



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends and
Supporters,



Community. It is a thread that ties us all together, and a foundation that connects us through common interest and fellowship.

Over the past two years, we have witnessed and experienced tragedies and crises in our world, in our nation, and in our backyards. It has been a challenging time that demonstrates the importance of our communities and our connections. Often, the worst of times brings out the best in people.

Each day at the Y, I am moved by the commitment of our donors and volunteers who support the Y's cause to strengthen the communities and lift up neighbors. Through your contributions to the Y, you take meaningful action and make a measureable difference to improve the lives of your neighbors.

Through your passion, values, and inspiration, you help us to foster social, physical, and mental well-being among individuals at all stages of life, which creates a stronger community.

In this issue of Transforming Lives, you will see many ways in which your generosity and spirit of volunteerism help to advance the Y's mission, specifically through our Annual Campaign, volunteer opportunities, and community benefit programs. The collective capacity for compassion among donors and volunteers inspires the work we do at the Y to deepen community impact.

Thank you for giving your best to the Y and our communities. On behalf of everyone who benefits from your generosity, thank you.

Gratefully,

David M. Carcieri

David M. Carcieri
President/CEO

TRANSFORMING LIVES

SPRING 2022



UNITY FOR COMMUNITY Annual Campaign Update

Our community is stronger because of you!

Your ongoing support of Greater Somerset County YMCA fuels our mission work to ensure that everyone in the community has access to vital resources and support and, for that, we are so grateful.

On March 30, we held our Annual Campaign Celebration to mark the fundraising accomplishments toward our 2022 Annual Campaign goal of \$1,500,000. Thanks to your generous support of the Y's mission, we came close to reaching our goal.

As a nonprofit organization, the Y is essential to the community. In 2021, Greater Somerset County YMCA provided over \$1.8 million in direct financial assistance to local individuals and families, as well as in support of mission-based programs that address urgent and emerging needs. One hundred percent of the funds raised in our Annual Campaign goes directly to the community.

Through your generous investment, you inspire children of all ages and abilities to reach their full potential; you empower individuals to build health and wellness in spirit, mind, and body; you provide financial assistance to under-resourced families; and, you uplift neighbors who struggle emotionally, physically, and financially. With your belief in the Y's mission as our inspiration, we will continue our efforts to meet and exceed our campaign goal to ensure access for all.





SELFLESS SPIRIT

2022 Volunteer Spirit Awards

To celebrate National Volunteer Month, we proudly presented 14 Volunteer Spirit Awards to individuals and partners who volunteer their time and talent for the benefit of others. The awards recognize volunteers for their commitment, service, and leadership toward helping Greater Somerset County YMCA to fulfill its mission of strengthening community.

Volunteerism is deeply rooted in the history of the Y, and volunteers remain as important to our organization today as they were in the beginning. Over the past year, we've been truly inspired by the meaningful contributions of all our volunteers in supporting the Y's response to ongoing community challenges. From helping with food distribution, to supporting individuals with special needs, to projects that inspire equity and inclusivity, our volunteers help neighbors to thrive and they are shining examples of social responsibility.

We are so thankful for all of our donors and volunteers who share a passion for transforming lives and propelling our community forward by investing in our kids, our health, and our neighbors.

Congratulations to the 2022 Volunteer Spirit Award recipients.





YOUTH

**Sami Bender, Mia Capizzi,
Hanne deBie, Brian Gannon,
Tessa Garner, Sophia Kaiser,
Jenna Langer, & Andy Moss**
Teen Advocate Volunteers



ADULT

**Erwin Hernandez
& Neal Bituin**
Swim Team Volunteers



FAMILY

Carol Mills & Family
Giving Tree Volunteers



ACTIVE OLDER ADULT

Artie Sanders
Community Volunteer



GROUP

**Sarah Altonji, Spencer Dobrowski,
Jess Johnson, Erin Laffey, Tim Ryan,
Jordan Selvin, Anish Vasu, Bryan Volpi,
Jessica Walpow, & Vincent Xie**
Ridge High School Vocational Studies
Volunteers



GROUP

**Rachelle Senzon,
Rich Ruffer, Kim Lamont,
& Lauren Barnicle**
Swim Team Parent Leadership Committee
Volunteers



LEADERSHIP

Bill Grippo
Franklin Township YMCA
Task Force Volunteer



LIVING OUR CAUSE

Julia Zauner
Annual Campaign Volunteer



RAY OF LIGHT

Stephanie Moore
Togetherhood Committee
and Tutoring Volunteer



COMMUNITY PARTNER

Star Fish Food Pantry
Food Security Partner



COMMUNITY PARTNER

PeopleCare Center for Nonprofits
Community Support Partner



BOARD LEADERSHIP

Kieran Anderson
Plainfield YMCA Branch Board Volunteer



PHILANTHROPY

Jack Morrison
Philanthropy Volunteer



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Jay Perantoni
Board of Directors Volunteer





FAMILY FOCUS

Healthy Kids Day

Healthy Kids Day is a national Y initiative to improve health and well-being for kids and families by promoting healthy habits while children are on summer break. The health crisis associated with the COVID-19 pandemic has heightened awareness of the importance of children staying active physically, intellectually, and socially.

On April 30, we held a Healthy Kids Day event at TD Bank Ballpark, home of the Somerset Patriots, to inspire healthy lifestyles among local families. The free, community event included fun, engaging activities such as: arts and crafts, games, an inflatable obstacle course, healthy snacks, and, of course, a visit from Sparkee! Over 800 families attended the event.

We are grateful for the support of community partners who contributed to a successful event including: Atlantic Health Systems, PIM Brands, Performance Rehabilitation, RWJ University Hospital Somerset, Somerset Patriots, and Somerset Pediatrics. We are proud to collaborate through a shared passion to improve health in our communities.



INSPIRED LEADERSHIP

Saturdays in Motion

This year marked the 30th anniversary of Saturdays in Motion (SIM), the country's longest running and largest non-public recreational program for children with autism. For 30 years, SIM has been led by teen volunteers who are paired one-on-one with a child who has special needs to play for an hour, and then swim for an hour. The program has a measurable impact not only on the lives of participating families, but also on the volunteers.

"At age 5, I was first introduced to SIM as a sibling of a participant with special needs, and the program has forever changed my life. My volunteer service over the past 17 years has been invaluable. SIM offers a welcoming, safe environment to connect with diverse children and other student volunteers. I've had the privilege to witness the children grow and improve their skillsets over the years, which has been an inspiration in my life. As a volunteer, I gained new perspective on life, I have become more compassionate and patient, and I discovered my desire to help and uplift others. SIM has motivated me to pursue a career in medicine and advocate for the special needs community, a group underrepresented in medicine. My family and I are so grateful for this program." – Jen

Your support of the Y makes programs like this, and many others, possible – thank you!



BRIGHT FUTURES

ACE Program

On May 25, Princeton YMCA celebrated the accomplishments of four high school seniors who will graduate this year from Princeton High School. We are especially proud of these students, as they are also graduating from our ACE (Accept, Compete, Excel) program, which matches chronically absent students with mentors that work with the student and the family to determine how to best assist the student. This is the inaugural group of students in the ACE program, who joined as high school freshman and participated all four years. The program has positively changed their trajectory and, now, they are matriculating at Harcum College, Ithaca College, Kean University, and Rider University. Your investment in the Y supports brighter futures for all children and teens.



PATRIOTIC PICNIC

Veterans BBQ

To commemorate Memorial Day and honor the sacrifices of our U.S. veterans, Somerset Hills YMCA's Togetherhood volunteer program held an outdoor BBQ at Valley Brook Village, a supportive housing community for homeless veterans. The volunteers cooked and served a lunch buffet of burgers, pulled pork, sausage, salads, cornbread, and more, all of which was donated by M&M Perrotti's in Basking Ridge. As much as the veterans enjoyed the delicious BBQ, they also appreciated the smiles, fellowship, and caring support offered by the volunteers. Our veteran heroes were tremendously grateful for the thoughtful and heartwarming event.

Your generous support helps to strengthen community.



DYAKUYU! (THANK YOU!)

Goods for Ukraine

As part of our larger Y family across the U.S. and internationally, we express solidarity and concern for the young people, families, and communities who have been directly affected by the crisis in Ukraine. We felt compelled to do our part to support the Ukrainian people; so Greater Somerset County YMCA partnered with Magnate CARES and the Rotary Club of Hillsborough on a drive to collect goods to help Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced people.

In total, we collected over 80 boxes, which equaled over 1,000 lbs. of vital goods. Several trips were required to get the goods to New York where they were shipped to Warsaw, Poland and then onto Lviv, Ukraine where they will be distributed by volunteers. A big thank you to all who contributed and collected goods for Ukrainian refugees in a time of crisis.



GREEN THUMB

Community Garden

During the pandemic, Y volunteers banded together to establish community gardens at our branches to help support our food security efforts through nutritious produce. Over the spring months, volunteers from Bridgewater YMCA and Somerville YMCA have prepped the garden beds, planted seeds, and cared for the gardens. Currently, carrots, radishes, spinach, and blueberries are being harvested, with more to come over the summer. We are so grateful for our volunteers and their work to support hungry neighbors – it truly takes a village.



NOURISHING NEIGHBORS

Food Distribution

Since March, our Y team has been supporting the Franklin Food Bank with the distribution of much needed produce to families in Franklin Township who struggle with food insecurity. On the first Wednesday of each month, staff from the Franklin Food Bank, the Franklin Township Police Department, and Greater Somerset County YMCA gather at the Community Relations Bureau on Hamilton Street to distribute hundreds of boxes of produce. We are thrilled to contribute to this meaningful service that is received with warm gratitude shown in the smiles and kind words of Franklin residents.



SUPER HABITS

School Age Child Care

Everyone knows that superheroes need to be strong, and that strength comes from being healthy. The children in our Plainfield YMCA School Age Child Care program are becoming superheroes in their own right by taking a pledge to be healthy. The students have been enjoying fresh fruit as an afternoon snack to fuel their energy. Our curriculum is focused on academic, physical, and social development, which includes teaching the children to make healthy choices through nutrition and exercise...super habits to learn at a young age.





READY. SET.
SUMMER!

Get ready for a summer
of adventure, discovery,
friendships and memories.

gscymca.com/camp

GREATER SOMERSET COUNTY YMCA

140 Mt. Airy Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920 908 630 3535 gscymca.org

BRIDGEWATER YMCA | FRANKLIN TWP YMCA | HILLSBOROUGH YMCA | PLAINFIELD YMCA | PRINCETON YMCA | SOMERSET HILLS YMCA | SOMERVILLE YMCA

The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening the community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. At Greater Somerset County YMCA, we believe everyone, regardless of age, income or background, should have the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive. For information about Greater Somerset County YMCA and financial assistance, visit us at gscymca.org.