



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT COAST YMCA PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

cccymca.org

SUMMER 2018

FOR ALL!

Dear Friends:

Those two words – *for all* – are the last and most powerful words of our YMCA mission statement. I believe that the volunteers, donors, and staff of our Y have created lasting and positive change impacting many thousands of kids, families, and adults living in Connecticut.

As a member of the worldwide YMCA movement, our Y has also stepped forward to serve and support other Ys outside of our Connecticut borders that have very little. One of these Ys, the South Dakota General Convention of Sioux YMCAs, is located on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation (CRIR) in South Dakota. Earlier this spring, I had the great pleasure of working for three days at this fantastic Y. First, some background. The CRIR is almost as big as the state of Connecticut and is home to approximately 8,500. While South Dakota is incredibly beautiful, those living on the reservation face serious challenges including 75% unemployment, addiction, abuse, crime, a strained educational system, and poor access to health care. Most on the CRIR live in extreme poverty.

The Sioux Y has a Board of Directors and Board of Trustees that include local community leaders and caring individuals from around the U.S. In fact, the retiring CEO from the Darien Y, Pat Morrissey, has just become the Chair of the Board of Trustees. This special Y has seven full-time staff and is supported solely by donations (including annual gifts from our Y!).

Their work focuses on after-school, hunger prevention, and summer camping. Volunteers and staff work very hard at serving as many kids as possible throughout the reservation, and they travel many miles to serve kids and families where they live. Imagine a small group of Y professionals working in Waterbury and serving our entire state!

During my stay on the reservation, I worked with several volunteers and staff at the resident camp building a shower house. This will be a great addition as campers and staff have bathed in the nearby lake for decades. I'd like to share that my experience working at the Sioux Y was moving, and once again reaffirmed my belief that the Y really is *for all*.

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



David Stevenson
President & CEO



The new shower house - almost done!

Dave

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BRANCH LOCATIONS

Alpha Community Services YMCA Bridgeport
Bridgeport YMCA
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.

THE Y IS THERE IN THE TIME OF NEED

A young and single mother struggles to secure a socially enriching and emotionally supportive preschool program, on a restricted budget.

A cancer stricken family seeks to keep life for their children, stable and as normal as possible, with swelling stressors and medical bills.

A father loses his job and must extract the "extras" from their families' lifestyle, although the weekly swimming keeps their children socially connected, physically active and safe around water.

A new widow struggles to find peace, connectivity to others, and commitment to health - until she walks into her local YMCA.

All of these real life examples are just a small part of what the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA Annual Campaign offers children, families and communities. We strive to ensure our programs and services are for all, regardless of the ability to pay.

These life changing programs and opportunities are made possible thanks to generous donors partners and supporters! The need is great, and seems to grow with each passing year. We can do so much more, and expand our reach of impact, with your help.

DONATE FOR A BETTER US, TODAY! <http://www.cccymca.org/make-a-difference/give/>

WE'RE STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

Welcoming, genuine, hopeful, nurturing and determined are just a few of the words that describe CCCY Volunteers! Our volunteers are also hard working and extremely dedicated to our mission. With their support, we can continue to do the good work we do in our community.

Recently, we elected new members of the Board of Directors including Dr. Paul Broadie II, President of Gateway and Housatonic Community Colleges and Samuel Linden, Yale Graduate School Candidate. We re-elected Patrick Charmel, Martha Dulla, William Jennings, Jon Leckerling and Jatin Mehta to the Board of Directors, and William Maley and Jerry Stagg to the Board of Trustees.



Dr. Paul Broadie, II



Samuel Linden

We thank, David Bjorklund, Jr., Althea Marshall Brooks, Jason Corsi, Sydnee Journal and Chris Velardi, for their devotion to the Y as they retire from our board.

We would also like to introduce a new CCCY leadership staff member, Amy Wiltsie, Annual Campaign Director.

MISSION MOMENT

A member at the Woodruff Family YMCA recently told us, "It felt so good to be back and see familiar faces. And, those familiar faces remembered me! I got a bit teary and I thought how it feels just like home at the Y. This place really brings back feelings of safety, warmth, and all great memories."



ENCOURAGING HEALTHY LIVING

The Soundview Family YMCA is a community resource – for all ages! With adults 50 years and older currently making up more than 30 percent of the U.S. population, the Soundview Family Y has geared up its programming to especially meet the needs of these individuals.

On any given day, you can see active older adults visiting in the Y lobby, energetically participating in land and aquatic group exercise classes and intently listening to a lecture. The Soundview Family Y is ‘the’ place to remain active, informed and involved on a social level.

Kathy Derken, Soundview Family Y Senior Coordinator, creates an atmosphere that is comfortable and welcoming based on input from the members. “The activities offered by the Y are purposeful. We recognize the need to be with others, participate, share and have friends.” Kathy also relies on community partners who are willing to share their knowledge by giving talks and programs that are relevant to the well-being of active older adults that help them maintain their lifestyle in our ever changing community. Taking field trips from the Soundview Family YMCA also offer some of the members a chance to get away and have new experiences and social opportunities with other members that they might not otherwise have.

If you’re ever in a local restaurant at lunch time and there’s a vibrant group of older adults being social and having fun – they might just be Soundview Family Y members enjoying one of their monthly luncheons at one of the many establishments in the area.



DEVELOPING FOR SUCCESS

The CCCY is fortunate to have leaders at every level with knowledge, skills, character and passion. We are committed to build upon their strengths and support all of them through training and development programs.

“Developing cause-driven leaders at every level of the YMCA organization is needed for the sustainability of the YMCA movement,” believes, Erin Grayson, CCCY Director of Leadership Development & Human Resources.

To build effective Y leaders, foster teamwork and engage staff, Erin recently led two half-day programs for the CCCY leadership; “Appreciation Languages” and “Why Do We Come To Work and Stay?” Both sessions left staff thinking about their role and the way they communicate. They also obtained thought provoking tools to personally build upon and use with their staff teams. These programs will not only help them while at the Y but also while in the community.

An example of a Y leader is Joan Shortell, Valley Y Membership/Program Services Coordinator, who was recognized for 30 years of service to the Y. Joan leads the administrative function at the Valley Y while being the ‘go to person’ for many staff and members.



COMMUNITY WELLNESS

The Valley YMCA in collaboration with the Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce and Griffin Hospital has hosted the Community Corporate Cup for the last several years. The community program builds camaraderie among local businesses while improving the wellness of their employees.

Participants receive a comprehensive health screening before the program starts. The team-building, wellness activities – or Cup Series, as they are referred to, consists of five months of team bowling, corn hole, mini golf, bocce ball, basketball shooting and horseshoes. Local community races and walks are also supported. These events provide an opportunity for local employees to work out, get in shape, meet new people and have fun.

“The Corporate Cup is an amazing opportunity for Valley companies and corporations to motivate their employees to focus on their health and wellness. The employee benefits, as well as their employer and the community at large,” shared Mark LaFortune, Valley Y Operations Director and one of the Community Corporate Cup Leaders.

The Corporate Cup becomes a little competitive, especially during post testing and the Healthy Team Events where teams of two individuals, representing their employer, accumulate points for healthy eating, exercising, reading and maybe even sharing healthy recipes – while they improve their health and lifestyle.

The Valley YMCA Sunset 5K & 2 Mile Fitness Walk is the final event! Proceeds go to the Valley Y Annual Campaign which provides financial aid so that recreational learning and life-enhancing experiences can be provided to all in the Valley.



Y LEADERS IN THE MAKING

The Fairfield Y Leaders Club provides local high school students with extensive leadership training with opportunities for Y and community service. The Club is led by Ryan LeWorthy, Fairfield Y Youth and Family Coordinator, who started it at the request of a very ambitious high schooler who had recently relocated and participated in the Greater Rochester YMCA Leaders Club.

Although only running for six months, the plan is to develop leaders by fostering a culture of service in addition to providing knowledge and training to help these teens better serve others while shaping a healthy and productive life for themselves. We also hope to recruit them as future Y professionals.

Ryan actively participates in the CCCY Emerging Leaders Program as a Steering Committee member responsible for the program communications. He takes what he’s learned in this program and repurposes it for Y Leaders Club meetings. “Our Y Leaders Club teens are anxious to be with their friends, learning and participating in events and service projects. They simply can’t wait to learn and do more.”

The Club meets once a week. Presently, the 15 members participate in social events, service projects and have the opportunity to go on field trips. Y Leaders Club is a safe, genuine place for high schoolers that helps direct their energy for positive outcomes.

Pictured: Fairfield Y Leaders Club members led Y Family Fun Night Carnival Games. Funds raised were donated to the Fairfield Y Annual Campaign.

