



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT COAST YMCA PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

cccymca.org

SPRING/SUMMER 2017

IS CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS OVER?

Dear Friends:

This past January, Connecticut Governor Dan Malloy reported that the state had reached the milestone of matching every verified chronically homeless individual in Connecticut with permanent and supportive housing *effectively ending chronic homelessness* (remember that a chronically homeless individual is defined as a person who has a disability and has experienced four or more bouts of homelessness in three years or has been continuously homeless for more than one year). In fact, the good news has continued over the past three years as *total* homelessness in Connecticut has continued to decrease. So, have we achieved our goals, and is our work done? The answer – yes, we have achieved many goals, but our work must continue.

As the largest provider of affordable and supportive housing in Connecticut, our Y takes great pride in being a leading member of an outstanding housing community. We recognize, however, that there are many families and individuals that are standing at the edge of a financial cliff. Yes, they may currently have a home, but they may also be one small "life circumstance" away from being homeless. An auto repair, furnace failure, doctor's bill, or reduced work hours are just a few of the tipping points that can nudge an individual or family over the edge. I have spoken with many in the housing community who feel that the deciding number is \$700. In other words, many can manage an unexpected expense or reduction in income of less than \$700, but those life circumstances costing more than \$700 often force and individual or family out of their home. Hard to believe, but it's true.

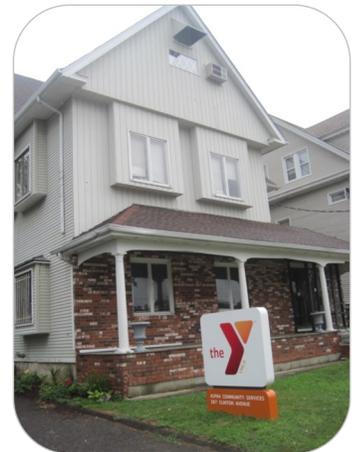
That's why the work of our Alpha Community Services Y will continue. We will work towards *preventing* homelessness by identifying and supporting those who have a home but are living on the edge, and we will work to *maintain* the great achievement of assuring that anyone who wants a home - can have a home, and the supportive services necessary to help them move forward. I'd like to offer my deepest thanks to the leaders, volunteers, donors and staff who make homes possible every day.

Best wishes to all for a safe, happy and healthy spring and summer season!

Dave



David Stevenson
President & CEO



Alpha Community
Services YMCA
387 Clinton Avenue
Bridgeport CT



Alpha Community Services YMCA Team

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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 CAN CREATE A BETTER US

Denise's Story: A high-risk pregnancy resulted in Denise's loss of income and then the loss of her apartment. Forced to move in with a family member, Denise and her five children slept in one bedroom with one bed for an entire year.

She and her children came to the Alpha Community Services Y Family Shelter with nothing but the clothes on their back. Our program provided daily laundry services, helped the children obtain school uniforms, helped them get access to clothing, groceries and household items. The children were able to participate in afterschool programs and Denise worked with Y Case Managers to put her affairs in order to qualify for cash assistance.

Denise then enrolled in a job search program and with on-going case management, she was able to re-activate her healthcare license and find full-time employment. She received support from our Rapid Rehousing funds to cover two months of security deposit and two months' rent.

With the assistance of the Alpha Community Services Y, Denise and her family were able to start over, to move into their own apartment, making a home where she and her children can thrive. This is the kind of transformational change you make possible. Your support changes lives. GIVE at ccymca.org.

GIVE TODAY. FOR A BETTER US.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Without volunteers, the Y wouldn't be the same! They made a difference through activities such as serving on our boards, spearheading our Annual Campaign raising funds, plus mentoring teens, coaching youth sports and helping teach others to be safe in and around the water.

We welcome our newly elected board member Alexis Smith while we recognize the following re-elected members to our Board of Directors: Joseph Bertolino, Eileen Lopez-Cordone, Chris Gallo, Dan O'Donnell and Preston Tisdale; re-elected member of the Board Trustees: Mike Leone and retiring members of the Boards of Directors and Trustees: Dorsey Kendrick, BOD; Jeannette Ickovics, DOD; Kurt Mohlman, BOD; John Crawford, BOT and Robert Lyons, Jr., BOT.

ADVOCATING FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Barbara Moore, CCC Y District Executive Director; State Rep. Linda Gentile; Brenda Pasquariello; Stratford Y Operations Director



Terry McCarthy, CCC Y Executive Director; Julian Brown, RTCC Y Operations Director; State Rep. Steve Stafstrom; Carmen Colon, Bridgeport Ys Vice President; State Rep. Jack Hennessy



Doug Shaw, CCC Y Executive Director; Melanie Wilde, Branford Board of Education School Based Health Centers; State Rep. Sean Scanlon

BOLD & GOLD OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The YMCA's BOLD & GOLD Outdoor Leadership program, has been operating out of Seattle for the last ten years. In 2016, YMCA Camp Hi-Rock was one of 10 Ys across the country chosen to help expand this incredible program. BOLD & GOLD takes diverse groups of boys and girls ages 11-18 on week-long backpacking programs to develop their fullest leadership potential as positive, multicultural leaders in their communities. Our small groups (eight participants and two to three counselors) travel to some of the most stunning wilderness areas in the Northeast to explore the beauty of nature, face challenges, try new things, and most importantly be their own unique self. Our participants return from our programs knowing that the confidence, strength and friendships they developed will help them meet any challenge on the trail, in the classroom, or back home in their communities.



YMCA Camp Hi-Rock succeeded in giving 28 youths on four different BOLD & GOLD trips, the opportunity to learn and grow from each other while exploring New Hampshire's White Mountains. Camp Hi-Rock has always cared deeply about helping campers become more responsible, respectful, honest, and caring people. BOLD & GOLD which stands for Boys and Girls Outdoor Leadership Development, has given Hi-Rock campers, new and old, the chance to further develop these character values in new and challenging ways. Additionally, these trips focus on developing the BOLD & GOLD values of courage, community awareness, and a sense of wonder. We are so excited to see where BOLD & GOLD takes us and are very excited for the whole new group of campers who will have the opportunity to have this unique, fun, and formative experience.



JOIN OUR 2017 Y MISSION TOUR

So that we may more fully engage, educate and inspire - a series of visits have been planned to see the Y's mission in action.

Ending Chronic Homelessness at the Alpha Community Services Y Jessica Tandy Apartments on Tuesday, June 13 at 11:00am.

Swimming Lessons and Water Safety at the Fairfield Y on Tuesday, June 20 at 11:00am.

Preventing Youth Overweight and Obesity at the YMCA Camp Tepee on Tuesday, June 27 at 11:00am.

Closing the Achievement Gap in Bridgeport at the Ralphola Taylor Community Center Y on Tuesday, July 18 at 11:00am.

Building Character through Summer Day Camp at the Valley Y on Tuesday, July 25 at 11:00am.

Building Character through Sleep-Away Camp at YMCA Camp Hi-Rock on Tuesday, August 1 at 10:00am.

Please email Dave Stevenson at d Stevenson@cccymca.org if you'd like to join us for fun, fellowship, and to see how your time, talent, and treasure are impacting the lives of many.



SATURDAY BREAKFAST AND MORE

The Ralphola Taylor Community Center YMCA (RTCC Y) located in the East End of Bridgeport, is the place to meet on Saturday mornings. Our "Breakfast for All" program is just that; a morning dedicated to providing a balanced breakfast to our entire community. In one of Bridgeport's most underserved areas, where people often struggle with poverty and homelessness, dedicated staff and volunteers transform such difficult situations into a world filled with hope. Guests are greeted at 9:00AM where they help themselves to coffee, fresh fruit, pastries and camaraderie. A warm breakfast is ready by 9:30AM, feeding 60-70 individuals on any given Saturday.



Along with being completely free and open to the public, the attraction that keeps many coming back is the welcoming atmosphere. Our Y strives to promote inclusivity for all regardless of race, gender, religion or income and the "Breakfast for All" program is a symbol of that very belief.



The gift of giving back to our community would not be possible without the support of devoted sponsors and volunteers. Since October 2016, Trader Joe's of Westport has provided crucial resources to the Y. Each week, Trader Joe's donates breakfast staples including eggs, bacon, fruit and vegetables that are not only organic and fresh but HEALTHY! With the presence of Trader Joe's and the food preparation from the amazing volunteers of Greater Bridgeport Christian Fellowship, RTCC Y provides 3,000 meals each year.

THE FINISHING TOUCHES

From Orange Avenue, the Woodruff Family YMCA looks quite different. The City of Milford has completed their building of An athletic complex on approximately 6 adjacent acres of land which includes two new sport-turf athletic fields, parking and a walking trail.



Parking on the side of the Y has also been expanded, adding a new area for summer camp drop off and more green space.

OUTDOOR FUN!

CCC Y Branches have been offering MOSSA Group Exercise Classes for almost a year now. Our members love them. This partnership has strengthen our focus on Healthy Living, helped build solid relationships with our members and increased the fun everyone is having while on their wellness journey.

