

The Good Works of the YMCA

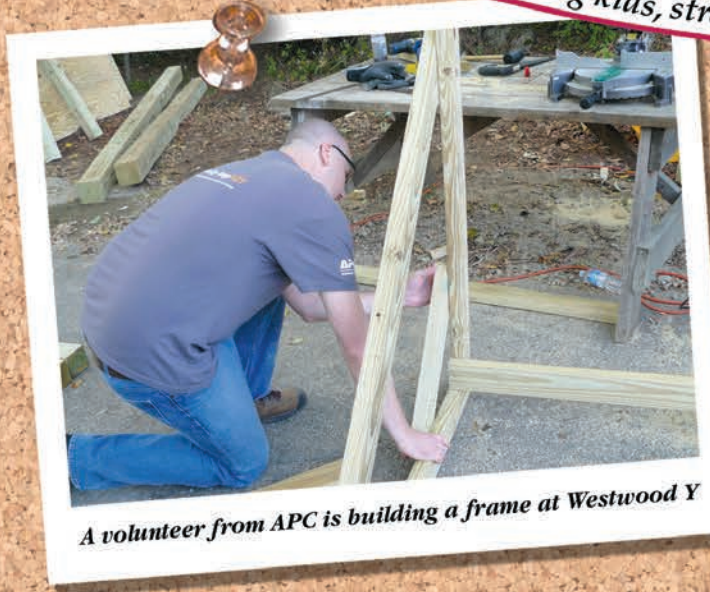


Communities

YMCA Newsletter

We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

Summer 2011



A volunteer from APC is building a frame at Westwood Y



One of the many families at the 2011 YMCA/PawSox All-Star Event at McCoy Stadium on May 30, 2011



A Heritage Park class learning about gardening in the new Neighborhood Gardens built by RISD students



Congressman David Cicilline talking to a young "groundbreaker" at MacColl Field on May 21, 2011



www.GoYMCA.com



Message from the General Director

This issue of Communities is particularly exciting for all of us at the YMCA of Pawtucket as it offers us an opportunity to share with you the news of breaking ground on a new facility for Northern Rhode Island and surrounding areas.

As of May, the YMCA has begun construction on a new, year-round YMCA for the MacColl Field branch that will serve youth and families of all ages. The planning and fundraising for this project was a significant challenge for the Board of Directors and Staff. After 8 years of planning and saving over 8 million dollars, the Board was finally in a position to reach for its vision to be able to provide a signature YMCA in this region of the state. Along with the extensive year-round programs in childcare, sports and early learning services that MacColl provides, there will be much room for expansion. We see this Y becoming the center piece of most YMCA services for much of Providence county.

Construction will take approximately fifteen months to complete. At this time, we expect to have a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially mark the opening of the new facility in September 2012 when we will welcome people from the community into our new home. In the interim, we continue to add members at all of our branches and to enhance our programs and services in order to meet the needs of those who seek out the Y.

MacColl Field YMCA will be able to premier its new facility on the heels of an exciting new rebranding effort that the Y-USA has implemented throughout the country. The new facility will feature the new look of the Y organization and strengthened programs to offer the best value for families. YMCA members will enjoy state-of-the-art fitness oppotunities and an enhanced recreational facility. The new MacColl will remain affordable, convenient and exciting as its services and programs expand, we will be committed to motivating people towards a healthier lifestyle. We are committed to youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. As we move forward with a new building and an innovative design for our Y, we anticipate that it will be rewarding to all families of Northern Rhode Island in the future.

This issue of Communities will give you some sense of the various initiatives underway and I hope you enjoy getting the news. The YMCA of Pawtucket strives to do good works in all of the communities in which we serve. You will read in this issue about our efforts with children and families, our community endeavors, our grants in aid to youth who need support and our engagement in continuous improvement of our operations and programs so that we can offer the very best to our members.

Esselton T. McNulty, General Director
YMCA of Pawtucket

YMCA of PAWTUCKET 2011

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Susan Reed (Y Board President) addresses audience at MacColl YMCA Groundbreaking Ceremony held on May 21, 2011.

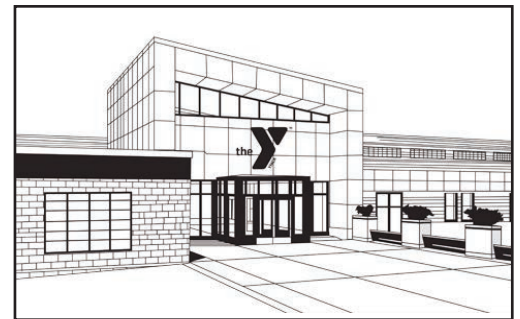
MacColl YMCA - 2011 Groundbreaking Event



In late May, the YMCA of Pawtucket hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for a new YMCA building to be constructed in Lincoln. Thanks to the generosity of members, friends, foundations and corporations in the community, the Y is able to build a 51,000 square foot, full facility that will serve youth and families from Northern Rhode Island – significantly expanding the organization’s ability to provide recreation, wellness and enrichment programs for the area.

The new MacColl Field YMCA has been planned specifically to address needs of the disabled by being fully accessible. The new Y will include a 6-lane indoor pool with locker rooms designed for families, adults and youth. There will be a 6-lane outdoor pool with a diving tank with an adjoining

family pool designed for parent and children - ages 3 months to 5 years old. In addition, the pool will house a double-loop giant slide that will be the hit of every family swim. The centerpiece of the project is a 6,000 square foot fitness center that will be equipped with state-of-the-art equipment, added program rooms as well as an exercise studio. A Family Adventure Center will provide recreation to preschool children as well as having a large climbing wall for the brave at heart. MacColl will also convert two existing year-round buildings on the site to expand its capacity for an early learning center and teen programming. Site improvements will also include expanded parking, and trail and habitat development of the 125-acre site. The new MacColl will have something for every age population and will expand its programming to offer its members the most innovative venue in the area.



Neighborhood Garden Teaches Kids About Nature

Last March, Sharon Friedman, Executive Director of the Heritage Park YMCA, along with other community leaders, including Louis Yip, Aaron Hertzberg, Sony Ng, and Bob Billington, met with 70 Rhode Island School of Design students and their instructors, including Sylvia Acosta, the lead architect, worked on a project that would invite the community to come together to enhance the community gardens at the Heritage Park YMCA and home to the Chinese Christian Church. The final construction was to utilize materials that were ‘repurposed’ and to enhance the natural contours of the area. In late April, 72 students and their instructors built two magnificent pavilions; one on the upper parking lot, the other at the end of the lower parking lot. In addition, all of the planting areas in the upper parking area were restructured with raised beds to the delight of the community farmers. The roof of the upper pavilion was constructed to catch rain water into two large containers that are used for watering the gardens.

The lower pavilion contains a built-in table with benches conducive to relaxation and viewing the Blackstone River. Heritage Park’s children have used it for reading and other literacy or science based lessons. During the first week of camp, the Pioneers enjoyed toasting marshmallows in the fire pit! The preschool children will be studying a unit entitled “things that grow” as part of their curriculum. In this unit of study children will have the opportunity to begin to grow flowers as seedlings in egg cartons inside the classroom and when the seeds grow to sprouts they will be bringing them up to the garden to plant them. Children will incorporate this planting activity into other aspects of the curriculum such as math and literacy. Each child will place a Popsicle stick into their plant with their name on one side and the name of their flower on the other. Children will visit the garden weekly to measure and track the growth of their plant. They will be keeping journals each week to write or draw pictures of what they see as they observe the plants growth. The preschoolers will also be discussing how plants grow and learn what is needed to keep their plants alive and healthy. This activity would normally be done in the classrooms but we at Heritage Park YMCA are now very fortunate to have the opportunity to allow the children to enjoy this as an outdoor activity. With the addition of the gardens the children will be able to engage in a truly “hands on” nature experience.



Good Works

The Y Tackles Youth Obesity Through Its Fits Kids Programming

The Pawtucket Family YMCA is doing its part to keep children more active and healthy after school as part of the childcare program. Children who participated in the program spent a minimum of 30 minutes three times a week doing activities designed to improve balance, agility, coordination, reaction time and speed. The four components of physical fitness that the Y tried to develop were cardio respiratory endurance, muscular strength, muscle endurance and flexibility. Throughout the year, children had an opportunity to join in a non-competitive atmosphere that allowed them to enjoy vigorous heart-healthy activities without being concerned with winning or losing. Fit Kids ran from September 2010 to May 2011 and the children's fitness levels were tested at the beginning and end of the program. Each child was tested in curl ups, the mile run, sit and reach, shuttle run and the flexed arm hang. 160 children were tested ranging from 6 years old to 15 years old and most tested 65% or greater. It is the goal of the Y to raise those results higher in upcoming programs to build strong, healthier children.

APC and CityYear Volunteers Work Together To Improve Westwood YMCA in Coventry

On September 16, 2010 three groups of volunteers met in Coventry at the Westwood YMCA including staff from American Power Conversion, CityYear Rhode Island and the Pawtucket YMCA. The group amassed on the YMCA's main field and after some introductions and a kickoff, the group of about 150 broke into teams and set off to accomplish their tasks.

Material and equipment had been placed at the project points throughout Westwood and suddenly the place was alive with activity. Roofs were stripped, holes were dug and paint brushes were flying. Each team was led by a CityYear corps member who coordinated to make sure the knowledge, skills, equipment and materials were all available, and then led the group to task.



Another team had been designated to provide refreshments and they also served lunch that was generously donated by American Power Conversion.

When you looked about, you could see only a few individuals scurrying about looking for the odd hammer or a bag of screws or some shingles. Midway through the day Laurent Vernerey CEO and President from American Power Conversion along with Esselton McNulty from the YMCA of Pawtucket and Theresa Dougherty from City Year took a tour of the groups and projects. At day's end a huge amount of work had been accomplished. Today you can visit the sites and it's still amazing to see what can be accomplished in one day. Projects were accomplished that never would have been possible without the help and resources of these volunteers.

All-Star Benefit Hits A Home Run Raising Scholarships For Area Kids

This year's All Star Benefit was a great success for the YMCA of Pawtucket. On Memorial Day the Pawtucket Red Sox hosted friends and supporters of the YMCA for a day of family fun at McCoy Stadium. The Paw Sox were edged out 5 – 4 by the Norfolk Tides, but it was an exciting game to watch and we had a lot of pre-game fun with a barbecue, raffle and lots of fun and prizes. This annual day of baseball helps the YMCA to raise over \$20,000 that is applied directly to help youth attend camp throughout the summer. It is part of the "Support-A-Child" Campaign that goes on all year-round and helps those in our communities who cannot otherwise afford membership or camp but for whom participation in the YMCA is an important part of their lives and development as youth.



Y Members and Staff Team Up at the 2011 Special Olympics's Summer Games and Win!

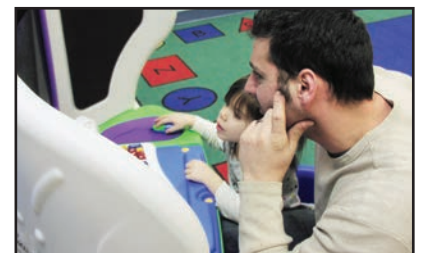


The Special Olympics of Rhode Island's 2011 Summer Games were held from Friday, June 3rd to Sunday, June 5th at the URI Campus. Nearly 1,500 athletes, 500 coaches, 500 volunteers and 4,000 family members participated in the three-day event. Among the volunteers and athletes who attended, the Pawtucket Family YMCA had three employees and three athletes who represented the Wampanoag Warriors Special Olympics Team and an employee from the Heritage Park YMCA who coached the Pawtucket Pacers Special Olympics Track & Field Team.

Four Warrior athletes are members at the Family Y and have been training for their respective sports throughout the year. Steven Leech, Casey Mercer and Russell Gregory, with the help of their coaches Josh Duquette, Jose Gonzalez and Kristin Quinn, displayed good sportsmanship and determination while winning medals of achievement. Coach Joshua Duquette, who led the track and field team, said, "Steve, Casey and Russ worked really hard throughout the year to prepare for their events and it paid off with an unforgettable two days of competition". On Sunday, Coach Jose Gonzalez led the Warrior swim team to greatness with the assistance of Russ Gregory, a Special Olympian and Y Member who took the year off from the swim competition. Coach Christy Carrion, who has worked with the Pawtucket Pacers for 10 years, helped her athletes win several medals in the softball throw. She is also currently playing on the Pawtucket Pacers unified softball team. Without the support of all the coaches, the Special Olympics Summer Games wouldn't be possible. The coaches from the Y who give their time and energy to the program are critical in making the participants not only better athletes but better people in our community!

Heritage Park YMCA Earns BrightStars Rating

In November 2010, Heritage Park YMCA received a two-star childcare rating from BrightStars, the quality rating program for the State of Rhode Island. To receive this rating Heritage Park had to complete an extensive self-evaluation and a quality improvement plan, and undergo observations and assessments in the classrooms. Of 16 licensed center programs in Pawtucket, Heritage Park joins just two others that are BrightStars rated. For more than 190 children who attend Heritage Park every day this is an indicator of a quality early learning experience is being received. Parents can be assured that their children are safe, learning through play, and being nurtured by well-trained teachers and support staff. Sharon Friedman, Executive Director at the Heritage Park YMCA stated "Our staff worked very hard to achieve this rating and we begun initiatives so that we are on our way to providing a high quality early learning experience for many children here in Pawtucket. Our children are going to be very well prepared for their formal school experiences when they enter Kindergarten." For more information about BrightStars and Heritage Park YMCA's rating, go to www.BrightStars.org.



Building a Stronger Community ... One Person at a Time

The mission of the YMCA of Pawtucket as part of a worldwide fellowship, to provide services and activities which help people regardless of age, sex, race, or religion, to develop in mind, body and spirit; to recognize and fulfill their responsibilities to the family, the community and each other; and to improve their health and life-styles.



Y People in Profile

“The Family Y Provides Me with a Support System Which Helps My Success in Getting Healthy and Losing Weight”

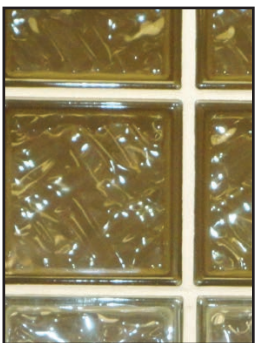
If you happen to see a cheerful person who is working out or involved in a special event at the Family Y, chances are good you have seen Jen Reid. Jen is a success story and she exemplifies the Y mission. Her story started out with her being very active in High School and involved in a lot of sports. As many of us have learned, as time goes on so does unhealthy life habits. Jen started to gain weight in her 20's and slowly lose her self-esteem. Six months after the YMCA reopened in 2006, she started swimming in the pool. At first, swimming was a challenge and very intensive. It was through determination and true grit that Jen continued on with her pursuit for health and wellness.

As time progressed, Jen joined 'Women with Weights' fitness class at the Family Y and got some personal training. 'Fight for Fitness' is a special Y program that Jen participated in 10 times. Her perseverance pulled her along and eventually she embraced exercise and healthy eating. She mentioned how Y staff offered her continuous encouragement and took a personal interest in her success. “They are like family, and like a support system all wrapped up into one. I lost over 160 pounds due to the help I got from the Family Y and its fitness programs. Josh and Kristen are great and they helped me get my old self back and I feel healthy and wonderful!”



Jen has worked at Calise Bakery for 23 years as an administrative assistant. After work, she looks forward to her daily visit to the Y to exercise and meet friends. Jen has also become very involved with Special Olympics. She loves to play in their unified sports games where participants and volunteers play together. She especially enjoys the Softball League. She mentioned that “this was an opportunity to help people by being a volunteer. It also is one of the greatest experiences that I have had in my life”. Jen also sits on the Board of Directors of an organization called Woman's Resource Network where her good work continues to make a difference in our community. Now... if you see Jen Reid, give her a thumbs up or even a hug because she is definitely part of our Y family and deserves a congratulations for all her hard work.

Meet Rick Hall - YMCA Board Member



Frederick H. Hall, Jr., “Rick”, joined the YMCA Board of Directors in 2011 and we are proud to have his involvement. Rick is a neighbor of the YMCA's MacColl Field Branch in Lincoln as his company, French Design Builders Inc. is located nearby in Smithfield. In 1998 Rick launched French Design Builders Inc. which is a full service design, build construction firm.

Today he oversees a company of eleven employees engaged in commercial, industrial construction with concentration in medical and offices ranging from 5,000 sq. ft. to 300,000 sq. ft. He is pleased to join the YMCA Board of Directors and is a big proponent of the Y's contribution to the community. “The YMCA of Pawtucket is a terrific organization that is essential to the development of youth in our cities and towns and I'm glad to have a chance to serve particularly at a time of so much growth and change and positive momentum.”



YMCA of Pawtucket
20 Summer Street
Pawtucket, RI 02860

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
 FOR HEALTHY LIVING
 FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mission Statement: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build character and promote a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

YMCA OF PAWTUCKET COMMUNITIES

Your Support Helps the Y Deliver Our Commitment

Did You Know?

- In the “What’s New” section of our website: www.GoYMCA.com, you can find exciting events for you and your family
- The Pawtucket Family YMCA membership is valid and can be used at any other New England Y facility.
- In 2010, the YMCA revitalized its brand and began officially referring to itself by its most familiar name – the Y.

With a focus on Youth Development, healthy living and social responsibility, strengthening communities is our cause. At the Y, we believe that lasting personal and social change happens when we all work together. Every day we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background, has the opportunity to be healthy, confident, connected and secure.

Giving online is easy. Give it a try today!



Donate Today
By Visiting Us on the Web at:

www.GoYMCA.com/aboutus

Communities is published by the YMCA of Pawtucket, a non-profit corporate entity representing four YMCA branches: Pawtucket Family YMCA, Heritage Park YMCA Early Learning Center, MacColl Field YMCA and Westwood YMCA. The Y provides physical and educational programs along with childcare services.

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