

PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER



JUNE 2026



RECOGNIZING CHAMPIONS OF COMMUNITY

"THERE IS SOME GOOD IN THIS WORLD, AND IT'S WORTH FIGHTING FOR."

— SAMWISE GAMGEE, THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

I was reminded of that quote during our recent Real Time Strategic Planning retreat, where we had the privilege of recognizing nearly two dozen extraordinary volunteers for their efforts in helping our YMCA address food insecurity throughout our communities.

Food insecurity is a big challenge. For too many families, the question of where the next meal will come from is a daily reality. The good news is that the CCC YMCA is surrounded by people who are willing to step forward and do something about it.

The volunteers we honored represent the very best of our mission. They have given their time, energy, expertise, and resources to help ensure that children, families, and older adults have access to nutritious food when they need it most. Their contributions have helped strengthen food pantries, support meal distribution efforts, build partnerships, and create pathways for neighbors to receive assistance with dignity and respect.

What makes volunteerism so powerful is that it turns compassion into action. Every hour given, every meal packed, every donation secured, and every helping hand extended creates a ripple effect that reaches far beyond what any one person can see.

While we recognized those individuals at our retreat, they represent the hundreds of volunteers who support our YMCA each year. Together, they remind us that the strongest communities are built when people come together in service to others.

To our honorees and to every volunteer who gives back through the YMCA, thank you. You are proof that there is indeed good in this world and that it is worth fighting for.

-Tim Bartlett, CCC YMCA President & CEO

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN ACTION

At the YMCA, we believe strongly in our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. At the Woodruff Family YMCA, we have also embraced a fifth value, inclusion.

Last month, we celebrated the graduation of our Project SEARCH interns. Project SEARCH is a program that partners with businesses and organizations to provide young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities personalized support through a nine-month internship experience. In addition to hands-on work experience, interns receive career development support and long-term employment follow-up after completing the program.

We are incredibly proud of this year's interns, Mia, Emily, and Stephanie. Throughout their internships, they worked alongside our staff in the Membership, Facilities, and Preschool departments. While Project SEARCH is a rewarding experience for the interns, it is equally rewarding for our staff and members.

Their contributions strengthened our Y in countless ways. Staff members embraced the opportunity to serve as mentors, developing new skills and perspectives while supporting each intern's growth. Our members and preschool children also benefited by seeing inclusion in action and experiencing the value that individuals of all abilities bring to our community.

For all of these reasons, we are proud to be a Project SEARCH host site and look forward to seeing where these talented young women go next.



MAKING WAVES IN WATER SAFETY

The Soundview Family YMCA Aquatics Department was excited to participate in the recent Wellness Fair at Jerome Harrison Elementary School in North Branford, where our team had the opportunity to connect with students and promote the importance of water safety.

Through hands-on activities and interactive demonstrations, children learned valuable tips for staying safe in and around the water. One of the highlights of the event was giving students the chance to try on life jackets while learning how they should be properly fitted and worn. The experience helped reinforce important safety lessons in a fun and memorable way.

At the YMCA, we believe that water safety is a life skill. Community events like this Wellness Fair allow us to extend that message beyond the pool and into our schools, helping children build confidence and awareness before they ever enter the water.

We are grateful to Jerome Harrison Elementary School for the opportunity to participate and look forward to continuing our efforts to educate families and promote water safety throughout our community. Together, we are helping create safer, healthier, and more confident communities for all.



PREPARING CAMP TEPEE FOR AN AMAZING SUMMER

As preparations for Summer 2026 get underway, the Lakewood-Trumbull YMCA is grateful for the incredible support of Aquarion Water Company, whose generosity and volunteer spirit are helping enhance the Camp Tepee experience for future campers.

Aquarion recently provided funding and supplies to build and extend the camp's waterfront dock, creating a safer and more accessible space for campers to enjoy water activities. In addition, the company supplied heavy equipment and assistance to move woodchips to the high ropes area, helping improve camp grounds and infrastructure.

Their commitment didn't stop there. During a volunteer service day, members of the Aquarion team rolled up their sleeves and tackled a variety of projects throughout camp. Volunteers painted picnic tables, reorganized the camp house, sorted and labeled equipment, and completed numerous tasks that will help Camp Tepee operate more efficiently throughout the summer season.

Partnerships like this demonstrate the power of community collaboration. Thanks to Aquarion's support, Camp Tepee is better prepared to provide a safe, welcoming, and memorable experience for campers for years to come.

Thank you, Aquarion Water Company, for investing in our camp and the children and families we serve.



BUILDING SKILLS, CONFIDENCE, AND COMMUNITY THROUGH STRIVE

At the Stratford YMCA, one of our most impactful partnerships is with the Stratford Board of Education's STRIVE Program. Since Fall 2025, STRIVE students have become valued members of our Community Fridge & Pantry team, contributing their time and talents to support neighbors in need.

Each week, students assist with unloading food deliveries, stocking shelves and refrigerators, helping community members select groceries, and carrying items to vehicles. Their dedication and enthusiasm have made a meaningful difference in the daily operations of the pantry while providing valuable opportunities for personal growth and community engagement.

In addition to their volunteer service, STRIVE students visit the YMCA twice each month to learn healthy lifestyle habits through supervised use of our fitness center. These visits help students build confidence, develop wellness skills, and establish positive habits that can support lifelong health.

As STRIVE Director shared, "The YMCA has provided STRIVE students with meaningful opportunities to give back to their community through volunteer work at the food pantry. Through this experience, students have developed teamwork skills while gaining a greater understanding of the valuable services the YMCA offers."

This partnership is a powerful example of how the YMCA creates opportunities for youth of all abilities to learn, grow, and thrive. By combining service, wellness, and community connection, the STRIVE Program is helping students build valuable life skills while making a positive impact on those around them.

We are proud to partner with STRIVE and look forward to continuing this meaningful collaboration for years to come.



CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS

We are grateful for the incredible individuals and organizations that help strengthen our community through their time, talents, and generosity.

A special thank you to Cathi Kellett from Safe Kids Lower Naugatuck Valley, who volunteers each month to educate children on a variety of important safety topics. Her dedication helps empower young people with the knowledge and skills they need to stay safe and healthy.

We also extend our appreciation to the many local businesses that participated in Read Across America. Community members visited our children to share stories, inspire a love of reading, and generously donated the books they read. Their involvement created meaningful experiences and encouraged literacy in a fun and engaging way.

Finally, we are honored to be recognized by Walnut Community Church as a vital partner in addressing food insecurity. Through our ongoing collaboration, we help distribute food to families in need, ensuring that members of our community have access to essential resources. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of local families.

Thank you to all of our volunteers and community partners for your commitment to serving others and helping build a stronger, healthier community.



WHAT CAMP GIVES THAT AI CAN'T: A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

My career depends on companies adopting AI. It's here, it's moving fast, and it's not slowing down. But every summer, my daughter gets a few glorious weeks in the Berkshires where none of that matters.

She goes to sleepaway camp, and it is completely screen-free. As the parent of an 11-year-old, I see the iPad addiction up close. Time limits and parental controls help, but not much competes with Roblox and YouTube Shorts. Camp does.

That's why I love the moment we turn onto the camp road. In 15 minutes, she will be fully unplugged. And once she is, something else kicks in: independence, responsibility, and real human connection.

At camp, kids learn to clean up after themselves, work together, and talk face-to-face. They canoe, do relay races, sing around campfires, and make skits that require teamwork and trust. They even go slug-hunting. It sounds small, but that's the point: camp teaches kids how to notice the world and each other.

In an AI-first future, that matters more than ever. AI will automate a lot of tasks. What it cannot automate is the need for human connection. Sleepaway camp gives kids a chance to practice exactly that.



FAIRFIELD YMCA VOLUNTEERS SUPPORT FAIRFIELD HALF MARATHON

The Fairfield YMCA was proud to be part of this year's Fairfield Half Marathon, thanks to the dedication and enthusiasm of our incredible volunteers. Their efforts played an important role in helping ensure a safe, successful, and enjoyable race day experience for thousands of runners and spectators.

Throughout the event, YMCA volunteers supported a variety of essential race operations, including packet pickup, staffing water stations, and providing course support. Volunteers also helped monitor runner safety by following participants along the course and assisting with transportation for those who needed support during the race.

The Fairfield Half Marathon is more than just a community race—it is an event that raises critical funds for numerous local nonprofit organizations, including the Fairfield YMCA. This shared commitment to strengthening the community made our involvement especially meaningful.

By giving their time and energy, our volunteers demonstrated the YMCA's mission in action, supporting healthy living, fostering community connections, and helping others achieve their goals. Their commitment and positive spirit contributed to an outstanding event while highlighting the powerful impact of volunteerism and community collaboration.

We extend our sincere thanks to all of the Fairfield YMCA volunteers who helped make race day a success. Your service continues to strengthen our community and inspire others to get involved.



UPCOMING EVENTS & SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

the Y | 175

Celebrate. Swim. Splash.

Big Splash Bash

FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026 | 6:30PM-9:30PM

REGISTER ONLINE OR AT THE Y

Tickets: In Advance - Y Members \$15 | Community \$20
After June 20 - Y Members \$20 | Community \$25

CELEBRATING 175 YEARS OF FUN,
FITNESS, AND FRIENDSHIP!

Pool Party
Food Trucks
Lifeguards & Pool floats

Family Friendly
Raffles and Prizes
Live Music by Sapphire

WOODRUFF FAMILY YMCA

175 YEARS OF FUN, FITNESS, AND FRIENDSHIP!

Woodruff Family YMCA

BIG SPLASH BASH

Friday, June 26, 2026
6:30PM-9:30PM

Register or Sponsor online at:

<https://bit.ly/4of6qek>

Make 115% of a Difference NOW Until June 28th

Donate to the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA through the Travelers Championship Birdies for Charity program and receive a 15% match!



Presented by
WebsterBank

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Central Connecticut Coast YMCA

BIRDIES FOR CHARITY

Sunday,
June 28, 2026

Support at:

<https://bit.ly/4oINVFc>



New Haven YMCA Youth Center
& Hamden/North Haven YMCA

ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT (18+)

AMISTAD HIGH SCHOOL
580 Dixwell Ave, New Haven, CT 06511

July 18, 2026 | 9:00AM - 4:00PM

Hamden North Haven YMCA

FLAG FOOTBALL

Saturday,
July 18, 2026
9:00AM-4:00PM

Register or Sponsor online at:

<https://bit.ly/4uqaXw0>



STRATFORD YMCA
22nd ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

TEES FOR TOMORROW

MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2026

Mill River Country Club
4567 Main Street, Stratford, CT

11:00AM Registration/Lunch
12:30PM Shotgun Start
5:00PM Reception, Dinner,
Auction, Raffle, Awards

Stratford YMCA

TEES FOR TOMORROW

Monday, August 3, 2026
11:00AM

Register or Sponsor online at:

<https://bit.ly/4dBpAY7>

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