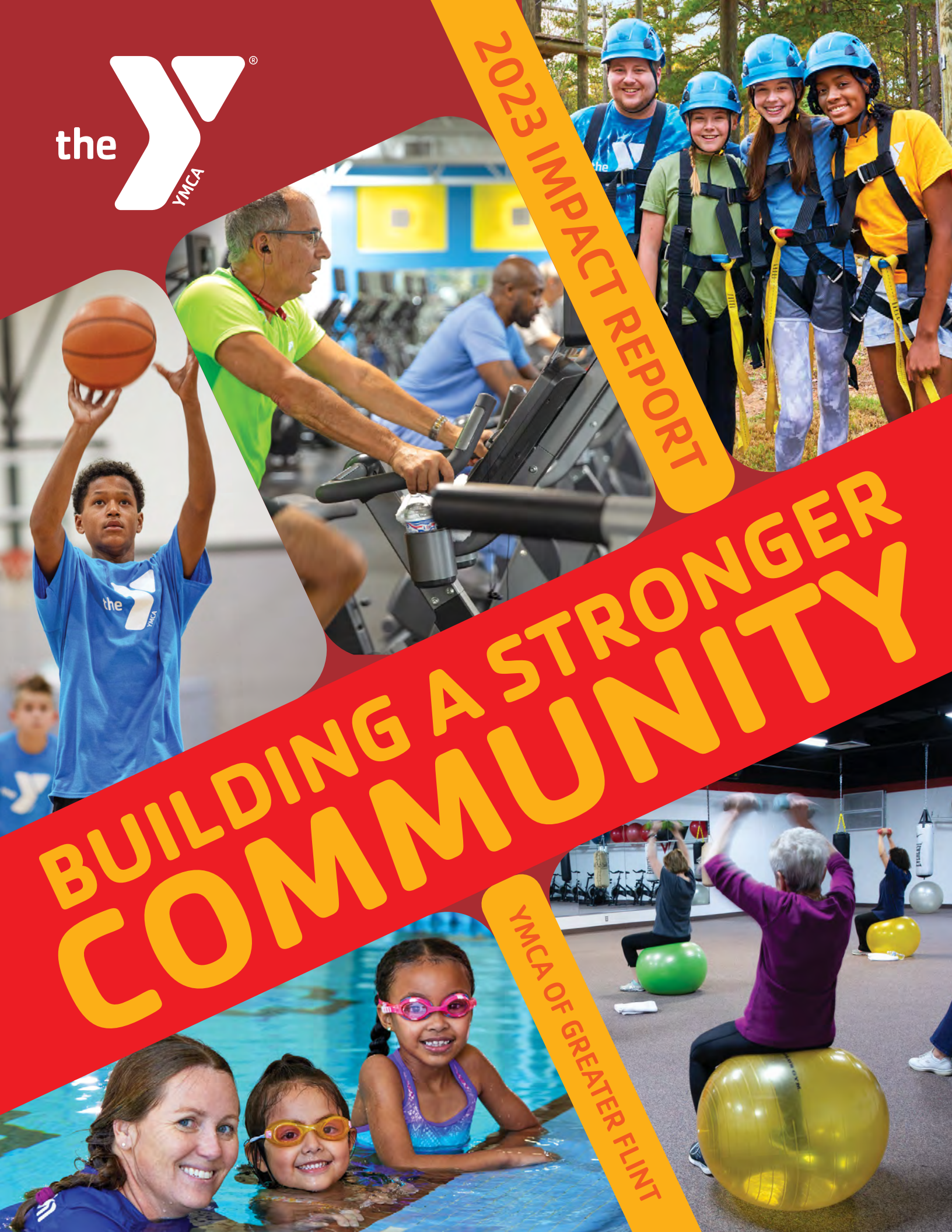




2023 IMPACT REPORT



BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

YMCA OF GREATER FLINT





MISSION

Putting Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

BUILDING A STRONGER FLINT

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on another year at the YMCA of Greater Flint, I am filled with immense pride for the positive impact we continue to make on our community. Our vision – to make Y programs accessible to everyone – is more than just a statement; it's the driving force behind everything we do.



This year, we witnessed firsthand the transformative power of the YMCA. We saw children blossom in our youth development programs, families strengthen bonds during shared activities, and individuals of all ages prioritize their well-being through our fitness and wellness offerings. We are a place where people of all backgrounds come together to nurture their body, mind, and spirit – a cornerstone of a healthy community.

Expanding Accessibility, Enriching Lives

We are deeply committed to ensuring that everyone, regardless of income level, has the opportunity to experience the life-changing benefits of the Y. Through our scholarship programs, we remove financial barriers for those who need it most. Seeing the joy and improved health of individuals who might otherwise not have access to these resources is truly inspiring.

Looking Forward to a Brighter Future

With immense excitement, I share news of our upcoming Downtown Facility, slated to open in 2025! This state-of-the-art center will be a beacon of health and wellness for the entire Flint community. It will boast cutting-edge equipment, diverse programs, and a welcoming environment designed to cater to a wide range of needs. The Downtown Facility represents a significant step forward – a testament to our ongoing commitment to serving you better.

Together, We're Building a Stronger Flint

The YMCA of Greater Flint thrives because of the unwavering support of our members, donors, and volunteers. Your dedication allows us to empower individuals and families, creating a ripple effect of positive change throughout our city. As we move forward, I invite you to join us in shaping a future where health, well-being, and a sense of community are accessible to all.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelly Hilton".

Shelly Hilton
CEO, YMCA of Greater Flint



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»»» BUILDING STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS



L to R: Teachers Andrew Page, Ann Marie Kingsbury, and Beth Damer

“25 years later and I still love it. Camp’s a place for me to be able to relax, build relationships with my students and their families, experience the outdoors, and learn away from the classroom without having technology and our textbooks in front of us. It’s an amazing opportunity to experience.”

– Anne Marie Kingsbury



A Quarter Century of Camp

Anne Marie Kingsbury, a fifth-grade teacher at Indian Woods Elementary in Kimball, Michigan, has been bringing her students to Camp Copneconic for over 25 years. While many might know Camp Copneconic for its fun summer programs, they might not know it provides educational and recreational activities for youth year round through outdoor education. One of the most important things that Anne gets out of Camp Copneconic is the opportunity to connect with her students outside of the classroom. This

allows her to see them in a different light and build stronger relationships with them. The camp also helps students to learn how to be more independent and responsible. For example, they learn how to pack their bags, make choices at mealtime, and get themselves ready in the morning. Anne also believes that the camp is a great place for students to unplug from technology and connect with nature. She has seen firsthand how much her students enjoy spending time outdoors and learning about the natural world.

A LIFESAVER FOR FLINT FAMILIES

Safe Places Makes a Big Impact



The afterschool program, Safe Places, has been a wonderful experience for Cecilia Nelson’s daughters, Cassey and Ava. It’s more than just a place to stay after school – it’s full of enrichment activities that they love.

They enjoy many activities, though Ava’s favorite was the weekly ski trips to Mt. Holly. While a little scary at first, she found she had more balance than she thought and really enjoyed the experience. It was a first-time experience for many of the kids, making it even more special.

Safe Places offers a variety of activities, from yoga to homework help. This keeps children in the program active and engaged, something many families struggle with. Yoga, in particular, has been a great outlet for Cecilia’s daughter, Cassey, to calm her mind and body.

The program has helped set Cassey and Ava up for success by giving them a variety of experiences and teaching them how to interact with other children. Cecilia also shared the staff, especially Miss Monica and Miss Tracy, have been amazing with their patience and dedication. They’ve made a big impact on her daughter’s life.



“If you’re looking for a great afterschool program, I highly recommend Safe Places. The staff are wonderful, the activities are engaging, and they even feed the kids! It’s been a lifesaver for our family.” – Cecilia Nelson

The Safe Places Winter Sports program is generously supported by



**SHARE
WINTER
FOUNDATION**

CAMP OASIS CREATES CONNECTIONS

A Camp Partnership Supporting Youth



Becky Johnson Rescola works with the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation and oversees their Camp Oasis program for kids with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Camp Oasis is hosted at Camp Copneconic as one of their partner camps.

One of Becky's favorite memories of camp is the closing night talent show. Over the years, she has seen shy and timid campers transform into confident performers. She has also seen some truly silly and unique acts, including a "cat tricks" routine that has become a camp tradition.

According to a recent study by the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, attending Camp Oasis has a significant impact on both the campers and the staff. Campers feel more connected to the world around them after experiencing the supportive and inclusive camp environment. For many campers, this is the first time they meet other kids with IBD, which is empowering.

The study also found that even first-time campers experience positive changes. The impact is so significant that the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation's new tagline is "One year can get the job done." Camp Oasis positively impacts adult volunteers and counselors, too. Many counselors never had the opportunity to attend camp as

children due to their IBD. Working at Camp Oasis allows them to connect with kids going through similar experiences and feel empowered them to help others.



Q&A

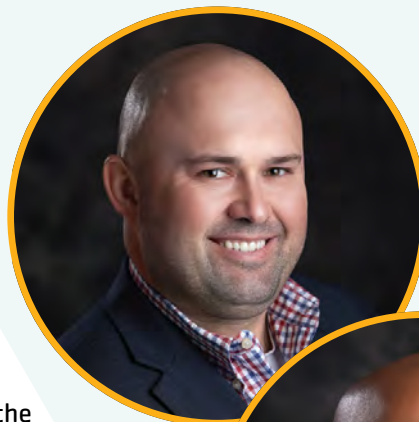
LEADING THE CHARGE

Meet Our New Executive Directors

1 What was your first experience with the YMCA?

Ed: Working as fitness center staff at the Jackson YMCA in 2010. I got to meet a wide variety of people from all walks of life and got to experience the magic of community within the Y.

John: My first experience at the Y was as an elementary schooler in New Jersey. I would catch bugs and fish at the lake next door to the Y and bring them into the building to show people. Rather than viewing me as a menace, the aquatics director connected me with some opportunities to learn how to swim, volunteer, and eventually become a staff member.



◀ Ed O'Brien
Executive Director
Pierson Rd Branch



▼ John Rice III
Executive Director
Downtown Branch

2 What do you look forward to most in your position?

Ed: Getting to know our members and how we can better serve them and add value to their membership to the YMCA. Also working with staff to help create a positive and supportive workplace culture.

John: We are turning the page and coming upon a new chapter in the story of Downtown Flint. I look forward to collaborating with our community, building upon its rich history, serving with staff, and stepping into new possibilities in our new home.

3 What is one thing you wished every member knew?

Ed: I wish that every member knew the efforts staff make to raise the additional funds for providing reduced and free programming for our community. Many believe that paying their membership dues goes towards scholarships. While it helps operations, it doesn't provide the impact a personal gift can make.

John: Whether through a single visit or throughout their overall experience as a member, my hope is that all members leave their experience with a realization and boost in that knowledge and are further empowered to help others know those things too.

4 What is your favorite class/program at the Y?

Ed: This is a tough question; I like all of the programs and offerings. If it were to be just one, I would have to say swim lessons. No other program can have the lifelong and potentially lifesaving impact that swim lessons have.

John: My personal favorite is summer camp. So much can take place in such a short period of time at camp for both staff and campers. I hope that every kid has a chance to experience at least one week of summer camp. A week at camp can make a lifetime of difference.

»»» A HOME AWAY FROM HOME



The Transformative Power of Summer Camp

Jennifer Perla’s connection to Camp Copneconic and YMCA runs deep, stemming from her own experiences working with youth at a YMCA in Dallas and now as a mother witnessing her daughters’ transformations at camp. Her eldest, Savannah, found a home away from home at Copneconic, forging strong bonds with counselors like Chloe and others whose names she fondly remembers.

For Jennifer, the impact of camp reaches beyond just fun activities. It’s about instilling confidence, navigating peer relationships, and facing fears head-on. As a mental health counselor, Jennifer recognizes the value of the program in teaching her daughter crucial life skills and safety awareness, particularly important for a child who’s navigating the complexities of adoption.

Through camp, Savannah’s shyness has given way to newfound confidence, her fears confronted and conquered, her swimming skills improved, and her understanding of boundaries and values deepened. Jennifer credits the dedicated staff like Chloe, Katie, and others, whose influence extends far beyond the campgrounds. These counselors become pivotal figures in the children’s lives, shaping their experiences and memories for years to come.

Beyond the individual growth, Jennifer sees Camp Copneconic as a community, a place where her daughter is known by name and where she feels valued. It’s this sense of belonging that has anchored Jennifer to Michigan, despite initial reluctance to move there. Now, with Savannah aspiring to become a counselor herself one day, Jennifer sees the camp not

just as a seasonal retreat but as a cornerstone of their lives. Through laughter, learning, and the occasional reptile encounter, Copneconic leaves an indelible mark on the hearts of campers and their families alike.



FROM SAFE PLACES TO SAFE SPACES

A Deep Dive with Lifeguard Lyric Lewis



Lyric Lewis, a familiar face at the YMCA of Greater Flint, embodies the transformative power of community and belonging. From her earliest days at the Y, Lyric found solace and support, shaping her into the confident young woman she is today.

For Lyric, the YMCA wasn't just a place for physical activities; it was a sanctuary where she found her voice and overcame her shyness. Her journey began at the age of five, attending Safe Places sessions where she was encouraged to open up and be herself. Over the years, the YMCA became her second home, a place where she felt accepted and understood.

As she grew older, Lyric's involvement with the YMCA deepened. Her happiest memory at the Y was the day she joined the swim team, a dream made possible by the unwavering support of Safe Places Director Monica Holmes, a mentor who played a pivotal role in her life. She would continue to become a lifeguard and now works for the Y.

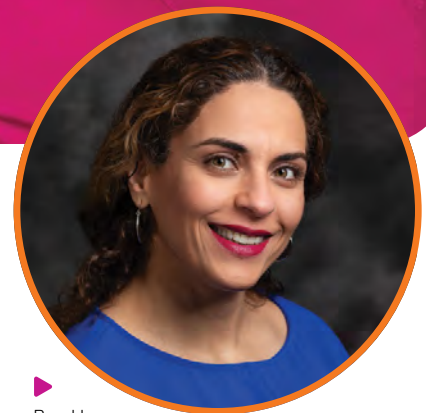


◀ Lyric Lewis
Lifeguard
Downtown
Branch

Beyond the activities, Lyric credits the YMCA community for her personal and academic success. The encouragement and motivation she received from her peers and mentors propelled her to excel in school and pursue her dreams. Without the YMCA, Lyric believes her life would have taken a different path—one devoid of the opportunities and support that shaped her into the person she is today.

Lyric's story is a testament to the YMCA's mission of building stronger communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Her journey exemplifies the impact of a nurturing community where individuals can thrive, grow, and achieve their fullest potential.

LEADING WITH INSPIRATION AND OPTIMISM >>>>



From Member to Wellness Coordinator: Meet Roz Hawa

From her initial days as a member, navigating the cultural nuances of a new country, to her pivotal role as Wellness Coordinator, Roz's connection with the Y runs deep. In her own words, it's "home away from home," a haven where she not only found solace in exercise but also a sense of belonging within a supportive community.

Her path was not without obstacles. Roz recalls the daunting moment when she was confined to a wheelchair after a car accident. But instead of succumbing to despair, she chose to defy the odds. With determination fueled by the encouragement of her husband

and the unwavering support of her YMCA family, she embarked on a journey of recovery, gradually reclaiming her strength and mobility.

As she transitioned from member to joining the staff at the Pierson Rd Branch, Roz's impact reverberated throughout the YMCA community. From expanding fitness programs to empowering fellow trainers, her dedication and passion were palpable. Yet, it wasn't just about professional achievements; it was about the personal connections forged along the way.

Her story encapsulates the essence of the YMCA—a place where individuals are not merely faces in a crowd but cherished members

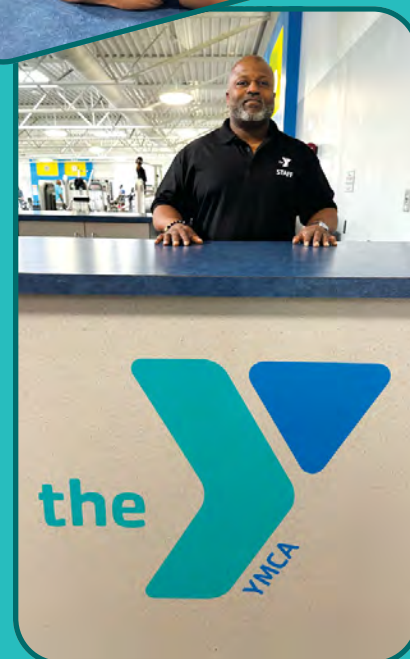
▶ Roz Hawa
Wellness Coordinator
Pierson Rd Branch

of a close-knit family. It's a place where dreams take flight, where barriers are shattered, and where resilience blooms.

In gratitude for the unwavering support she received, Roz extends a heartfelt "thank you" to the YMCA—a beacon of hope that illuminated her darkest days and guided her toward a brighter tomorrow. For believing in her when she doubted herself, for providing guidance without judgment, for fostering a sense of belonging when she felt lost—she is happy to continue to call the YMCA her home.

A SANCTUARY OF COMMUNITY AND COMPANIONSHIP

Sense of Belonging Inspires Member to Join YMCA Staff



Marvin Mays had been a familiar face at the YMCA for decades. In the mid-80s, he and his friends made the YMCA their sanctuary. It was more than just a place to play basketball or lift weights; it was a refuge from the streets, a haven where they could steer clear of trouble and build lasting friendships. Throughout the years, Marvin's bond with the YMCA has only strengthened. Every visit is filled with positivity, whether it was meeting friends, working out, or simply enjoying a good day.

But Marvin's relationship with the YMCA transcended mere nostalgia; it was about finding solace and support during life's trials. When Marvin lost his father, the YMCA community rallied around him, providing comfort

and companionship during his darkest moments. He felt safe within its walls, surrounded by good-hearted people who genuinely cared. The sense of belonging he found there was unmatched, unlike any other gym he had been to. The staff and members weren't just acquaintances; they were family, always ready to lend a listening ear or a helping hand.

Marvin's dedication to the YMCA was unwavering and he joined the team at the Pierson Rd YMCA. To him, it wasn't just about working out; it was about being part of something bigger, a supportive network that extended beyond the gym floor. Now, as he works for the Y, it's his face greeting members every morning, his positive attitude making others feel like they belong.

BUILDING A STRONGER FOUNDATION

Celebrating 26 Years of Supporting the Y



2023 marked the 27th anniversary of the establishment of the YMCA of Greater Flint Foundation. Since its inception in 1996, the Foundation has granted over \$13,000,000 dollars of support in programming, projects, infrastructure, and even operational support. The Foundation has played a vital role in helping further the YMCA of Greater Flint's mission of putting Christian principles into practice through programs which build healthy spirit, mind, and body.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve the YMCA of Greater Flint for the past 17+ years in many capacities, including operating as board president from 2012–2014 and current president of the YMCA of Greater Flint Foundation.

The Foundation has a remarkable track record of supporting the mission of the YMCA; however, our work is far from done. The needs of the community have never been greater and it's the goal of the YMCA of Greater Flint to keep pace with those needs.

As the YMCA looks to the future, the focus remains on long-term sustainability to ensure the vital programs the Y provides impact the community for years to come. The YMCA of Greater Flint continues to be committed to being a place for all to feel a sense of belonging as they achieve goals, gain confidence, grow, and thrive.

For the Foundation to continue to support the amazing work of the YMCA of Greater Flint, Foundation asset growth is essential. The recipe for growth comes from great stewardship, prudent investment management, and gifts, donations, and estate bequests from friends of the Y like yourself.

While the Foundation board is committed to unwavering stewardship and prudent investment management, we hope that you'll please consider including the YMCA of Greater Flint in your charitable contributions, as well as your estate and philanthropic planning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Snider". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jeff Snider
President, YMCA of Greater Flint Foundation

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W

elcome to the future of the
YMCA of Greater Flint, as we
construct an all-new multi-use
building on the corner of Third
and Harrison streets in downtown Flint.
This innovative partnership sees the Y join
with 50 units of apartments, Hurley Physical
Therapy Clinic, and Crim Fitness Foundation to
create a home for health and wellness in Flint.

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BUILDING A BRIGHT





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Coming January 2025!



BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY



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