

# BOARD of DIRECTORS NEWSLETTER



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA OF Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge & South Amboy  
Office of Rose Cushing, President & CEO

## February 2017 ★ Board of Directors Update

### 2017 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF EVENT



The YMCA held their 2017 Annual Campaign Kick-Off event on Tuesday, January 10th at the JFK Social Center. Rose Cushing, President & CEO, started off the evening by reminding everyone that the success of this campaign ensures that the communities served by the Y have access to vital community programs and resources that support youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

Lucinda Florio delivered a motivational speech on how the donations that the Y receives can impact so many lives. Toni H., a single mom from Avenel, shared her story of how receiving a scholarship from the Y allowed her to bring her three daughters, one of whom is

“differently-abled”, to the Oakcrest Pool to enjoy many summers of healthy exercise, sun and fun. Susan shared her journey to a healthier lifestyle and how the Y enabled her to improve her energy, self-esteem and overall health.

Last year, charitable gifts from donors allowed:

- ☑ Almost 900 children to have a safe place to learn and build confidence in summer camp.
- ☑ 17,263 youth and teens to join the Y as members and program participants.
- ☑ 387 volunteers to invest 6,343 hours in service to Y members and programs.
- ☑ 45 cancer survivors to get strong through the LiveSTRONG at the YMCA program.
- ☑ 29,823 people to have access to Y facilities and programs.



As Bruce noted, “Throughout the communities we serve, countless people know the Y. But there’s so much more to our Y than one might think. As a charity, we’re dedicated to nurturing the potential of every child and teen, improving the nation’s health and well-being, and giving back and providing support to our neighbors.”

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### DID YOU KNOW?

The YMCA is always looking for new Board members to help move forward the cause and mission of the Y.

Do you know someone who might be a good candidate to serve on our Board? If so, please submit your nominations to the Board Governance Committee by emailing George Trapp at [gitrapp@aol.com](mailto:gitrapp@aol.com).



# RYAN PATTERSON MEMORIAL SWIM MEET



## About Ryan

Ryan Patterson believed that every child should be provided the opportunity to sparkle. She helped so many children realize their gifts and share them with the world. Ryan believed that gestures both large and small had the power to make a difference in the life of a child.

At a young age, Ryan committed to helping those around her. As a teen she began her work with children as a member and coach of the Metuchen Branch YMCA Manta Ray swim team. Her work with her teammates inspired her and helped guide her direction in college.

Ryan attended Colgate University, graduating with honors with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology. She then received her Master of Social Work degree from Fordham University in the Bronx. After graduate school, the Bronx became her new domain. Ryan's caring, insight and persistence allowed her to help troubled children in need. At the time of her death, Ryan worked at the Morris Heights Health Center counseling and supporting students at the Health Opportunities High School and Truman High School in the South Bronx.



*"Ryan set the bar for everyone in this room as an example of how to give back to our community"*  
-Rose Cushing  
President & CEO,  
YMCA of MEWSA

## About the Meet

The Ryan Patterson Memorial Swim Meet is an annual fundraiser to benefit the YMCA of MEWSA Annual Support Campaign, the Ryan Patterson Memorial Scholarship and the MEY Swim Team. The meet began as a tribute to honor Ryan Patterson, the Metuchen YMCA swim coach who passed away at a very young age. Ryan Patterson Memorial Meet Day is a beautiful tribute to honor a wonderful woman.

At the January Board meeting, Mike Patterson proudly reported that this year's event was very successful with over 108 swim events, 1,400 athletes participating, 4,400 splashes (how many times a person entered the water), and over 1,400 volunteer hours for the two-day event. The event raised over \$40,000 which was a landmark amount. Volunteers Tracy Platt and Dawn Smith also attended the meeting to speak about their experience with the event. They noted that everyone wore t-shirts and there were signs posted around the room with Ryan's quotes that she said to her own athletes when she was a swim coach. "You could feel her energy in the room for the entire two days", said Dawn. Bruce added to this homage, "What an amazing tribute to Ryan. This swim meet started under her tutelage and leadership and to see how it has grown to the size it is today speaks volumes about the admiration that people have for Ryan. It is truly a remarkable event and a great tribute to Ryan."

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## TOGETHERHOOD UPDATE



Togetherhood's first project in 2017 for meeting community needs is to help in the effort to reduce the constant shortage of blood in our area. Less than 2% of the population donates blood while virtually 98% of the population will need blood or blood products during their lifetime. In order to make a lasting impact on this problem, Paul Edgcomb and Mike Patterson have organized a blood drive and they need your help. The blood drive will be held on:

**Sunday, February 12, 2017 at the  
Metuchen YMCA Branch from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

The Y, with the guidance and drive of the Togetherhood team, can make an impact by donating blood, passing the word along to others, bringing a friend with you when you donate, volunteering for this (or another) project, or join the Togetherhood team. They are asking for **100%** participation by the Board on this worthwhile and impactful project. If you wish to donate blood, please contact Paul Edgcomb at [pedgcomb@optonline.net](mailto:pedgcomb@optonline.net) or at 732-887-6633. He will make an appointment for you and answer any questions you may have. Your donation may save a life.

The Togetherhood Food Pantry Project was held at the Metuchen YMCA Branch from November 28th through December 19th. Several Togetherhood volunteers and Metuchen Y staff manned tables at the Y to collect donations of food and money.



*Volunteers Mark Goldstein and John Murphy*

Togetherhood is happy to report that they collected 1,545 non-perishable food items and \$500 in cash for the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen Food Pantry!



*Volunteer Matthew Melchione, a food donor and YMCA staff Cathy Hough and Angelica Causing*



*-Contributed by Chrissy Tolley*

The YMCA has started offering English as a Second Language courses and they are a huge success! Classes are being held at the Metuchen Y on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday evenings to accommodate work schedules and a class at the Edison YMCA as well. There are a total of 44 participants in the classes representing China, Korea, Egypt, Taiwan, Ukraine, Lithuania, India, Japan, Ecuador

and the Philippines! The classes are lead by literacy volunteers Tom Zimmerman and Carolyn Greenberg in Metuchen, and John Sayers in Edison, who report very positive results from the students.



*Tom Zimmerman teaching the ESL class. Tom also works in the Y's Wellness Department as a Personal Trainer and LiveSTRONG® Instructor.*

Marie Patterson commends Togetherhood ESL Committee Chair Claudia Asmuth as well as John Sayers and Paul Edgcomb for helping to organize this wonderful new program. Angelica Causing, Membership & Marketing Director and the Welcome Center staff have also been instrumental in getting this program off the ground with recruiting and intake of program participants.

*-Contributed by Marie Patterson*

## “SCRATCH” PROGRAM COME TO THE Y

The Edison YMCA has begun offering SCRATCH to our After School children and our members. Scratch is an educational program developed by the Lifelong Kindergarten Group at MIT. This program works within the context of a computer application to develop computer games. Students learn computer programming concepts, interacting with a computer (rather than just playing games) as well as educational concepts to enable the game they are creating. The program covers many other educational areas including science, music, art, engineering and robotics, skills including creativity, experimenting and design and social skills including team building, collaborative problem solving and communicating clearly. Students create their own interactive stories, games and animations which can be used as a simple game, or to create a presentation that would replace the traditional PowerPoint with content that is far more dynamic and interactive. Scratch is part of a new generation of technologies designed to help prepare students for a far more advanced, technologically savvy world.



*The first SCRATCH class being taught by Instructor Brandon Corujo*

The program was offered to SACC children as an Enrichment class twice a week and the classes are at near capacity. Edison is also offering a Saturday class that is filling up fast, with the first class being January 7<sup>th</sup>. Wayne Blum was very instrumental in contacting SACC parents to participate in this exciting enrichment program. Thanks to Craig Levine for getting the program off the ground and for training our teachers.

The class has been so successful that the program is also being offered at the South Amboy YMCA and ultimately at the Metuchen YMCA as well. A class for 5-7 years olds (Scratch, Jr.) is also being developed, as well as a class for adults. We look forward to continued success.

*-Contributed by Cindy O'Neill*

## THE Y CELEBRATES A HEROINE DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

In recognition of Black History Month, and to highlight the achievements and contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds, the YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge & South Amboy pays tribute to Harriet Tubman, a civil rights activist and abolitionist during the American Civil War, by hosting an event highlighting her life's struggles and accomplishments. Harriet Tubman gained notoriety by risking her life nineteen times by leading hundreds of slaves through the Underground Railroad to the North where they lived as free citizens. The event is entitled, "A Visit with Harriet Tubman" and will feature a reenactment of her heroic life as abolitionist, humanitarian, armed scout and spy for the U.S. Army during the Civil War. Students enrolled in the YMCA SACC programs will have the opportunity to participate in a contest crafting a meaningful social media post about the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman. With the assistance and supervision of YMCA staff, the students posts will appear on YMCA social media, ready to be "liked" and "shared". The student with the most "likes" will receive a Barnes & Noble gift card. This will have a two-fold effect of learning the dramatic influence Harriet Tubman had on American History and learning that social media can be used responsibly to share ideas, opinions and information.



The event will be held at the Borough Improvement League (Old Franklin Schoolhouse), 491 Middlesex Avenue, Metuchen on Thursday, February 9, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

For more information, visit [www.ymcaofmewsa.org/events](http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/events) or contact Katie McAdoo at 732-516-1110.

## YMCA BRANCHES HOLD OPEN HOUSE

Despite the rainy weather, all three branches held their Open House on January 7th to let the community know what the YMCA has to offer in 2017. The Open House highlighted existing programs as well as new programs being offered in the new year. Demonstrations and showcases were planned, as well as giveaways including YMCA bags, pens, guest passes and other fun items. There was also craft and camp activities for the kids. Tours of the facilities were held and informational brochures on Camp and Membership were available. The Open Houses resulted in seven new memberships, two personal training sessions, one new LiveSTRONG® participant, four redeem a week trial, 8-10 new camp names, one birthday party, one new program membership and several inquiries. There will be two more Open Houses held on February 25th and April 29th.



## ZUMBATHON AT SOUTH AMBOY YMCA MAKE EVERY MOVE COUNT

All funds raised through this event will support YMCA's Annual Campaign  
**Saturday, March 4th, 2017**

\$20 donation for members  
\$25 donation non-members

Zumbathon will run from 9am-12pm - starting with a 15 minute warm up, alternating instructors every 30 minutes, and ending with a 15 minute cool down. Register [here](#) to join us for a fun day of dancing, raffles, and refreshments!

9:00-9:45 Ingrid  
9:45-10:15 Jeanine  
10:15-10:45 Alli  
10:45-11:15 Amanda  
11:15-11:45 EJ  
11:45-12:00 Amanda

## Y VOLUNTEERS COME TO THE RESCUE AT OAKCREST!

It was recently discovered that there was a break-in at the Oakcrest Swim Club and Day Camp. The Art Shed was found vandalized and its contents completely destroyed.

Despite this setback, Metuchen volunteers immediately banded together to tackle the tough job of cleaning it up. Even though the weather was freezing, this amazing group of kids took time out of their schedules to come to the rescue, under the supervision of Metuchen Y staff Bradford Lindsey, Christine Tolley, Gabby St. Fleur and Barbara Verikas. It is selfless acts like this that makes the YMCA so proud of its volunteers and staff!

-Contributed by Kathy Minaeff



Back row, left to right:  
Bradford Lindsey, Christine Tolley, Stephanie Morgado,  
Brian Jeney

Front row, left to right:  
Gabby Bing, Kaitlyn Prendergast, Gabby St Fleur,  
Barbara Verikas, Jeanette Yip, Kira Rose Olsen, Sydney  
Pratt, Hannah Thomas

## GIRL SCOUT HELPS THE EDISON YMCA

Ojuswani Phogat, age 15 (pictured right) displays her Silver Award Girl Scout project that she prepared for the Edison YMCA's Child Watch area. Ojuswani created a Lending Library which included books but also play masks and stuffed animals to help play acting while reading. She is very passionate about children reading or being read to by their parents or teachers. The children in Child Watch enjoyed looking through the books Ojuswani provided and helping to act out the



books with the props. She will receive her Silver Award in May in North Brunswick. Ojuswani is also interested in volunteering at the Edison Y!

*-Contributed by Cindy O'Neill*



## SIEMENS & EDISON YMCA: PERFECT TOGETHER

Two Siemens employees have generously donated their volunteer hours to the Edison Branch Annual Support Campaign. Siemens Caring Hands Volunteer program sent two volunteers to our Oak Tree Camp last summer and will continue to do so in 2017! The expertise they bring to our camp program working with STEM activities for the Junior Enrichment Class is superior in quality and knowledge. 2017 will be their 3<sup>rd</sup> year bringing the classroom to life and their first year donating to our Campaign and our mission work. We are happy to have this community based-global corporation working together with us!

*-Contributed by Cindy O'Neill*

## PNC FOUNDATION STEM GRANT AT WORK

The South Amboy YMCA was the recipient of a grant from the PNC Foundation in December for the purpose of implementing a STEM Program for 2-4 year olds in their Ready....Set...Learn Program. Pictured below are those grant dollars at work! Instructor Tara Dziubek shows the children one of the educational toys the Y was able to purchase with the grant funds. STEM embraces the introduction of Science, Technology, Math and Engineering concepts into the classroom curriculum, giving these children the opportunity to learn skills not taught in a conventional classroom setting, and also giving them an advantage in life, school and career. Shown below is the ball track, where the children set up an obstacle course and strategize on how to set up the blocks, tunnels and arches to redirect the marble to roll down the ramp and through the chute.



*Instructor Tara Dziubek has the children's full attention as she shows them their new educational "toy".*

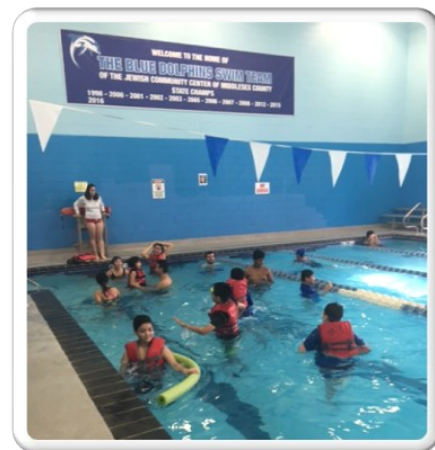
*It doesn't take long for the children to become fully engrossed in building their obstacle course in many different variations and learning the concepts of gravity, force, motion, speed and momentum, as well as design process, strategizing and teamwork. Great job!*



*-Contributed by Beth Helsby*

## AUTISM SWIMS BEGINS AT THE EDISON Y!

The second Autism Swims class has begun at the Edison YMCA! There were a total of nine students including two girls and seven boys from Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Edison that were offered instruction and free swim time. Their teacher, Tom Macchiaverna, and two para-professionals were also present and in the pool swimming with the children. The Edison YMCA has offered this class in partnership with the JCC, with the Y providing the life vests for the group and the JCC providing the pool time and swim instructor.



We are also extremely happy to report that the Y has received grant approval from Autism Speaks on their application to offer swimming scholarships to individuals from financially disadvantaged families. The grant amount received is \$2,000 per quarter for four quarters. This will enable the YMCA to offer these classes to more children than ever!

## THE Y GIVES BACK

The YMCA, through the efforts of Katie McAdoo, coordinated the donation of golf vests that were leftover from a previous golf outing all the way to La Hatte, Ile a Vache, an island of Haiti, to be used by fisherman and refashioned into bee keeper suits for a cottage industry established there by the Good Samaritan Foundation, which helps to economically sustain the residents there.

"Needless to say", said Robin Bolton, volunteer for the Good Samaritan Foundation, "the golf wind vests will not be used for golf, but, with dexterous use of the treadle sewing machines that were taken to Ile a Vache by the GSF a few years ago, they will be converted into smaller winter vests for the fishermen, and into bee-keeper suits for the farmers who manage the bee colonies that the GSF established on the island last year."



"From the rolling greens of Metuchen Golf and Country Club to the islands of Haiti", says Katie, "paying it all the way forward!"

## GOGO SQUEEZ YOGURTZ SAMPLING PROGRAM

The South Amboy YMCA participated in a Gogo Squeez Yogurtz sampling program. Not only are these scrumptious yogurt pouches convenient, they have no preservatives, include 4 grams of protein per pouch, 15% of the daily value of calcium and vitamin D, AND they don't need a fridge!

The South Amboy YMCA received a pallet full of yogurt samples and were able to provide a low fat yogurt and fruit treat to their members. They have also included them in the snack portion of the School Age Child Care program as well as give out free samples to their members and use as giveaways at their Open House.



*-Contributed by Beth Helsby*

## STAFFING UPDATE/NEWS

### PEGGY POTTER, DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM



We are pleased to welcome our new YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program (YDPP) staff person, **Peggy Potter**. Peggy has a proven track record of working closely with people in all fields and all demographic groups for more than 15 years with extensive experience in wellness and coaching positions. She has a passion for working with a diverse range of ethnic, socio-economic, gender and ability levels. Peggy also works part-time at the Summit YMCA as a Group Exercise Director, and at the JCC in Edison. She is certified with the YMCA to be a group exercise instructor in the areas of cycling, cardio and step, strength and conditioning and Pilates. Peggy believes that everyone can be successful in achieving one's health and fitness goals. She creates a positive environment all area of teaching, coaching and training. Welcome aboard, Peggy!

### DIANE WERNER, MARKETING SPECIALIST

The YMCA welcomes **Diane Werner**, Marketing Specialist as part of the team! Diane joins our YMCA with a wide breadth of experience in leading marketing and communications for non-profit and for profit organizations. Diane earned her BA degree in Communications and Journalism from Rutgers University. She has served on the staff of the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA and most recently the Madison Area YMCA. Prior to her YMCA work Diane freelanced and worked for United Jersey Bank and the Keyes Martin Advertising Agency. Diane is married to Gary Werner, and they have one daughter who was married last year. In her spare time, Diane enjoys spending time with her family, traveling and reading. She currently volunteers on the Auction Committee for the Susan G. Komen North Jersey 20th Anniversary Pink Tie Party. She grew up in Newark and lived in Rahway and Springfield before moving to Chatham and she is very excited to join the YMCA of MEWSA team!



## WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER ALKA ANEJA!



We are pleased to announce a new member to our Board of Directors! **Alka Aneja** is a full-time licensed New Jersey realtor with On Track Realty in Edison, NJ. Alka Aneja is a long time resident of Edison and has been serving the real estate needs of the community since 1993. She is on the Board of Multiple Listing System and the Middlesex Association of Realtors. She received her bachelor's degree in Psychology from Douglass College and a bachelor's degree in Management from Rutgers School of Business. When she is not working, Alka enjoys traveling and has explored the United States as well as abroad. Alka treasures her family and friends as well as all of her wonderful clients that she serves in her career in real estate. She is one of the top producers in Middlesex County and attributes her success to putting people first. She is looking forward to serving on the Board and making a difference!





**FUNDRAISING NIGHT**

HELP SUPPORT  
SOUTH AMBOY YMCA

February 9, 2017  
4:00 pm—8:00 pm

Panera Bread Bakery-Café  
1064 U.S. Highway 9  
Parlin, NJ 08859

Bring this flyer when you dine with us and we'll donate a portion of the proceeds from your purchase to the South Amboy YMCA. Please hand in a hard copy or show an electronic version of this flyer upon placing your order. Purchases of gift cards are not counted towards this event. It's a great way to combine great taste and great fund—for a great cause.



**National Wear Red Day® is  
Friday, February 3, 2017**

Why Go Red? Heart disease and stroke cause 1 in 3 deaths among women each year, killing approximately one woman every 80 seconds. Fortunately, we have the power to change that because 80% of cardiac and stroke events may be prevented with education and action. Go Red For Women advocates for more research and swifter action for women's heart health. That's why this year we are asking that you wear red on **National Wear Red Day®** and [Donate](#) to Go Red For Woman. By doing so you help support educational programs to increase women's awareness and critical research to discover scientific knowledge about cardiovascular health.

**UPCOMING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS**

MARCH 22 ❄️

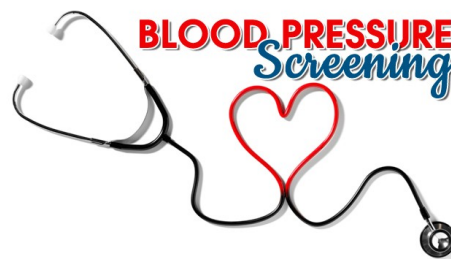
APRIL 26 ❄️

JUNE 28 ❄️

SEPTEMBER 27 ❄️

**There's a reason it's often called the "Silent Killer".** Most of the time, high blood pressure (HBP or hypertension) has no obvious symptoms to indicate that something's wrong. The best ways to protect yourself are being aware of the risks and making changes that matter.

- Nearly 20 percent of people with high blood pressure — one out of every five — don't even know they have it.
- High blood pressure develops slowly over time and can be related to many causes.
- High blood pressure cannot be cured. However, it can be managed very effectively through lifestyle changes and, when needed, medication.



South Amboy has partnered up with Raritan Bay Medical Center to provide information on healthy living and conduct free blood pressure screenings.

February 1	11:00AM—1:00 PM
March 1	11:00AM—1:00PM

Don't become a statistic! Get your blood pressure screening at the South Amboy YMCA!

# UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

## FEBRUARY

- February 1      **BOARD GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**  
AO Conference Room  
5:30 p.m.
- February 3      **PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
AO Conference Room  
2:30 p.m.
- February 9      **A VISIT WITH HARRIET TUBMAN**  
In honor of Black History Month  
Borough Improvement League  
6:00 p.m.
- February 14     **FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
AO Conference Room  
5:30 p.m.
- February 16     **FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
AO Conference Room  
6:00 p.m.
- February 17     **IT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
AO Conference Room  
8:00 a.m.



## MARCH

- March 1          **BOARD GOVERNANCE MEETING**  
AO Conference Room  
5:30 p.m.
- March 3          **PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
AO Conference Room  
2:30 p.m.
- March 14         **FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
AO Conference Room  
10:00 a.m.
- March 16         **FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
AO Conference Room  
6:00 p.m.
- March 22         **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
Wernik Room  
5:30 Fellowship / 6:00 Board Meeting