

# BOARD of DIRECTORS NEWSLETTER

February 2019



YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge & South Amboy  
Office of Rose Cushing, President & CEO

## ASC KICK-OFF RALLY EVENT

The 2019 Annual Support Campaign Kick-Off event was held on January 15th at the JFK Social Center. The evening helped educate staff and volunteers about how the Y strengthens the communities we serve. Gary Graham, former Y CEO, inspired all with his words of encouragement to campaigners with the message, "give until it feels good". Two families involved with our Exercising Speech Program and Childcare/Camp Programs gave heartfelt testimonials on how the Y has been instrumental in their children's lives. One mother noted, "it's great to know that I have a place that I can send my children to, and know that they are safe and being cared for, and when they leave they run to hug their teachers. Being at the Metuchen Y makes her feel like she is with family. I would not have been able to send my child here without the financial assistance from the Y." Another parent, whose child was diagnosed with Apraxia and participates in the Exercising Speech Program, noted, "working with James Farley gave my daughter a chance to work on her speech and exercise at the same time. I have never seen her so motivated, but now she counts the days until she can go back to the Y to see James. Her balance has improved and she is talking much more. We can never thank the Y enough for their help." Rose Cushing noted, "we are about preparing our communities for the next generation and that's why we are here tonight."



Chair and Co-Chair Katie Barnes and Mike Lackland gave an update on the campaign, and praised the programs that the Y offers that are support systems within the community served. They noted that this year's goal is \$275,000, with an aspirational goal of \$300,000.

"Our Annual Campaign has always given us the power to make our communities stronger and provide essential programs and services to people from all walks of life", said Bruce Peragallo, Board Chair. "To me, however, it is most important to invest time and effort to the children in our communities".

A special thank you goes out to Anita Bennison, who spearheaded the event.

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## STAY CONNECTED!

Association Office



Metuchen



Edison



South Amboy



# GIRL SCOUTS RAISE MONEY

Girl Scout Troop 83561 sold Girl Scout cookies at the Edison YMCA branch to raise money towards their business badges: Money Count badge, Meet My Customer badge, Cookie CEO badge, Business Plan badge and My Portfolio badge. A portion of the money raised will go to a charity that the troop will collectively vote on. Funds also go towards a weekend campout for their entire troop—an event that all of the girls look forward to!



-Contributed by Cindy O'Neill



## DID YOU KNOW?

### ANNUAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN FORMS

Campaign materials for the Annual Support Campaign are available on our website at: <https://www.ymcaofmews.org/giving/annual-support-campaign>. Materials include the 2019 Campaign Story Book and the fillable .pdf version of the tri-fold "How Can I Give" brochure.

## UPCOMING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

February 27



March 27



April 24

## TOGETHERHOOD TALLIES IMPRESSIVE BLOOD DRIVE NUMBERS!

*Togetherhood held it's final blood drive for 2018 with some impressive numbers! A total of 64 people signed up to donate blood the day after Christmas. While 19 did not qualify, 40 donors gave whole blood, and five donors gave double red cell donations (this counts as two donations). Metuchen was credited with 50 units!*

*This blood drive marks the fifth blood drive at the Metuchen Y this year! A total of 270 units of whole bloods were collected for the year, with an average of 54 units per blood drive.*

*Great work to all who donated, the Metuchen staff, and Paul Edgcomb and his Togetherhood crew for organizing this and the many other Togetherhood volunteer events throughout the year!*

*The first scheduled blood drive for 2019 is Sunday, February 24th.*



## METUCHEN Y HOSTS GIFT WRAPPING FUNDRAISER

Staff from the Metuchen Y and the Association Office volunteered for their annual gift wrapping fundraiser at Barnes & Noble in Menlo Park Mall. The staff wrapped gifts that were purchased at the store and talked to shoppers about our Annual Support Campaign and all that it does for the community. \$511 in donations was collected from the fundraiser that went to the Annual Campaign. Other volunteers included: Chrissy Tolley, Veronica Vargas, Raquel Aday, Lee Garfield-Levy, Patricia Colandra, Pamela Cohen, Kaitlyn Prendergast, and several LiveSTRONG® participants.



Decked out in their Christmas gear, Gabby St. Fleur and Bradford Lindsey volunteer for the gift wrapping fundraiser!

## METUCHEN CHILD CARE HOLDS WINTER FESTIVAL



Kathy Ramsay and Laura Brunson, Ready Set Learn teachers, held their second annual Winter Festival on December 21<sup>st</sup>. All of the children and their families were invited to participate in winter-themed activities such as a snowball toss, ice fishing and mitten matching along with child friendly bowling and golfing. There were also crafts, snacks and refreshments for all who attended.



-Contributed by Pamela Cohen

## TESTIMONIALS

**Each month we will publish a testimonial that we have received from one of our branches or Child Care Centers**

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*"I have nothing but good things to say about Avenel Learning Center. From the time we moved here about five years ago, we have been sending our son Caleb to the aftercare program. We started out at a different center, but quickly transferred our son to the Y's SACC program and were very relieved with the care that he received there. Caleb loves attending the afterschool program and loves the staff. This past fall, we enrolled our 3-year-old son, Micah, in the full day preschool program at Avenel. From day one, the entire experience has been a great one. Everyone's kindness and enthusiasm is amazing. Through the help of Miss Rosanna, Miss Kim and more recently Miss Brianna, Micah has learned sign language, number recognition and a whole host of other information. Micah teaches his big brother sign language now! We see the progress Micah has made and we are very impressed with the team at the Avenel YMCA. With its close proximity to our home and the invaluable teachers there, it has made our work and home life well balanced."*

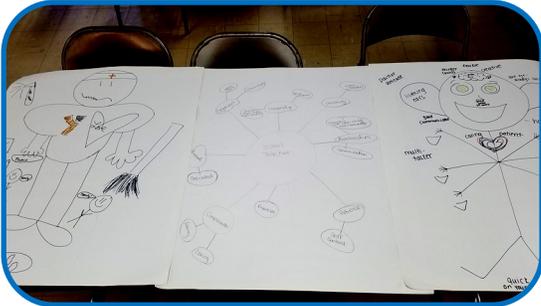
-Mia G., January 2019

# CHILD CARE IN-HOUSE TRAINING

Lead Teachers from the Child Care Services Branch gather together once a month to discuss various topics integral to their roles. Meetings take place throughout the school year and is the perfect opportunity for teachers to share ideas and experiences from their classrooms.



Pictured right, Lead Teachers work on a team-building activity. Guided by Ken Shirk Learning Center Director Samantha Cote, teachers were asked to step their way through a grid by discovering and memorizing an unmarked path. Teachers then had to help each other through the grid without speaking.



Pictured above, Lead Teachers worked in groups to draw a picture of the "ideal teacher" including all qualities and responsibilities essential to the position.

*-Contributed by Jennifer Guthlein and Angelique Nabi*

# SHOP AT AMAZON!

## Share the love

Shop for your Valentine at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and Amazon donates.

You shop. Amazon donates.  
**amazonsmile**



## Edison Global Fundraiser

The Edison YMCA began a collection for [Global Brigades](https://www.globalbrigades.org/) so that one of their staff members can travel to the Honduras with the organization this spring to establish a clean water system and set up clinics to provide communities with medical supplies and treatment.

*-Contributed by Cindy O'Neill*



# JOB FAIR

YMCA OF METUCHEN, EDISON, WOODBRIDGE & SOUTH AMBOY

**Metuchen YMCA**  
65 High Street  
January 15, 2019  
4:00-7:00 p.m.

**South Amboy YMCA**  
200 John T. O'Leary Boulevard  
January 15, 2019  
12:00-3:00 p.m. and 4:00-7:00 p.m.

**Edison YMCA**  
1775 Oak Tree Road  
January 16, 2019  
12:00-3:00 p.m.

## BE A PART OF SOMETHING GREAT!

A Job Fair was held at the three YMCA branches on January 14th and 15th to interview for many positions within the organization, including Welcome Center staff, Assistant Teachers and Counselors, CDL bus drivers, lifeguards and enrichment instructors.

The event was a huge success! Applicants were able to pre-register for the event, however, interviews were also given on the spot for eligible candidates. South Amboy interviewed over 20 persons with a total of seven people hired, Edison interviewed 35 persons with a total of five persons hired, and Metuchen interviewed 45 persons with a total of four persons hired.

A total of 16 people were hired, with many more applicants are still being interviewed or considered for current or future positions.

Thanks to all the staff who went over and above to make this event successful! The team spirit is truly appreciated!



Mary Valera, Annmarie Sabovik, Tara Francis and Ernie Scapolatempore prepare for the Job Fair.



Edison staff interview eligible candidates.

**FOR MORE  
INFORMATION, VISIT  
[YMCAOFMEWSA.ORG/  
EMPLOYMENT](http://YMCAOFMEWSA.ORG/EMPLOYMENT)**

## METUCHEN OFFERING CITIZENSHIP CLASSES

The Metuchen YMCA will again be offering Citizenship Preparation classes at the branch. The 8-week class is open to members and non-members of the Y at a cost of only \$40.00 which will go towards class materials. Classes will meet on Wednesday evenings at the Metuchen Y and will begin on February 20th. To qualify for the class, participants must be able to read, write and speak English, they must be in the process of applying for citizenship or planning to apply this year, and must be 18 years of age or older. Registration for these classes begins on February 5, 2019. Interested applicants can contact Diane Cammarano at [dimuka@optonline.net](mailto:dimuka@optonline.net).



## RYAN PATTERSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Applications are now being accepted for the Ryan Patterson Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded each year to a youth member of any branch of the YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge & South Amboy who is pursuing a higher education in the fall of 2019. The recipient must strive for excellence in academics, sports or the arts. In addition, they must demonstrate that they have overcome some sort of adversity or challenge (not limited to health challenges), live by the golden rule, have influenced others in a positive way and advocated for others who are less fortunate.

The scholarship awarded is for \$2,000. Applications are due by March 29, 2019 and the scholarship will be announced in April.

For more information, please visit the website at <https://www.ymcaofmews.org/giving/ryan-patterson-memorial-scholarship>.

## SAY STAFF RECEIVES AQUATICS TRAINING



Last week South Amboy Aquatics Director, Liz Moreira (pictured left), and Aquatics Coordinator, Joe Derogatis, attended a Lifeguard Instruction Course. This course involved intense in-water exercises and drills. Liz and Joe look forward to bringing their training to upgrade lifeguard

preparedness and leading future lifeguards to keep pools safe at the South Amboy YMCA.

*-Contributed by Karen Robson*

South Amboy held an in-service training for aquatics staff on Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. Areas of focus included water safety, lifeguard preparedness, and drowning prevention. Special thanks to all staff who attended to help keep our community safe!

*-Contributed by Karen Robson*



Have an article or item of interest for the newsletter? Please submit to Veronica Vargas at [veronica.vargas@ymcaofmews.org](mailto:veronica.vargas@ymcaofmews.org).

# <bits & pieces>



Metuchen Y Pre-K and K children have fun in the snow with teacher, Raquel Aday



Metuchen offers new Adult Game Lounge!



Edison Y Early Learning Center gets new flooring in Pre-K classroom!



South Amboy youth play basketball with equipment that was donated by SNY Play Ball!



Students have fun with their 100 Days of School projects.



Metuchen preschoolers have fun with their National School Choice Week yellow scarves!



All of the branches held Open Houses on January 5th for membership and camp!



Metuchen's SACC children having a salad for their healthy snack!

## MLK DAY OF SERVICE PROJECT



*Jillianne Peguero, Samantha Creange, Kathy Minaeff and Fatima Ismael organize and pack hygiene kits.*

*-Contributed by Karen Robson*

All three branches participated in the National Day of Service on January 21st, honoring Dr. Martin Luther King. All three branches asked members, families and friends to donate travel-sized toiletries and Ziploc bags to put together hygiene kits to be donated to several shelters and high school nurses for students in need. Some of the kits are being kept at the branches and childcare centers for distribution.

There has been wonderful feedback that these donations were appreciated by many!

Thank you to everyone to donated!



## YMCA MEETS WITH STATE OFFICIALS

Rose Cushing, President & CEO, Bobby Kleinau, V.P. of Operations and Branch Leadership, and Karen M. Robson, Director of Operations for the South Amboy YMCA, joined New Jersey's most powerful elected state officials—Gov. Phil Murphy, State Senate President Stephen Sweeney, and State Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin (pictured below) at the Ocean Bay Diner in Sayreville on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

This meeting celebrated the compromise the



*Bobby Kleinau, VP of Operations and Branch Leadership and Rose Cushing, President & CEO*

government officials made on a bill that will provide a gradual, steady increase in the state's minimum wage over a number of years that would reach \$15.00 by 2024 for the vast majority of minimum wage workers, with moderated increases for a number of job sectors.

*-Contributed by Karen Robson*

## STAFFING NEWS

We are very pleased to report that Christine Tolley has been appointed as the new Director of Operations at our Metuchen YMCA branch! Chrissy has a long history at the YMCA, with over 27 years of service to the Metuchen branch in a number of roles, beginning Preschool, After School Care and Camp Munsee, and then transitioning to Senior Program Director and then Director of Operations in January 2019. She has already taken on new initiatives such as Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) and Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) and the Togetherhood Program.



She is passionate about strengthening the foundations of the community and families through the Y's three key areas of focus: youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

Congratulations, Chrissy!



Please join us in welcoming Mary Valera as the new Membership Director at the South Amboy YMCA branch! Mary has been working with the YMCA of MEWSA for the past year in a variety of programs which has allowed her to gain a strong understanding of membership needs as well as our opportunities, challenges and strengths. She has many exciting plans to make a greater impact on the well-being of our welcome center staff, members and communities. Special thanks to South Amboy branch staff for their support during their ongoing leadership transition. Due to their commitment to our cause, our members were supported successfully and our branch is set up for success in 2019! Please join us in congratulating Mary in this new role!

## RALLY! RIDE! RAISE!

Calling all Espresso Bike riders! Join the Rally for the Y and sweat to support your local community. **Riders will earn 10 cents/mile from Espresso for our Y!** Saddle up and invite your friends and family to pledge. Raise \$100 and be recognized with a Rally Badge next to your name on the leaderboards. All proceeds go directly to our Y. Sign up for the challenge at [espresso.com](http://espresso.com).



## GRANT AND DONOR RECOGNITION

<b>Y-USA</b>	\$3,000	Fifty (50) Swimming Scholarships for underprivileged children.
<b>SNY PLAY BALL</b>	\$210	Basketball supplies at Edison YMCA
	\$210	Basketball supplies at South Amboy YMCA

# YMCA HOLIDAY STAFF PARTY

The YMCA holiday staff party was held on Saturday, January 26th at the American Legion Hall in Metuchen. The party had a Winter Wonderland theme, and almost 100 staff from all branches and child care were in attendance and had a night of fun dancing, singing karaoke, and enjoying each others company. The group was also entertained with a choreographed dance by several staff members to the song "Better When I'm Dancin'" by Meghan Trainor. A fun time was definitely had by all!



## CAMP FAMILY FUN NIGHT



“On Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup> the Metuchen Y Pre-K and Kindergarten children celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> day of school. The children posed with friends in the photo booth, they counted from 1 to 100, they counted by 10’s while playing hopscotch, they built towers with 100 cups and drew pictures of what they thought they would look like when they turned 100. We are happy to announce that we are all now 100 Days Smarter!”

*-Contributed by Pamela Cohen*



## HEALTHY WEIGHT & YOUR CHILD

Based on a \$20,000 grant received from Y-USA, our Y will be introducing the Healthy Weight & Your Child Program to our members and to the community in February 2019. The program is geared towards children between the ages of 7-13 who carry excess body weight in the 95th percentile or higher. It is a family-based program, as evidence shows that child weight management programs are more effective when the entire family is involved and committed to adopting healthier habits. It focuses on healthy eating, regular physical activity and behavior change to empower children to live a healthier and active lifestyle. Families will work with trained leaders for the duration of the 25 session programs.



The program begins in February and will be held on Tuesdays and Saturdays. A one adult family membership is included with the program.

For more information, contact Hannah Thomas, Senior Director of Healthy Living, at [hannah.thomas@ymcaofmews.org](mailto:hannah.thomas@ymcaofmews.org) or at 732-548-2044.

## IMPORTANT DATES

### Winter I Session

December 31–February 24

### Spring Session

February 25–April 21

### Camp Open House

February 23 and April 27

### Community Annual Campaign

February 1–March 31

### Camp Registration Begins

March 1

### Oakcrest Camp/Pool Open House

March 15 and April 26

# UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

## FEBRUARY

- 6 **BOARD GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**  
AO Conference Room—5:30 p.m.
- 7 **CHILD CARE COMMITTEE**  
AO Conference Room—6:00 p.m.
- 12 **FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
AO Conference Room—6:00 p.m.
- 20 **FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
Wernik Room—6:00 p.m.
- 27 **BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**  
5:30 Fellowship—6:00 p.m. Meeting

## MARCH

- 1 **PROPERTY COMMITTEE**  
AO Conference Room—9:00 a.m.
- 6 **EDISON BRANCH BOARD**  
Edison Branch—8:30 a.m.
- 13 **SOUTH AMBOY BRANCH BOARD**  
South Amboy Branch—6:00 p.m.
- 20 **FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
Wernik Room—6:00 p.m.
- 20 **METUCHEN BRANCH BOARD**  
Metuchen Branch—8:00 a.m.
- 27 **BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**  
5:30 Fellowship—6:00 p.m. Meeting



### MISSED AN ISSUE?

All Board newsletters as well as Donor newsletters can be found on the YMCA website at

<http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/about-us/ation-newsletter>.



**CHECK OUT  
OUR NEW  
CAMP  
COMMERCIAL!**