell** for the commitment and leadership that he has brought to our Y. Under Dan's tenure as our Chief Volunteer Officer, the Y has expanded its outreach and number of people served, has improved our physical facilities including branch renovations and additions, and has added a new branch – the Elm City Y. Thank you, Dan!

It gives us great pleasure to introduce **Lisette Andino** as the new Chair of the CCCY Board of Directors! Lisette began her volunteer Y service on the Alpha Community Services Y Board of Managers and joined the CCCY Board in 2010. For the past four years, she has served as a Board Vice-Chair. In her professional life, Lisette serves as the Manager of Community Relations & Economic Development for Eversource Energy. In addition to her passion for the Y's mission and deep understanding of community needs, Lisette brings outstanding leadership skills to her new position as our Chief Volunteer Officer. And she is also the first woman and first Latina to lead our organization in our 157 year history! Congratulations, Lisette.



RIBBON CUT FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT WING

The Woodruff Family Y Board and Staff were joined by CT State Sen. Gayle Slossberg, Milford Mayor Ben Blake, CCCY leadership, as well as a few dozen young children, to cut the ribbon on their new child development wing.

"We know that the time we invest in our kids when they're very young makes a critical difference in their ability to succeed in school and throughout their lives. That's what this project is about," said Slossberg. "By expanding classroom space we have increased the number of young lives that can be impacted by the great work of the Woodruff Family YMCA. This YMCA does incredible work for our community, and I'm proud to have been able to help them with that work."



The \$250,000 of state bonding made it possible for the Woodruff Family YMCA to build its new early learning center. The bonding paid for the construction and furnishing of three new classrooms, as well as children's restrooms.

"The Woodruff Family YMCA keeps getting better and better," Blake said during the ceremony. "This is a place where I grew up, taking swimming lessons and going to summer camps. I have three children under seven years old, and we take them here very often as well."

"What a great day it is for Milford." David Stevenson, CCCY President & CEO said. "We have some pretty serious challenges here in Connecticut, but I'm convinced that we have the assets and the resources to address them. One of those challenges is the education achievement gap that so many families struggle with. We know that in many of our towns and cities, kids entering into the fifth grade are several grades behind. The most powerful thing we can do is help kids get off to a good start. So while this new child care facility is about creating support for families, it's also about helping kids get academically prepared to enter kindergarten on par with their peers."

WELCOME TO THE BOARD

The work of CCCY is made possible by a dedicated and accomplished group of volunteers who make up its Board of Directors.

Joining the CCCY Board of Directors is **Dr. Martha Okafor**, the City of New Haven Community Services Administrator. Martha is committed to the health and well being of all New Haven residents and to creating opportunities for them to thrive.



MISSION TOUR ENGAGES, EDUCATES & INSPIRES

Nothing is better than seeing and feeling the difference the Y makes in people's lives! This summer, we had a lot of fun, visiting six CCCY Branches sharing our work to end chronic homelessness, close the education achievement gap, teach water safety, build character and prevent youth overweight and obesity.

Our staff and leadership team hosted numerous Volunteers, Board Members, Donors, Elected Officials, and Community Leaders who had a chance to see our programs in action.

At the Y's Harrison Apartments, we met an Alpha Community Services Y client who allowed us to visit their apartment. Meeting the children and observing the Bridgeport Y Kolbe Learning Center staff helped the group to understand more about our work with early childhood learners. While at the New Haven YMCA Youth Center, we joined energetic campers and discussed the Y's positive impact on closing the achievement gap for at-risk kids.

Everyone loves a camp skit! Soundview Family Y campers creatively demonstrated our four core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Water safety and swim lessons are taught daily at the Woodruff Family Y. Being on the pool deck, watching a child's confidence build was enlightening. Just being at YMCA Camp Hi-Rock is inspiring, learning how the Y prevents youth overweight and obesity through camping was motivational.



Alpha Community Services Y Harrison Apartments tour included Jeff Jones, Cindy Penkoff, Kerry Whitham and Senator Tony Whang.



At the Bridgeport Y Kolbe Learning Center Lissette Andino, Preston Tisdale, Sandra Brown, Cindy Penkoff, Tom Lawlor, Pat Riemersma and John Cattelan joined us.



The New Haven YMCA Youth Center hosted John Crawford, Mike Morand, Maura Stevenson and New Haven Mayor Toni Harp.



Chris Velardi, Pat Andriole, Anita Catardi, U.S. Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, State Senator Ted Kennedy, Rep. Lonnie Reed, Rep. Sean Scanlon and Retired Rep. Patricia Widlitz enjoyed the Soundview Family Y visit.



Enjoying the YMCA Camp Hi-Rock campers were Sandra Fischer and Ron Noren.



On the pool deck at the Woodruff Family Y were Kevin McGrath, Tom Lawlor, Eileen Lopez-Cordone, Bill Maley, CT State Rep Pam Staneski and Milford Mayor Bill Blake.