



Impact & Gratitude

Annual Report

2023

YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge,
South Amboy and the YMCA at the
Piscataway Community Center

www.ymcaofmews.org



OUR IMPACT IN THE COMMUNITY

As a nonprofit committed to community, the Y provides roads to opportunity every day. That's because in the 8+ towns throughout our service area, we have the presence and partnerships not just to promise but deliver positive change.

The Y is responsive:

For more than 100 years, we've listened to our communities and delivered innovative, effective solutions to community needs.

The Y brings people together:

We connect people of all ages and backgrounds to bridge the gaps in community needs while enhancing social opportunities.

The Y nurtures potential:

We believe that everyone should have equal opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

OUR VALUES

Caring
Honesty
Respect
Responsibility

OUR MISSION

Our Y welcomes all. We strengthen communities, educate and nurture children, and promote healthy living in spirit, mind and body.

OUR VISION

Where all children, adults and families are healthy, confident and connected.

Welcome To The YMCA

The Message From Our Leadership



As we finished out 2023 and launched into 2024, our staff and board were found reflecting on both the challenges and progress we've made together during the last few years. While some aspects of our operations returned to "normal" as the pandemic has subsided, others needed to change and evolve in order to thrive. The opportunity inherent to change is something to encourage everyone to take advantage of, as it provides the greatest potential to build strength and resiliency. This means that we have spent time rebuilding our essential programs where possible and have devoted effort to create new ways to best serve our mission as well. We are rebuilding, reimagining, and moving ahead!

An example of rebuilding and reimagining is the new series of Enrichment Programs spearheaded at the Edison Branch, serving the community's needs while providing the excellence in childcare that we are known for. At the Metuchen Branch we are reimagining the "Stay and Play" programs that were popular years ago, before the pandemic, and in our Childcare Centers we've adjusted our procedures in order to more fully and appropriately accommodate children with special needs. All of our facilities have undergone energy audits and taken steps, both large and small, to reduce costs.

To do all that we endeavor to do, we rely on support from the community, engagement from our members and achievements from our staff. At our core, we are about meeting the variety of needs in our community by focusing on healthy living, youth development and social responsibility.

- As we age, prioritizing healthy living becomes paramount. It's about more than just exercise; it's about disease prevention, combating obesity, and adopting healthy habits for nutrition, wellness and mindfulness. The YMCA provides a space for members to connect with neighbors, find solace from stress and burnout, and address mental health concerns.
- Youth Development, including childcare, is crucial amid growing demand. The YMCA provides a safe environment fostering cognitive, physical and social growth. Supporting our young adults has been a focus of 2023 with the Y aiming to become part of the solution to improving mental health and well-being. Investing in youth benefits our community and ensures a brighter future.
- We have seen a resurgence of many of our programs aimed to help individuals recover from cancer, fight Parkinson's and recover from addictions. Our members have volunteered to conduct ESL classes, run food drives and blood drives, read to and mentor our youth, further green initiatives and more.

In closing, let's remember: the YMCA thrives through collective strength. With our members, staff and volunteers, we hope to continue rebuilding and reimagining together. Your support ensures a brighter future for all.

Rose Cushing, President and CEO

John Dowd, Chief Volunteer Officer

Priorities

Youth Development

We surround our children and teens with developmental opportunities and experiences for learning, enrichment and growth so they can thrive...



Social Responsibility

...thriving youth become inspired young adults and leaders who understand the value of serving others...



Healthy Living

...inspired young adults become healthy, responsible and caring people, creating strong and functional families that form connected and caring communities...



The cycle continues

...caring communities support and value youth...





There in a time of need

Susan faced a challenging journey when she went through a divorce in 2019, moving in with her parents with her three children, including 6-year-old James. Unemployed and seeking work, she found the YMCA's Before and After Care program for James, enabling her to find and keep her job. Then, when summer rolled around, she realized, "I wouldn't have to quit because there was someone that could watch him during the day."

In January 2023, she secured a job and an apartment, but tragedy struck when her fiancé passed away. "That's when things started to go downhill. How am I going to do this on my own?" Susan was grateful to receive financial assistance when needed and recalls, "There was never a point I was scared that my son wouldn't be able to return to the Y." The YMCA not only helped Susan maintain employment but also provided stability and opportunities for her and James, who is now 10.

To Susan, "It's important to help other families. If you are struggling financially, you are afraid people are going to look down on you or that there is no help available. Knowing that the YMCA is there helps tremendously. It made it less embarrassing to admit that we are having financial troubles.

"If I did not have the YMCA, I would not have been able to work and I wouldn't have my own apartment now or my own car. James wouldn't be happy. We are doing so well now that we are on our own and that wouldn't be possible if I didn't have a place like the Y, especially during a difficult time in my life.

"The impact it has on the lives of others is tremendous and I can't emphasize enough the importance of such programs for families in temporary financial crises.

"It helps. It means a lot."

James is definitely going back to summer camp.

The Challenges

The Y's mission has consistently been to meet the most pressing needs of the community it serves. In Middlesex County, this involves tackling issues like childcare, youth engagement and safety, mental health challenges and responding to the growing needs of an aging population. Ultimately, the YMCA is dedicated to strengthening our community in mind, body and spirit. Every day, we work side by side with our neighbors to make sure everyone has the chance to reach their full potential.



Childcare

The demand for childcare has never been greater. Today's workforce shortage can be linked to a lack of available local child care.

Youth Development

The pandemic is having a lasting effect on teen mental health and academic performance. Communities often lack non-sports opportunities for teens to get involved in positive activities.

Youth Sports

In NJ, 82% of children are physically inactive (not active for a minimum of 60 minutes per day). Risks of a sedentary lifestyle include cardiovascular disease, obesity and diabetes.

Seniors

Social isolation and loneliness hinder good health - putting older adults at risk for chronic diseases, depression and cognitive decline.

Our Neighbors

In our service area, more than 1,260 local households earn less than \$50,000 annually, potentially resulting in a lack of emphasis on preventive health measures and childhood enrichment.

LEARN, GROW AND THRIVE

Our programs are designed to support the cognitive, physical and social development of children by providing a safe, nurturing environment to foster early learning and support family needs.

DEVELOPING YOUNG LEADERS

The Y becomes a safe and supportive space where young people find a sense of belonging. We aim to become a greater part of the solution to improving mental health and well-being for youth by providing the social outlet they need.

TEACHING VALUES, DEVELOPING CHARACTER

Our sports programs keep kids active, teach friendly competition and introduce health practices for life. We aim to expand offerings so more children can combat inactivity, set positive goals and learn valuable skills.

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE

The YMCA connects seniors by championing health and improving access to health and wellness programs designed for adults of all ages.

OPEN ACCESS FOR ALL

In 2023 we provided financial assistance to more than 1,000 families with over \$800,000 in financial support, sponsorships and free programs ensuring that no one is turned away from the services they NEED.



Our Impact



1,256

donors provided more than \$680,000 of financial assistance



26,158

members in 4 facilities throughout Middlesex County



3,930

teens and tweens are members and many more take part in important civics programs like Youth & Government



children attended summer camp at our 9 locations to prevent learning loss

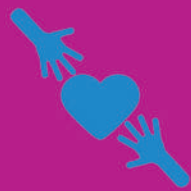
13,361

lessons provided to 5,089 participants to help them learn to swim and prevent unnecessary drownings



1,579

children had the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive in our Y's Child Care and Early Ed program



4,418

senior members felt connected and stayed active at the Y in 2023



meals and snacks served to our youth or donated to local food pantries and more than 8 gardens are kept where children learn to grow

1,098

children participated in youth sports and 35 more are part of our award winning swim team programs



A SAFE PLACE FOR TEENS

Earlier this year, I found myself grappling with severe anxiety and a deep lack of confidence in my abilities, especially within the highly competitive environment of my school. The relentless pressure was particularly overwhelming, and it took a significant toll on my well-being, prompting me to retreat and question my capabilities. However, finding the YMCA Youth and Government (YAG) was a turning point.

From the very first meeting, I felt the positive and passionate atmosphere that everyone exuded. The discussions were engaging, and humorous, and made me look forward to every session. I found my mindset shifted from always worrying about winning to one of learning and growing. Your belief in my abilities, even when I couldn't see it myself, made all the difference. I felt supported and valued.

~ 2023 YMCA Youth and Government Participant



Our Mission

We are dedicated to building strong kids, strong families and strong communities through programs that develop values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. The YMCA serves all people, regardless of age, religion, gender or financial means and is committed to helping everyone develop a healthy spirit, mind and body.



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"I just love the Y because it is beneficial to everyone in the family. The Y has everything! Financial assistance is important because I want to keep my kids busy and involved in activities. Without financial assistance, I wouldn't be able to afford membership." Staci, YMCA Member

Gifts to the YMCA support Financial Assistance,
Scholarship, Camp, Chronic Disease Programs and more

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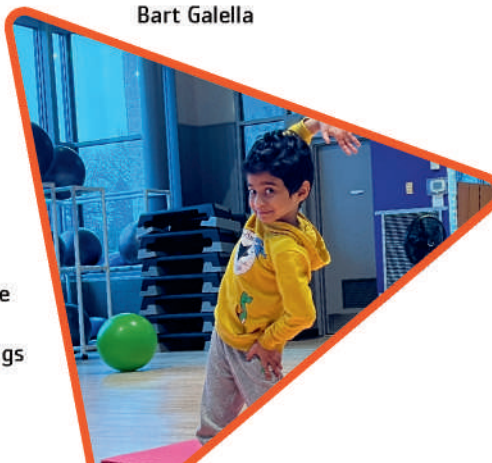
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Clarissa Gordon
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Anu Gupta
Alissa and Mike Haas
Diane Hagerman
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Sherri Hanlon
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Nora Hartigan
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Francis Hogan
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Leigha Hughes
Joseph Iallonardo, Jr.
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Nikki Jasper
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Kinder Pediatric
Urgent Care
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Metuchen Travel
Metuchen-Edison
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Ann Marie Williams
Isabel Wolock
Woodbridge
Chamber of Commerce
Jordan and Jillian Woods
Alexandria Wright
Katherine Wyckoff
Janis Young
Thomas Zimmerman
Marianna Zonenberg

Operating Fund Report

Thanks to the generosity of public and private donors who give to the Y, our community is stronger. Every day, we work side by side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background can learn, grown and thrive.



Revenue

Membership Dues	\$2,339,153
Program Service Fees	\$8,775,583
Investments	\$1,230,188
Grant Income	\$1,089,806
Fundraising Revenue	\$604,147
Other Revenue	\$608,433
Total Income	\$14,647,310

Budget

PROGRAM SERVICES	
Youth Development	\$1,604,054
Healthy Living	\$2,544,423
Child Care Programs	\$6,286,232
OPERATING EXPENSE	
Management and Facility	\$2,848,992
Fundraising	\$140,172
Total Expenses	\$13,423,873

Financial Assistance Provided

Military, Veteran, Emergency Responder	\$19,353
Open Doors Membership	\$162,867
Child Care and Camp	\$173,314
Enrichment Program	\$3,028
Healthy Living and Social Responsibility	\$45,518
Teen and Pre-Teen	\$129,586
Senior Care	\$6,783
Total Financial Assistance	\$540,449

Membership Fees cover our operations while donations and grants support financial assistance and scholarship for local families and our social responsibility programs like Livestrong and Youth and Government.

More than 1,256 people donated to help neighbors through the Y.

4

Health and Wellness Sites

9

Day Camp Program Sites

17

Before and After School Sites

9

Early Childhood Development Sites



Seniors and Veterans Connect

Meet Jim and his friends. They are part of the Red Shirt Crew! Every Friday, these members (and more!) wear red shirts to honor military members. The movement was created in Canada in 2006 and has made it all the way to New Jersey! In this photo alone, we have an Army veteran, a Marine Corps veteran and a Korean War veteran. For years now, the Y has served as a meeting place for them as a way to exercise and socialize with each other.

Jim shares with us, "The Y helped save my life. I was 254 pounds and experiencing health issues. After my doctor became concerned about my weight and the strain it was putting on my knee, I joined the Metuchen Y. This was over 13 years ago and I've completely transformed my life since. I'm a regular at the Y now and have made some amazing friends along the way."



LET'S MAKE AN IMPACT TOGETHER



YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge and South Amboy

Metuchen Branch
65 High Street
732-548-2044

South Amboy Branch
200 John T. O'Leary Blvd.
732-553-9622

Child Care Services
Association Offices
483 Middlesex Ave.
732-516-9200

Edison Community Campus
1775 Oak Tree Road
732-494-3232

YMCA at the Piscataway Community Center
520 Hoes Lane
732-562-2302

