



# Team Captain Toolkit

Thank you for your and your family's generous support of the YMCA's 5K Walk and Run, an annual event benefiting the **Livestrong® Program** at the YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge, and South Amboy, as well as the YMCA at the Piscataway Community Center. This program is offered at no cost to cancer survivors and provides vital support to help them regain their physical and emotional health after a cancer diagnosis.

Each year, walkers and runners participate in this meaningful event in memory of **Janice Garbolino**, a former Health and Wellness Director at the Metuchen YMCA who lost her battle with cancer in 2002. Cancer is a life-changing disease, and the Livestrong® at the YMCA program offers survivors the opportunity to rebuild their strength, increase physical activity, reduce cancer-related fatigue, and promote overall health.

Your support is an integral part of the success of the Livestrong® Program, and we're excited to have you join us for this year's race! This **5K Walk and Run** is more than a race—it's a chance to make a tangible difference in the lives of cancer survivors and their families.

To help you get the most out of your experience, we've put together a kit filled with tools and resources for a fun and rewarding participation. If you're interested in fundraising, you'll also find ideas, challenges, and opportunities to have your team recognized in the **Livestrong® at the YMCA 5K Hall of Fame!**

Take the first step today by exploring the materials included in this kit. Together, we can make a lasting impact!

Thank you again for being part of this important mission.

Every step you take helps cancer survivors **LIVE STRONG!**



## FORM YOUR TEAM (JANUARY)

First Question: Do you want to start a team? Running, Walking or Fundraising is fun together!

Invite friends to join you at the event or to support the cause with you. You can raise

important funds that will impact cancer survivors in your neighborhood. Every dollar you raise

impacts a family. If you registered already but would like to start a team, please reach out to

[Elizabeth.bennett@ymcaofmewsa.org](mailto:Elizabeth.bennett@ymcaofmewsa.org) to make the necessary changes online.

Be **optimistic** and **determined**.

Find out if your company has a **matching gifts** program. Matching gifts can double your team money!



Set a daily goal for yourself and **beat it!**

Ask your friends to **contribute** to **Livestrong® 5K** instead of **purchasing a gift** for your birthday, anniversary, or any occasion!

# HITTING YOUR GOALS – RECOGNITION AND CHALLENGES

## Fundraising Badges:

*Earn fundraising badges once you've reached a new milestone.*

**Fundraising Badges**  
*Badges will display on your page when you hit certain milestones*

 <b>\$50+</b>	 <b>\$100+</b>	 <b>\$250+</b>	 <b>\$500+</b>
 <b>Team Member</b>	 <b>Team Captain</b>	 <b>First Donation Received</b>	 <b>Facebook Fundraiser Enabled</b>
 <b>5 Donations Received</b>	 <b>10 Donations Received</b>	 <b>20 Donations Received!</b>	



YMCA of MEWSA and the YMCA at the Piscataway Community Center's Livestrong 5K Run and Walk, a Janice Garbolino Memorial Event.

[www.ymcaofmews.org/5K](http://www.ymcaofmews.org/5K)

# Fundraising Incentives



## Team Awards

*\* Teams must consist of three or more fundraisers*

**Top Fundraising Team** – YMCA Livestrong Top Fundraising Team Trophy, Inclusion in post-race email to all participants as top fundraising team, Race swag items to share with team.

**All for One (Team with the most individual gifts)** – Race swag items to share with your team, Inclusion in post-race email to all participants as top "All For One" team.

**Sponsor Star** – Team with the most Sponsors (donations of \$250+) – Race swag items to share with your team, Inclusion in the post-race email to all participants as top "Sponsor Star" team.

**Largest Team (Team with the most members)** – YMCA Livestrong Largest Team Trophy, Inclusion in post-race email to all participants as the largest team.

## Individual Awards

**Top Individual Fundraiser** – YMCA Bag, Inclusion in post-race email to all participants as top fundraiser.

**\$500 Individual Fundraising Milestone** – Race swag item

We encourage participants to start fundraising right after registration. Challenges will end at 12pm the Friday before Race Day.

Fundraising pages will stay open throughout race weekend, closing out at the end of the month and participants can register day of the event but will not be counted towards the competition. Incentives will be handed out at the event or can be picked up at your local YMCA Branch. Registration fees do not count towards fundraising totals.

Questions about fundraising? Contact [Elizabeth.Bennett@ymcaofmews.org](mailto:Elizabeth.Bennett@ymcaofmews.org)



# YMCA 5K AND WALK FOR LIVESTRONG® FUNDRAISING TIPS



*Fundraising is easier than you think! Here are some tips to get you started. If you're a team captain, forward this to your members to help them with their fundraising efforts and to show them just how easy it is.*

## Tip #1: Personalize your fundraising page

- Add an image or photo that illustrates your story.
- Share your reasons for participating in this year's event.



## Tip #2: Set a fundraising goal

- Make your goal challenging but attainable.
- Lead by example and make a personal donation.
- Share, share, share and follow up with your network again once you reach your goal!

## Tip #3: Ask, ask, ask

- Use the sample emails below to reach friends, family and colleagues.
- Promote the race at work, in your neighborhood and anywhere you visit! Ask us for Posters and Brochures to put around town.
- Spread the word on your Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram accounts.
- Host a little event like a bake sale, car wash, yard sale, or jeans day at work to support your team.
- Sell sponsorships on your team t-shirts. When asking for donations, offer to put their name on your team's t-shirt if they donate \$25 or more. At \$250 they can be listed on the official YMCA 5K and Walk Event T-shirt!
- Encourage virtual runners/walkers – ask someone who cannot run or walk with you to help collect donations and become a virtual fundraiser.
- Help your Team Captain by suggesting friendly competition between team members. Give your teammates a weekly challenge; 1<sup>st</sup> to \$100, 1<sup>st</sup> to recruit 2 new walkers, etc. Be sure to recognize the winners.

## Tip #4: Maximize donations through matching gift programs

- Encourage friends and family to check with their Human Resources department to see if their company has a matching gift program. Our [Matching Gift](#) page can be helpful in determining which companies match donations. Your supporters will need to complete a matching gift form (available from their company's HR department) and send it in with their donation or afterward.

## Tip #5: Thank your supporters

- Don't forget to send thank you messages to your friends and family for their support. A sample thank you e-mail is below or consider publicly thanking your donors on social media.
- We hope you find these tips useful in your fundraising efforts. If you have any questions, please contact Elizabeth Bennett at 732-516-2087 or email [Elizabeth.Bennett@ymcaofmewsa.org](mailto:Elizabeth.Bennett@ymcaofmewsa.org)



## THE FAST TRACK TO \$250...



- Donate \$20. The first donation is the hardest – set an example!
- Ask 4 relatives for \$20. Now you're at \$100.
- Ask 3 friends for \$20. You've reached \$160, and over half of your goal!
- Ask a co-worker to give you \$10. That's one less takeout lunch during the week. That's \$170! Doesn't that feel good?
- Email four people you know and ask for a small donation of just \$5. That's the cost of a fancy latte. Hey - now you're at \$190.
- #BeSocial! Post a message on social media and ask for only \$10. You'll easily find two people to donate to your cause, and that makes \$200. Woohoo!
- The neighbor who always asks to borrow something from you – the lawnmower, your shovel ... ask them for a \$10 donation. It's time to give back!
- Speaking of giving back ... ask two people (your mechanic, hairdresser, dentist, doctor, insurance agent, plumber, landscaper, etc.) for a \$10 donation. That's \$230, which means you have 20 dollars left to raise!
- Ask two members of a group you belong to donate the last \$10 to meet your goal. If you are a member of a school, book club, rotary, young professional's network, parent group, church, temple, etc., you will surely find two more people who wish to contribute.
- Congratulations! You have reached your \$250 goal. Wasn't that easy? Now, re-visit these steps and **double your donations!**
- Don't forget about sponsorships! Ask your physician, nutritionists, therapists, pharmacy, dry cleaners, daycare, and other local businesses to support **Livestrong®** at the YMCA. They can have a logo on the T-shirt for a \$250 donation. We also thank our sponsors with shout-outs on Facebook and on the YMCA Website!



DID YOU KNOW? Most people who donate to you or your team will do so because of one simple reason:

**YOU ASKED.**

## ASK FOR A GIFT

**Subject:** Help Me Support Cancer Survivors!

Hi [Recipient's Name],

I'm participating in the YMCA's **Livestrong® 5K**, raising money for a free program that helps cancer survivors regain their strength, confidence, and health after a diagnosis. This cause means so much to me.

As you know, [Friend's Name – Mom, Brother, etc.] battled cancer. [Add a personal note about why this is important to you.] It's a life-changing disease, and this program truly helps survivors heal—at no cost to them.

There are 335,000 cancer survivors in NJ alone. With your support, we can help even more people get back on their feet.

I'm trying to raise \$[Amount], and I'd love for you to:

- **Donate** (any amount makes a difference!)
- **Join my team** and walk or run with me
- **Cheer us on**

To donate, visit [www.ymcaofmews.org/5k](http://www.ymcaofmews.org/5k), click **DONATE**, and search for my name or team: **[TEAM NAME]**.

Thank you for helping me make an impact!

[Your Name]

## RECRUIT YOUR TEAM

**Subject:** Join Our Team to Support Cancer Survivors!

Hi [Recipient's Name],

Our family is putting together a team for the YMCA's **Livestrong® 5K**, and we'd love for you to join us! This event raises money for a free program that helps cancer survivors regain their health and confidence after a diagnosis.

As you know, [Friend's Name – Mom, Brother, etc.] battled cancer. [Add a personal note about their journey or why this matters to you.] This program truly changes lives—it helps survivors build strength, reduce fatigue, and heal, all at no cost to them.

There are **335,000 cancer survivors in NJ**, and we want to make a difference. Our goal is to raise \$[Amount], and we're looking for 10 team members to help us get there. Whether you walk, run, or just fundraise, every effort counts!

It's easy to sign up:

1. Go to [www.ymcaofmews.org/5k](http://www.ymcaofmews.org/5k)
2. Click **SIGN UP** and choose "Join a Team."
3. Search for our team: **[TEAM NAME]**.

You don't even have to be at the event to participate—but if you can, it's a great day in the park for all ages!

Can we count you in?

Thanks so much,  
[Your Name]

# About Livestrong® 5K Run / Walk

Each year walkers and runners participate in this event in memory of Janice Garbolino, former Health and Wellness Director at the Metuchen branch YMCA, who lost her battle with cancer in 2002. Cancer is a life-changing disease that takes a tremendous physical and emotional toll on those affected. Through the Livestrong® at the YMCA program cancer survivors have the opportunity to get back on their feet to increase physical activity, reduce cancer-related fatigue and promote overall health. Through donations and partnerships, the YMCA is able to offer this program to support cancer survivors at no cost to them and help them achieve their goals of increasing their strength, balance, flexibility, endurance and improve their confidence and self-esteem.



**LIVESTRONG AT THE YMCA**  
THIS 12-WEEK PROGRAM IS FREE FOR PARTICIPATING CANCER SURVIVORS

**BUILD MUSCLE STRENGTH**     **INCREASE FLEXIBILITY**     **STRENGTHEN ENERGY LEVELS**     **IMPROVE ENDURANCE**     **BETTER MOOD**

**REGAIN.     RENEW.     RECOVER.**

The banner features a yellow background with black text and icons. The icons include dumbbells, a person stretching, a lightbulb, a person running, and a sun. The text is arranged in a clean, organized layout.

We partner with the Livestrong® Foundation to promote the importance of physical activity after a cancer diagnosis.

Through their ongoing conversations with cancer survivors, the Livestrong® Foundation was told that a top concern among survivors is the difficulty of returning to physical activity after treatment. We wanted to change that. In 2007 we partnered with the Livestrong® Foundation to create Livestrong® at the YMCA, a 12-week physical activity program designed to get survivors back on their feet. The Livestrong® Foundation worked with researchers from Yale University and Dana Farber Cancer Institute to conduct a research study on the impact of the program on participants' cancer-related outcomes and found that participants experienced significant increases in physical activity, overall quality of life and fitness performance as well as decreases in cancer-related fatigue. Survivors participate in free customized exercise regimens catered to their individual needs from certified fitness instructors. The instructors are trained in cancer survivorship, post-rehabilitation exercise and supportive cancer care. Survivors and often their families receive a membership at the YMCA for the duration of the program.

## About the YMCA

The YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge & South Amboy and the YMCA at the Piscataway Community Center is a charitable, nonprofit organization devoted to supporting individuals and families—regardless of age, income or background—in their quest to realize their full potential through programs and services that foster youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Each day we serve 20,000 YMCA members and 1,000 children in childcare in five communities throughout Middlesex County. The YMCA of MEWSA has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. [www.ymcaofmewsa.org](http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org).