



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

TRANSFORMING LIVES

SUMMER 2015

LETTER FROM THE CEO



DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS,

The Y is a powerful organization comprised of people of all ages and backgrounds. What joins us all together is our shared passion - to strengthen the foundations of community. Each day, we put that passion into practice.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the success of our 2015 Annual Campaign. Funds raised through our Annual Campaign allow us to assist individuals and families who struggle financially, as well as provide mission-based programs that meet community needs.

In mid-February, we kicked off the campaign with a goal of raising \$700,000, an amount that will help us better serve individuals and families who need us most.

With tremendous gratitude to our donors, volunteers and partners, I am extremely pleased to announce that we surpassed our 2015 Annual Campaign goal, raising \$706,149. This milestone was celebrated at our Spirit Awards and Annual Campaign Celebration held on the 29th of April.

I would like to thank each of you who supported our campaign this year – donors and volunteers alike. At the Y, we believe positive change can only come about when we all work together to invest in our kids, our health and our neighbors. Your donations truly make a difference by helping to transform lives.

As you read this edition of Transforming Lives, I hope you will be moved and inspired by the impact your gifts have made in the lives of those served by the Y as we work together to fulfill our mission to build a stronger community.

With gratitude,

David M. Carcier
President/CEO

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



On Friday nights, the Seale brothers enjoy participating in Planet Y, a mission-based program that inspires healthy living among teens.

PLANET Y FOR TEENS

It's not hard to find twins **Josh and Justin Seale** on a Friday night. Just check the Hillsborough YMCA and they'll be playing hoops in the gym, lifting weights in the fitness room or spending time with friends in the Planet Y program.

Their parents say they love that their sons are away from TV and video screens and staying active, as well as developing friendships that extend beyond the walls of the Y. They are especially appreciative of the staff, who not only supervise but serve as role models.

A subsidy from the YMCA's Annual Campaign and a grant from the Hillsborough Township Youth Commission keeps the cost to attend Planet Y to \$3 per child, ensuring the doors are open to all. Justin and Josh can't wait for Friday nights and neither can their friends.

Planet Y gives teens a safe, nurturing environment where they can learn and grow, gain a sense of independence, feel connected to their community – and just be kids.

SOMERSET COUNTY YMCA ASSOCIATION OFFICE
140 Mt. Airy Road
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
P 908 766 7898
www.somersetcountyyymca.org

Facebook.com/SomersetCountyYMCA

Twitter.com/scymca

BRIDGEWATER YMCA
601 Garretson Road
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
P 908 526 0688

HILLSBOROUGH YMCA
19 East Mountain Road
Hillsborough, NJ 08844
P 908 369 0490

SOMERSET HILLS YMCA
140 Mt. Airy Road
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
P 908 766 7898

SOMERSET VALLEY YMCA
2 Green Street
Somerville, NJ 08876
P 908 722 4567

SOMERVILLE YMCA
2 Green Street
Somerville, NJ 08876
P 908 722 4567

RIVERWALK
665 Martinsville Road
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
P 908 766 7898

HEALTHY LIVING



Members of the Breakfast Club enjoy friendship and a much deserved breakfast after their early morning workout.



THE BREAKFAST CLUB

At first, they were strangers – politicians, teachers, law enforcement, lawyers, and individuals from all walks of life – working out in the fitness center at Somerville YMCA. Their only connection was showing up at the crack of dawn with a desire to improve their health. That shared commitment led to friendships that have spanned decades for the 20-or-so individuals who, together, call themselves The Breakfast Club.

The group got its start through member, **Joe Musorafite**, who became friendly with the other early-risers and challenged them to step up their morning workout.

Their camaraderie quickly grew while exercising together, as well as over monthly breakfasts to celebrate birthdays and debate current events. The group formed an enduring bond, supporting each other during tough times and celebrating happy times, family events and milestones.

The charismatic man who was the heart of The Breakfast Club and motivated people to do their best, Joe, sadly passed away in 2012. But, the tradition continues. Breakfast Club members may have joined the Y to become fit, but they have gained so much more...friendships, support and community.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Volunteers from Community in Crisis were honored for their contributions to the community at the Y's Spirit Awards in April.

COMMUNITY IN CRISIS

"I have been clean for 17 years now, and feel I'm lucky. When I read that heroin has reached epidemic proportions in our communities, I felt despair. Then I learned about Community in Crisis and the success the group is having in fighting the epidemic, reducing the stigma of addiction and stopping drug overdose deaths. I am now a proud volunteer for this movement, and I wake up with a sense of resolve, purpose and hope."

– Valerie



United Against the Pills To Heroin Epidemic

Heroin and other opiate drugs are not just a city scourge, as is commonly believed. The majority of heroin deaths in New Jersey, in fact, occur in the suburbs. To stem the tide, Somerset Hills YMCA has spearheaded an effort called "Community in Crisis," bringing community groups together to halt drug abuse and drug-related deaths in the Somerset Hills area.

The group created a community action plan modeled on the evidence-based NJ Governor's 2014 report, "Confronting New Jersey's NEW Drug Problem: A Strategic Action Plan to Address a Burgeoning Heroin/Opiate Epidemic among Adolescents and Young Adults." The multifaceted plan, intended to address the prescription pill and heroin/opiate epidemic among adolescents, has split more than 100 volunteers into seven active task forces. Community agencies,

law enforcement officials, organizations, schools, churches and parent coalitions have united with the Y to work on community engagement, physician outreach, mental health and addiction support, and public policy changes.

Community in Crisis Co-leader, **Jody D'Agostini**, is proud of the work that the group has achieved so far. "What began as an overwhelming task suddenly became clear and well-defined thanks to the Governor's report and the amazing spirit of collaboration that this community has demonstrated," she said. "This sends a loud and clear message that we are in this together, that real change can occur when people and organizations band together. We are united – all of us, regardless of background, political agenda or religious affiliation – in our commitment to save precious lives."

TRANSFORMING LIVES

SPIRIT AWARDS AND ANNUAL CAMPAIGN CELEBRATION:

Our volunteers rock every day at the Y! At a celebratory dinner in April, we let them know how much we appreciate their hard work and dedication by honoring them at the Spirit Awards and Annual Campaign Celebration. With 180 guests looking on, we recognized a community volunteer group and 11 individual volunteers who showed exceptional commitment, service, creativity, cooperation and leadership.

"We are so proud to recognize our volunteers who contribute so much of their time and talent to make a meaningful difference at our Ys. We are tremendously grateful to all of them," said **David M. Carcieri**, President and CEO of Somerset County YMCA.

Nina Vitale received the lifetime achievement award for volunteer service to Somerset Hills YMCA spanning more than 30 years. She started the community-wide Volunteer Recognition Night in 1988, joined the board of directors in 2007 and chaired the financial development committee. She is a founding member of the Millicent Fenwick Scholarship Committee, as well as the John Fanning Scholarship Committee and a recognized Somerset Hills YMCA founder.

The Board Leadership award recognized **Jody D'Agostini** and **Andrea Thorne**,

Board Chairs in 2014 who led the merger of Somerset Valley and Somerset Hills YMCAs. They are currently members of the Board of Directors of Somerset County YMCA.

Also recognized with a Spirit Award and their award category:

- **Kristine deBlasi**, Living our Cause Award, Hillsborough YMCA
- **Lori Ann and Tim Foley**, Family Award, Bridgewater and Somerville YMCAs
- **Emma Broos**, Youth Award, Somerset Hills YMCA
- **Linda Martino**, Adult Award, Somerset Hills YMCA
- **Joseph Petite**, Active Older Adult Award, Somerset Hills YMCA
- **Community in Crisis** – Group Award, Somerset Hills YMCA
- **Allan Mitch**, Ray of Light Award, Hillsborough YMCA
- **Heidi Kelleher**, Leadership Award, Somerville YMCA

We are enormously grateful to all of our volunteers who are the heart of our organization. They make it possible to offer programs that otherwise would not exist in our community. We hope you join us in congratulating them.

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN CELEBRATION AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF DOLLARS RAISE



Somerset County YMCA Board Member and Chair of the Annual Campaign, **Mark Irwin** announced the total dollars raised at the recent Spirit Awards and Annual Campaign Celebration.

CAMPAIGN BY THE NUMBERS:

- **1,159** Total Donors
- **\$67,535** Donated by Staff
- **195** Campaign Storytellers
- **100%** Board Members Donated
- **\$706,149** Most Ever Raised



Board Leadership Award Recipients
Andrea Thorne (left) and Jody D'Agostini (right) pictured with David Carcieri, President and CEO of Somerset County YMCA



Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient
Nina Vitale (center) pictured with Sylvia Velez, Director of Member & Volunteer Engagement (left) and Kelly Castro, Annual Campaign Director (right)



Living our Cause Award Recipient
Kristine deBlasi (left) pictured with Somerset County YMCA Board Chair Pat Hurley



Family Volunteer of the Year Award Recipient
Pictured (left to right) are David Carcieri, Somerset County YMCA President and CEO; Lori Ann and Tim Foley, Swim Team and Board volunteers; Sarah Nathans, Somerville YMCA Executive Director; and Dan Roth, Somerset Valley YMCA Director of Competitive Aquatics





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SOMERSET COUNTY YMCA

Association Office
140 Mount Airy Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
(P) 908 766 7898
www.somersetcountyyymca.org

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



TRANSFORMING LIVES

SAVE THE DATE

SPOOKY SPRINT 5K

JOIN US FOR THIS FUN RUN THAT BENEFITS THE Y.

DATE: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

WHERE: SOMERVILLE YMCA

