



TRANSFORMING LIVES

2024, ISSUE 3

LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends and Supporters,



Outside my office window, I see our future leaders... children enjoying the enriching experiences of summer camp and young adult counselors who are their role models. Beyond the smiles, laughter, and all the fun...summer camp, among many Y programs, is a formative experience that helps nurture young people by inspiring strong values, self-discovery, responsibility, and diverse skills.

Your unwavering support of Greater Somerset County YMCA has a profound impact on shaping our future leaders. At its heart, the Y is a place where children and teens are encouraged to learn, grow and develop their potential.

Your generosity enables us to provide programs and opportunities that are instrumental in cultivating the leaders of tomorrow. Together, we equip children and teens with essential life skills and the tools they need to thrive. Our many youth programs are designed to foster resilience, empathy and responsibility, as well as to encourage teamwork, critical thinking, and a strong sense of civic duty – attributes that are vital for successful leaders.

We are deeply grateful for your support that directly improves the lives of countless children and teens, giving them access to valuable resources and experiences that might otherwise be out of reach. Your investment ensures that the Y remains a cornerstone in their journey towards becoming confident, capable, and compassionate leaders.

Thank you for being a vital part of this mission, for inspiring young minds, and for giving your best to the Y and our communities. Together, we make a difference, one child at a time.

Gratefully,

David M. Carcieri

David M. Carcieri
President/CEO



BRIGHT FUTURES Summer Camp

This summer, our camps were buzzing with more than just the excitement of outdoor adventure, activities, and songs. From the very first day, our campers are immersed in an environment that fosters belonging, independence, responsibility, learning, friendships, and fun.

Summer camp is not just about fun and adventure. It is a dynamic training ground where future leaders build their skills, confidence, and qualities needed to excel. Our camp program takes a well-rounded approach to enriching the whole child through social-emotional, academic, character, and physical development.

Hundreds of children benefitted from our camp programs this summer; many of whom were afforded the opportunity thanks to your generosity. We are proud of our campers' achievements this summer and excited to see how they will use these experiences to lead with strength and empathy in the future.





Pictured are Chris Guiliano, Matt Fallon, Jack Alexy, Thomas Heilman
Photo was taken by: Carol Capitani

OLYMPIC GLORY GSCYMCA Swimmers

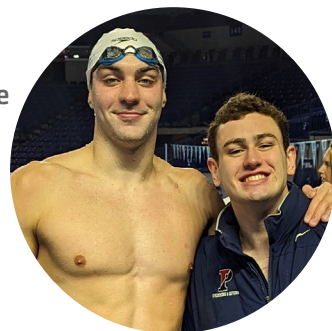
Did you enjoy watching the Paris Olympics? We sure did!

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.

Your wonderful support of the children in our programs truly makes dreams come true!



SPECIAL GUESTS Campers Welcome Elected Officials

Over the summer months, our campers were delighted to welcome elected officials for visits to camp. It was a wonderful opportunity for our representatives to join in the fun of summer camp, while learning about the Y's meaningful community impact. We enjoyed visits with (top to bottom, left to right):

- Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. at Camp Acorn
- Senator Zwicker & Asm. Freiman at Camp Star
- Somerset County Commissioner Director Shanel Robinson & Commissioner Sara Sooy at Camp Soar
- Commissioner Melonie Marano at Camp Sunburst
- Princeton Mayor Mark Freda at Camp Falcon
- Mayor Robert Britting at Camp Star

We are grateful for our elected officials, their time, and their advocacy on issues important to the Y.



Your generous support helps to strengthen community.

LIFTING SPIRITS

Camp Dragonfly

This summer, we continued our unique Camp Dragonfly program for children experiencing grief, trauma, or loss. This camp provided the children, age 5 through 13, with a safe, welcoming, and caring environment to help them heal and grow.

Thanks to the support of our compassionate donors, we were able to expand Camp Dragonfly from two weeks last summer to six weeks this summer. In total, there were 21 campers, all of whom have experienced a trauma such as the loss of a loved one, social isolation, and anxiety/depression, to name a few. Our skilled staff, specially trained in trauma informed care, guided the children through each camp day full of fun activities and new friendships.

We are so grateful for your generous support. Camp Dragonfly is made possible at no cost to the participants to further alleviate the stress on their families – thanks to you. On behalf of the families, thank you!



THROUGH YOUR SUPPORT OF THE Y,
YOU TRANSFORM LIVES EVERY DAY.



SUMMER LOVE

Camp for Children Experiencing Homelessness

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. GSCYMCA answered a call-to-action from the NJ YMCA State Alliance to offer summer camp experiences to local children who are currently without a permanent home.

A total of 23 children, who ranged in age from kindergartners to 7th graders, were registered for a collective total of 63 weeks of camp at three of our locations: Princeton YMCA, Franklin Township YMCA, and Somerville YMCA. The children were primarily from the Franklin Township and Trenton School Districts.

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.

Your support is vital to GSCYMCA's sustainability and builds a strong foundation upon which we can offer opportunities like this for our youth.



LIFE SAVER Swim Lessons

Summer...it often brings thoughts of the joy of swimming. However, for many area residents swimming is a cause for concern because they don't know how. At the Y, we believe that swimming is a life skill that should be afforded to everyone. Just think how much safer our communities would be if everyone could swim.

Our Franklin Township and Plainfield summer camp programs are held at locations without pools. With that in mind, the camp staff across our branches worked together on a schedule that would allow the children in those camps to be bussed to our Y facilities for swim lessons this summer. The goal was to increase their knowledge and improve their skills in order to build their confidence and safety, in and around the water.

Thanks to your generosity, 190+ children in these communities learned critical water safety skills. Participants were taught how to get in and out of the pool on their own without the use of stairs, to float, to roll on their belly, to glide to the wall, and to perform basic swim strokes.

Your support of the community through the Y is vital in preventing accidental drownings and making our communities safer.



THANKS TO YOU...



We completed our first triathlon!



We released the stress of trauma in our lives through fun & friendship!



We had awesome outdoor adventures!



We explored our imaginations and made lifelong memories!



We learned how to swim!



We tried new sports and learned teamwork!

GREATER SOMERSET COUNTY YMCA

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BRIDGEWATER YMCA | FRANKLIN TWP YMCA | HILLSBOROUGH YMCA | PLAINFIELD YMCA | PRINCETON YMCA | SOMERSET HILLS YMCA | SOMERVILLE YMCA

The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening the community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. At Greater Somerset County YMCA, we believe everyone, regardless of age, income or background, should have the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive. For information about Greater Somerset County YMCA and financial assistance, visit us at gscymca.org.