

improvements including painting, moving of equipment for social distancing, locker room updates and additional hand sanitizer dispensers as well as deep sanitizing cleaning while we are closed.

We are also looking at how camp is going to be offered this year, with some scenarios including virtual camp or modified weeks, while following new regulations and guidelines by the State and addressing learning loss.

Please take a moment to read this newsletter to catch up on what we've been doing. We can't wait to see everyone again soon!

Rose Cushing
President & CEO

We've Been Busy!

Our doors may be closed, but we've been busy! We have compiled this video to show our members the steps we've been taking to ensure that all of our facilities have been sanitized and disinfected, ready and waiting for their return!

[Click here to watch video](#)



DISTANCE LEARNING AND KINDERGARTEN READINESS SUPPORT



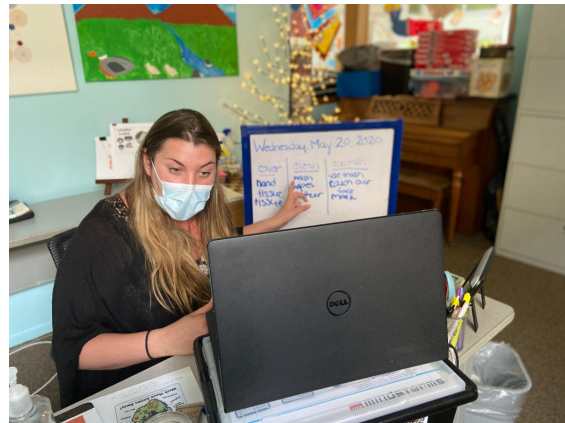
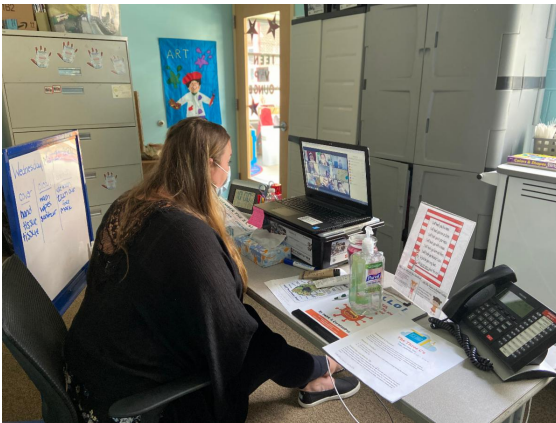
To address a need in the community to alleviate the stress on families who are now working from home and challenged with providing educational instruction to their children, two new virtual learning support programs have been created and are being administered by our Senior Child Care Directors, Erin Siemers and Cindy Shields.

The **Distance Learning Program** offers virtual one-on-one support with school assignments for youth in grades K-8. Our qualified child care professionals and staff will use their experience working with school-age youth to help your child complete school assignments through one-hour live virtual tutoring sessions.

Our **Kindergarten Readiness Program** provides appropriate learning activities, in a small virtual class setting, that develop social-emotional, cognitive and language skills to align with the NJ Preschool Standards and The Creative Curriculum Objectives for Development & Learning.

Families can choose the days and times that are convenient for them. Parents will provide information about their expectations, child's personality, and learning style in advance, and be matched with an instructor. The program has been very successful with 12 children registered to date! The response was so overwhelming that two additional sessions had to be added to the schedule.

For more information, visit <https://www.ymcaofmews.org/child-care/distance-learning-support>.



Teacher Georgina Harmer holds virtual Kindergarten Readiness sessions.

DRY LAND CLASSES OFFERED TO YMCA SWIM TEAM

Andres Gallego, Senior Director of Aquatics, has creatively thought of a way to keep swim team athletes active and fit while sheltering at home. His goal when he formed the virtual dry land workouts for swim team participants was to develop a team culture while keeping the swimmers fit and connected. Swimmers meet virtually twice a week which the sessions being divided into video analysis, technique discussions, guest speakers and conditioning. The swimmers are also assigned to do one fitness challenge each day. The exercises started as a 30-second challenge and have progressed to increase workouts in time and repetitions. Andres has been successful in bringing an average of 28 swimmers of all ages together twice a week for these sessions!

Check out the video that Andres put together of all these great kids staying fit and active at home! A true inspiration!



GRANT RECEIVED FROM Y-USA



The YMCA of MEWSA received notification that they have been awarded a \$107,271 grant from Y-USA to be used for business continuity purposes in conjunction with our Aquatics programming to serve our communities as it weathers the COVID-19 crisis. Funds can be spent on expenses such as aquatics staff/training, swim scholarships, cleaning/maintenance of the pools, and other equipment needed to run our Aquatics programs. This grant will come in very handy as we roll out our remodeled camp sessions at Oakcrest as well as providing much-needed swim scholarships for families in our communities!

ROSE CUSHING APPOINTED TO COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY PANEL



New Jersey Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin announced on May 12th that Rose Cushing will be joining 32 other prominent community experts to serve on his Economic Recovery Council. The Council is comprised of experts from our community in the fields of government, health care, education, higher education, business, tourism and social services. The working panel will advise the Speaker and other members of Assembly Leadership on efforts to ensure New Jersey can responsibly recover from the devastating impacts of COVID-19 when the pandemic subsides. This is a great honor for Rose and we know that she will do a great job representing the nonprofit sector!



THE YMCA AT THE PISCATAWAY COMMUNITY CENTER UPDATE

The YMCA at the Piscataway Community Center is moving forward! The facility is nearing completion with hopes of opening by the summer. YMCA of MEWSA staff have been busy interviewing and hiring for the many employment opportunities at the facility. To date, several key team leaders have been hired including Executive Director Kyle Strohman, Facilities Director Muhammed Derti and Aquatics Director Kelly Molinelli, pictured below. We know that this team will be a strong foundation and provide great insight and expertise for our newest branch!



Kyle Strohman



Muhammed (Mo) Derti



Kelly Molinelli



A **YPCC Facebook Page** has been created to keep the community informed about construction activity and other information on the facility. Please visit this page to see some photos of the beautiful recently completed 3-pool aquatics center and ongoing construction in other areas of the facility as well as bios on our new staff and more!

STOP & SHOP PROMOTION

Stop & Shop is supporting nonprofit organizations through their

Stop & Shop Community Bag Program

the Y **Have You Bought The Community Bag Yet?**



**WHEN YOU BUY THIS BAG IN MAY,
THE METUCHEN YMCA WILL
RECEIVE A \$1 DONATION !**

In this uncertain time due to COVID-19, supporting non-profits has never been more important. Though some communities have asked shoppers not to bring reusable bags from home to the store, Community Bags are still available for purchase in store for later use. Supermarkets are still busy, and shoppers are still buying Community Bags as a way to give back.

**Participating Location:
1049 US Highway 1 South, Edison**

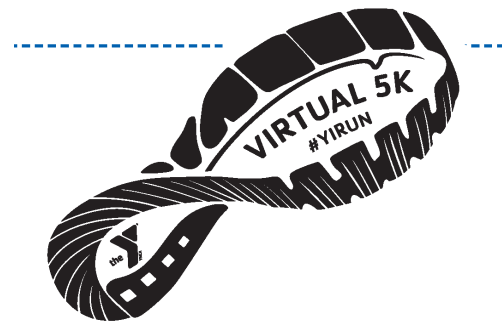
Community Bag Program. This promotion provides \$1.00 to the Metuchen YMCA for every reusable shopping bag that is purchased in their store.

The participating location is at 1049 US Highway One South, Edison.

This is a great way to support the Y while also protecting our environment!

VIRTUAL 5K/FAMILY 1-MILE WALK/RUN

Over Memorial Day Weekend, May 22 -25, New Jersey and Pennsylvania YMCA's will partner together to host a Virtual 5K and Family 1-mile walk/run. The virtual race is free and any donations will go towards the YMCA Stay with Us campaign. Participants can register below or see the flyer with all the details by clicking on the image to the right.



VIRTUAL 5K RUN
Family 1-mile walk/run

[Register Here!](#)



ZOOM WORKOUT CLASSES ARE A HUGE SUCCESS!

Virtual workout classes continue to be a huge success with our members! Classes are offered six days a week, offering between 4 to 6 classes per day. Participants have been so grateful that they are still able to take a class with their favorite instructors! We have also received some great testimonials which can be read [here](#). Two groups of members were so happy with these classes that they made videos which you can view to the left. These virtual workouts have



been so successful that many members are asking that they continue once our doors open. We will be looking into options on how to offer this new model to our members!

YMCA VOLUNTEERS CONTINUE TO GIVE BACK DURING COVID-19



Despite having to shelter at home, many of our volunteers have found ways to continue to give back to the community. We are so very lucky to have such committed and giving volunteers who continue to give of their time even through this difficult journey.

Long-time volunteer **Matthew Melchione** continues to give back through his work with the Teen Leader's Clubs and ESL groups. Matt has been working virtually on a grant application with the Teen Leader's Club called Empower the Youth Challenge, working with them on how to make and donate face masks for local hospitals and recruiting food donations for local food banks. They also continue to hold meetings via Zoom every few weeks and are working on setting up a movie night as well! Teen member **Caroline Rankin** has taken a leadership role in spearheading many of these projects for the group which is inspiring!!

Matt also continues to work with the English as a Second Language (ESL) group through the WhatsApp group chat to check in and see how they are doing. They are also in the process of setting up their first Zoom meeting to continue to practice their English speaking skills while at home!

Association Board Member and Edison Branch Board member **Alka Aneja** has been very busy during the pandemic! Alka formed a group called Humbled by your Service to acknowledge the front line workers who put their lives on the line every day to help others. The group was formed when a community family of four were all diagnosed positive for COVID-19 and had a great need for assistance. Alka pulled together some volunteers to bring food to the family and because the response to help was so overwhelming, the group was formed and their mission expanded. To date, the team has donated 6,000 lbs. of food to [MCFOODS](#), the parent food pantry, [provided personal protective equipment \(PPE\) to hospitals and nursing homes](#), [provided meals for hospital workers](#) and are in the process of organizing a fundraiser for [CASA of Middlesex County](#), a nonprofit that advocates for children living in foster care. Please visit the group's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/HumbledByYourService/> or click on the links above to see the posts. The pictures displayed above and below are some of the members of the HBYS team...great job, guys, you are truly making a difference!!

Alka has also been busy with her blog, [Soul Talks with Alka](#), to create conversations around the new challenges being faced with COVID-19. Each week she invites a guest to discuss topics such as mental wellness, food assistance and the future of weddings in the time of Coronavirus.

We are so proud of all of our volunteers and thank you from the bottom of our heart--you are the backbone of our organization!



ROSE CUSHING WELCOMES NEW GRANDDAUGHTER!

And ending the newsletter with more good news, *congratulations* to Rose Cushing who is celebrating the birth of her new granddaughter, Maeve Agnes!

Rose's daughter Annie and her husband Tim welcomed their third child, Maeve Agnes, nicknamed Mae, on May 20th, weighing in at 8 lbs. 10 ozs.

What a blessing!! Congratulations to all!