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CENTRAL CONNECTICUT COAST YMCA PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

[cccmca.org](http://cccmca.org)

FALL 2021

## TAKING CARE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Dear Friends:

I hope that this message finds you and your families well and looking forward to a great fall season. In past newsletters, I have reported on the Y's ability to quickly identify community needs and respond rapidly with quality programs and services. The Covid-19 pandemic has really tested our Y as we have addressed immediate human needs including hunger and food insecurity, emergency shelter and housing, blood supply, welfare checks of the elderly, and on-line programming for all family members. I'd like to offer my special thanks to those who donated to the Y's Covid Relief Fund through which \$228,520 was raised to help our neighbors in need.

We are particularly proud of the 10 Y Learning Centers that our staff developed to support hundreds of families in need of academic support and child care as schools closed and transitioned to remote learning. Parents and guardians were able to return to work knowing that their child was being supported in their learning and well cared for throughout the day. This pandemic has brought to the surface the very real social needs in America. One of the most glaring challenges for many young families is access to quality and affordable child care. What is particularly concerning is that the U.S. was facing a child care crisis *before* the pandemic began, and the lack of licensed care for children has increasingly affected families and the economy. As the pandemic has continued, many child care centers have closed leaving even fewer options for families. Consequently, many parents of young children have been forced to quit their jobs because they must now care for their family full-time. And it is even worse for families of color. For example, Black Americans are nearly *twice* as likely as non-Hispanic white families to make significant work changes, including leaving their jobs altogether, due to the lack of child care.

So, how has our Y responded. First, we have worked very hard to preserve our 7 current pre-school child care and nursery school programs that serve hundreds of families every day. Second, we have actually grown to 67 the number of elementary schools that we serve with quality before and after-school programs. And, should the need arise, we are ready to re-open our 10 Y Learning Centers and add more if needed. Please remember that it is through your generosity that we are able to do this important work and welcome every child and family regardless of their financial situation. I would also like to recognize our great Local, State, and Federal government partners who have supported our work with families through on-going emergency funding programs.

Best wishes for a safe, happy, and healthy fall season.



David Stevenson  
President & CEO



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#### BRANCH LOCATIONS

Alpha Community  
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Fairfield YMCA  
Hamden/North Haven  
YMCA  
Lakewood-Trumbull YMCA  
New Haven YMCA Youth  
Center  
Soundview Family YMCA  
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Stratford YMCA  
Valley YMCA Ansonia  
Woodruff Family YMCA  
Milford  
YMCA Camp Hi-Rock  
Mt. Washington MA  
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New Haven

#### OUR MISSION

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

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL OUR YOUTH

In Connecticut, families continue to struggle with the work-life balance, and the majority continue to need safe, healthy and sustainable options for their children. The cost of a highly effective program should never be a sacrifice they need to make, especially now when Y programs are exactly what they need. The need continues, and many Central Connecticut Coast YMCA families require some level of financial aid, and we stand by our promise to serve ALL.

This year, and every year before, and for years to come, the Y offered early learning programs for school-readiness, school-age child care programs in all of our communities and summer camp, allowing **ALL** youth to experience their best school free days.

The Central Connecticut Coast YMCA **Annual Campaign means opportunity for our youth.** By promising to serve ALL, we are being inclusive and affording opportunity to those who need us.

Consider the child better off today because they attended a Y school-age child care program before and after school, on financial aid, otherwise unable to do so. They were kept safe, they had fun, they were active, they received help with homework and healthy snacks. Then in the evening, it was a little easier on their working parent, because of the Y and your donation.

Help bring Y programming to all children. Consider a financial donation to our **ANNUAL CAMPAIGN** by visiting [www.cccymca.org/makeadifference/give](http://www.cccymca.org/makeadifference/give)

**DONATE FOR A BETTER US.**



## OVERWHELMING GENEROSITY

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the YMCA. This past year highlighted their importance in ways we have never seen before. Many, many individuals and organizations shared their time and talents, giving back through activities such as cleaning up and preparing outdoor facilities for summer campers, serving on our boards, spearheading fundraising programs, lending a hand at food drives and simply leading STEAM games. They've been able to enhance their personal well-being and develop meaningful relationships while we've been able to make a greater impact in the communities we care about.



An Alpha Community Services Y volunteer creates book boxes. Our families just love them! They include diverse books specific to age/gender/ethnicity and more.



Woodruff Family Y Together Hood Program volunteers regularly work with Milford Food4Kids helping to pack healthy meals and snacks for over 125 food insecure children in the Milford School system.



Mr. Frank has volunteered at YMCA Camp Mountain Laurel for the last seven summers. He offers a wealth of enrichment activities, games, stories and fun! The campers look forward to working with him.



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## READY TO SERVE FAMILIES IN EAST HAVEN

The Soundview Family YMCA has expanded its services into East Haven. Thanks to a partnership with the Town of East Haven, the Y is able to offer child care to many more families in the community.

This summer, the Y offered a day camp program at Hayes School and Cosey Beach. Two fun and enjoyable outdoor camp experiences were provided to over 150 children. Parents were able to focus on their work day, knowing that their children were safe and participating in activities that kept them active.

To help support families during the school year, a YMCA before and after-school program is being offered at Hayes School. Families enjoy the convenience of having the program in their own neighborhood. For students, it's a short bus ride to and from their school.

During the after-school program, students receive homework help, a healthy snack, do STEAM projects, play games and enjoy their friends. Y Vacation Club and Y Fun Club programs are offered when school is not in session. All the programs are led by Lynn Wheeler, Soundview Family Y Youth and Family Director, and her team of Y professional educators.

Enrollment has been impressive, with over 45 students registered. Financial aid is being provided for those who may need assistance. "It's been exciting!" shared Wheeler. "The Town of East Haven, the Board of Education, the teachers, the parents and the Y; all coming together because they care and want to support East Haven families."

Plans are already underway with the Y, the East Haven Parks & Recreation Department and their Senior Center to create classes and programming for all ages.

## SHARING OUR MISSION

We were so honored to host several Federal, State and Local elected officials this summer. We were proud to have the opportunity to share our mission and the work the Y is doing in Youth Development and in helping to close the Academic Achievement Gap.

Thank you for visiting U.S. Senators Chris Murphy and Richard Blumenthal, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Stratford Mayor Laura Hoydick, Ansonia Mayor David Cassetti, East Haven Mayor Joseph Carfora and State Reps Joe Gresko, Phil Young, and Kara Rochelle. Our children loved meeting you!



## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNITY



Twelve families have moved into the newly renovated Alpha Community Services YMCA Clinton Avenue apartments.



School supplies, back packs, school uniforms, healthy breakfast items were collected for the August CCCY Days of Service initiative.



Stratford Y Preschoolers finalized all their writing and math packets before heading off to Kindergarten.



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## WE PROUDLY WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

The Central Connecticut Coast YMCA Board of Directors recently elected three new members. We'd like to welcome Dr. Thomas Coley, Dr. Victor Morris and Ms. Casey Stark.

Dr. Coley is the Regional President for Connecticut State Colleges and Universities Shoreline-West Region. The Shoreline-West region includes Gateway Community College, Housatonic Community College and Norwalk Community College.

Dr. Morris is the Chief Medical Officer, Senior Vice President Medical Affairs at Bridgeport Hospital and Assistant Professor of General Medicine at the Yale School of Medicine.

Ms. Stark is the Assistant Athletic Director for Academic Services at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, where she is also an Adjunct Faculty member.



## HOW DID YOU SPEND YOUR SUMMER VACATION?

Well, 2,548 children attended one of eight CCCY day camps and another 672 children attended resident camp at YMCA Camp Hi-Rock. Yes! 3,220 children had a great summer just being kids! Games, swimming, archery, basketball, arts & crafts, challenging themselves on the climbing wall, investigating insects, AND singing were just a few of the activities enjoyed by all.

An additional 119 children trained to be youth triathletes in our Race4Chase Program (made possible by the Chase Michael Anthony Kowalski Foundation). Daily for six weeks, these children learned to swim, bike and run.

And what did their families think? "Our child enjoyed every day of camp, made new friends and had a good time. We liked it." "Thank you for all that you and your staff did this summer to make camp a safe and exciting place for the kids to play and learn. Our child really enjoyed their first camp experience." "Thank you for a great summer in not the easiest of times. Our child really enjoyed her camp experience!"

**So here's a HUGE shout out to all CCCY staff members for a job extremely well done! And another HUGE shout out for all families who have great kids! See you next summer.**

