



# TRANSFORMING LIVES

2025, ISSUE 1

## LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends and Supporters,



In a world that often feels fragmented, the Y stands as a beacon of hope, connection, and support. Our commitment to strengthening community and addressing critical issues, like youth development and wellness, has never been more vital. Whether it's a child learning to swim, a senior enjoying social connections, a family engaging in healthy activities, or a teen discovering their potential, the Y is here to meet the evolving needs of our community.

As we look ahead to another year of service, we know that our impact will continue to grow. Guided by a new strategic plan, we are committed to enhancing our programs and facilities, as well as developing new ways to support mental health, access quality education, and create a sense of belonging for everyone in our community.

Our ability to serve the community is made possible by the support of countless individuals—donors, partners, volunteers, and our dedicated staff. We are profoundly grateful for each of you who has contributed your time, talent, and resources to ensure that Greater Somerset County YMCA remains a thriving cornerstone of our community.

It is through your generosity that we are able to provide so many transformative opportunities. Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of individuals and families, and we are building a healthy, vibrant, and connected community.

In this issue of Transforming Lives, I hope you will be inspired by all of the 'good' made possible through your investment in the community through the Y. On behalf of everyone who benefits from your generosity, thank you.

With heartfelt gratitude,

*David M. Carcieri*

David M. Carcieri  
President/CEO



## MISSION IMPACT

### Annual Meeting and Campaign Kick-off



On February 12, we held Greater Somerset County YMCA's Annual Meeting and Annual Campaign Kick-off. Nearly 200 guests attended the event at the Bridgewater Manor to celebrate the Y's 2024 accomplishments and launch the 2025 fundraising campaign.

During the event, new Chair of GSCYMCA's Board of Directors, Lisa LaVecchia, announced a healthy start to the campaign with \$694,131 raised, representing 46% of the 2025 goal of \$1,500,000. Early momentum was driven by pledges from 100% of members of the Board of Directors and Branch Boards. Additionally, Y staff pledged donations of \$68,640, with 76 who commit through the Hourly Club in which they donate the equivalent of one hour of their wages per pay period – a testimony of the staff's devotion to the Y's cause.

Philanthropic support is essential to sustain Greater Somerset County YMCA as a nonprofit, community-benefit organization committed to inspiring children and teens, improving health for all ages, and supporting neighbors. One hundred percent of the funds raised through the Annual Campaign go directly to community. Every day, we work to ensure that everyone has the opportunities, relationships, and resources necessary to reach their full potential.

In 2024, we provided over \$2.6 million in direct financial assistance and community program support to meet urgent community needs; that is a 35% increase over the previous year.

As a donor, you inspire us through your commitment to community. We are truly grateful for your generous support. You make the Y's mission possible.

# LOOK AHEAD

## New Strategic Plan

For over 150 years, Greater Somerset County YMCA has been addressing important social issues that affect our children, families, health, and neighbors. We seek to remain a vital, trusted, and respected community asset that responds to critical needs. Toward that end, in 2024, our Board of Directors launched planning efforts for a new strategic plan. The result is an updated mission and vision rooted in our values and commitment. We are pleased to share them with you here:

### Our Mission:

To cultivate an inclusive and dynamic community through programs that promote social connections and inspire individuals to realize their unique potential

### Our Vision:

A healthy, vibrant, and connected community

### Our Values:

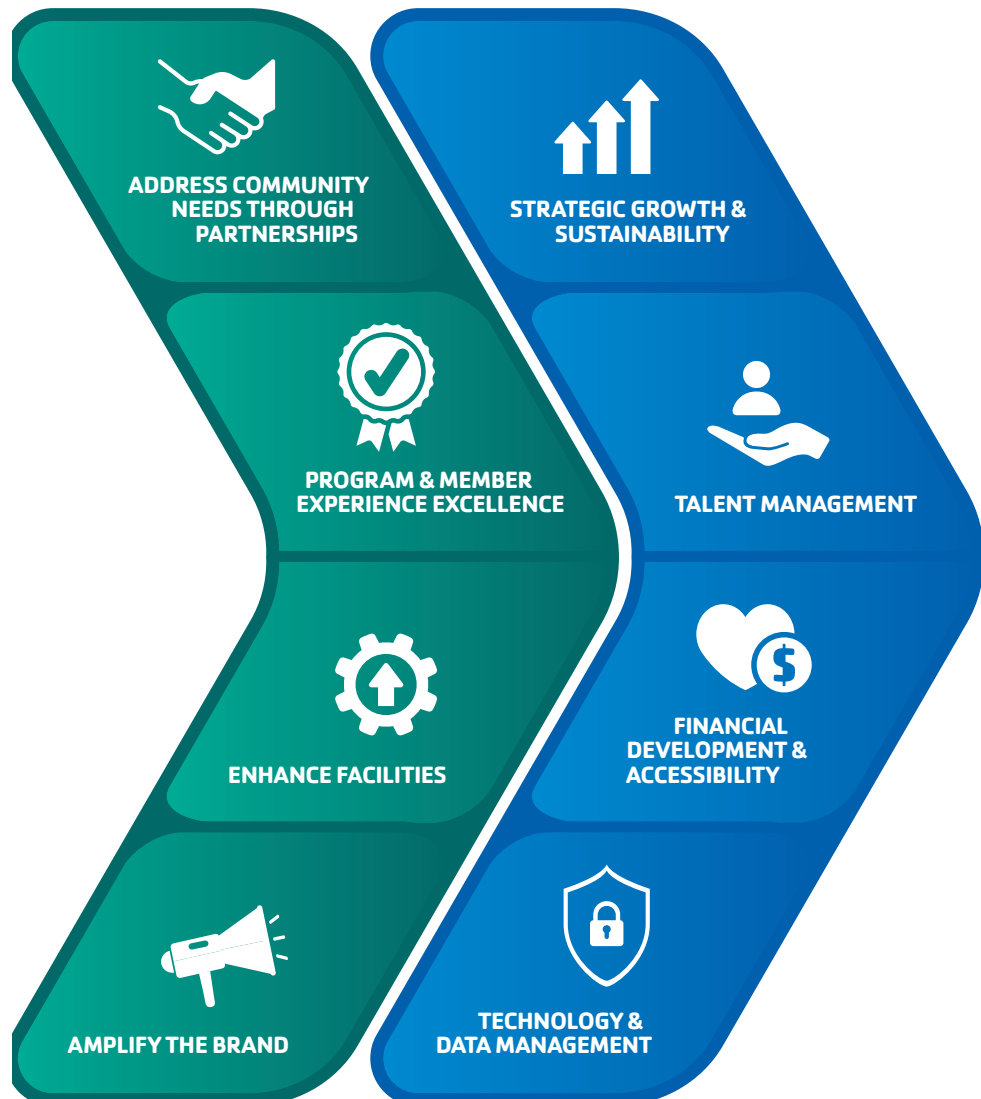
Caring | Honesty | Respect | Responsibility

### Our Commitment:

To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity

Our mission, vision, values and commitment guide our plan to expand GSCYMCA's impact and foster a healthier, more connected community through strategic growth and innovation. Additionally, we will continually adapt and enhance our facilities, programs, and services to align with emerging community needs and trends. Looking ahead, these are our strategic priorities:

- Community Needs & Partnerships
- Program Excellence & Member Experience
- Enhance Facilities
- Amplify the Brand
- Strategic Growth & Sustainability
- Talent Management
- Financial Development & Accessibility
- Technology & Data Management





# 2024 SNAPSHOT & HIGHLIGHTS

Your support has a direct impact on neighbors. These are just a few examples of the meaningful difference achieved in 2024 through your community investment...

## Summer of Discovery

Summer camp at the Y is a season of discovery and personal growth for kids. There is an abundance of opportunities for experiential learning that allow kids to broaden their horizons. Each day immerses our campers in activities that encourage them to unleash ingenuity, talents, and fun, all while making friends and lifelong memories. Our well-rounded approach enriches the whole child through social-emotional, academic, character, and physical development.

**1,900+** campers across all branches

**1 in 4** campers received Financial Assistance



## Carefree Summer

At the Y, we always seek to remove barriers that prevent neighbors from thriving – particularly those who struggle financially, physically, or emotionally. This summer we had a meaningful opportunity to be a support system for families experiencing homelessness, children suffering from grief, trauma, and loss, as well as children with special needs. It was an enriching experience for the children who enjoyed a summer making friends while learning to swim, discovering nature, enhancing knowledge, and building self-esteem – all in the carefree environment of Y camp.

**23** children, currently without a permanent home from the Franklin Township and Trenton School Districts, were registered for camp at: Princeton YMCA, Franklin Township YMCA, and Somerville YMCA

**21** children dealing with grief, trauma, or loss had the safe, welcoming, and caring environment of Y camp and skilled staff trained in trauma informed care to help them heal and grow

**94** children with special needs benefitted from an inclusive camp environment to enjoy a summer of friendship, fun, and learning



## Olympic Glory

It is always amazing to witness athletes competing at such a high level on the world stage. Their innate talent, unwavering dedication to training, and focused goal-setting, coupled with the enthusiastic support of their families, friends, coaches, and supporters, create a truly magical combination. The 2024 Summer Olympic Games were especially exciting for all of us at GSCYMCA. Two alumni from our STORM Swim Team qualified to compete in Paris. Matt Fallon qualified to compete in the Men's 200m Breaststroke. Jack Alexy qualified to compete in three events: Men's 100m Freestyle, Men's 4x100m Medley Relay, and Men's 4x100m Freestyle Relay. We are extremely proud of both swimmers for their remarkable achievements, for representing the USA, and for representing GSCYMCA. And, we congratulate Jack Alexy on winning a Silver Medal in the Medley Relay and a Gold Medal Freestyle Relay respectively. Our Y helps to make dreams come true.



## Water Safety

Swimming is a life skill that makes communities safer by preventing accidental drowning. We encourage children and adults, alike, to learn to be safe around water and develop strong swim skills. In addition to the Y's swim lessons, our no-cost Safety Around Water teaches essential knowledge and skills to help individuals of all ages to improve confidence and water safety. In 2024, we expanded our program that integrates Safety Around Water lessons into the physical education curriculum for 2nd graders beyond Franklin Township to additional school districts.

**5,774** children in Swim Lessons

**464** children in 2nd Grade Water Safety

**218** adults & children in Safety Around Water

**300** adults in Swim Lessons





## Promising Paths

Over the past year, a growing number of pre-teens and teens have been benefitting from new and enhanced Y programs that promote core values, deepen family connections, and inspire students to realize their full potential. Two such programs are Y Achievers and ACE (Achieve, Compete, Excel). These mentorship programs, designed to inspire bright futures among teens, are offered at no cost. Y Achievers supports students with career and college readiness through weekly meetings, college/career planning, internship guidance, and college tours. The ACE program provides support to students to address truancy and guide them toward graduation. Through these programs Y staff serve as positive role models who demonstrate the importance of goal setting, hard work, resilience, and ethical decision-making.

**69** high school students, grades 8 - 12  
**100%** participate at no cost



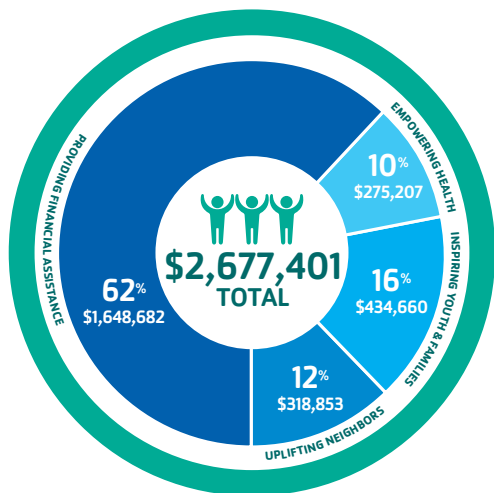
## A New Home

We are thrilled to announce that we have a new location in Plainfield. Through a longstanding partnership with the duCret School of Art, we have relocated our Plainfield YMCA offices to the school and acquired program spaces. We are excited about the opportunities this will bring to expand programming and to deepen the impact we have in the Plainfield community

## Financial Assistance & Community Program Support

Financial assistance and community program support ensure that our doors remain open to all. Our member dues and program fees support everyday operations. However, Greater Somerset County YMCA's mission-work relies on individuals, partners, businesses, and grant funders for philanthropic support, which is necessary to sustain financial assistance and services that meet community needs. Awards for child care and school age child care allow single and dual-working parents to work with peace of mind. Camp scholarships provide kids with the opportunity to unleash the adventure in their hearts while building lifelong friends and memories. Membership awards and program assistance empower individuals and families to pursue their interests and stay healthy.

All of this is possible thanks to YOU, our donors!



## SHOW YOUR SPIRIT

### 2025 Spirit Awards & Annual Campaign Celebration

Join Greater Somerset County YMCA for our 2024 Spirit Awards & Annual Campaign Celebration!

The celebration will be held on April 9, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bridgewater Manor. We'll be honoring the hard work of our volunteers and partners, and celebrating this year's Annual Campaign. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Sylvia Velez at [svelez@gscymca.org](mailto:svelez@gscymca.org)

We can't wait to see you!



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Greater Somerset County YMCA is a leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community by connecting all people to their potential, purpose and each other. The Y empowers everyone – no matter who they are or where they're from – by ensuring access to resources, relationships and opportunities for all to learn, grow and thrive. For information about Greater Somerset County YMCA and financial assistance, visit us at [www.gscymca.org](https://www.gscymca.org).