



ANNUAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

Campaigner Handbook 2024





FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Dear Campaigner,

Thank you for being a Campaigner during the Y Annual Support Campaign. Your efforts and your results will allow the Y to extend its offerings to the widest possible number of people, regardless of need.

Philanthropic giving is essential if institutions like the Y are to serve people of limited means. Charitable contributions make possible our goal of never having to turn a child, a family, or an adult away. All dollars raised during the Annual Support Campaign will be used directly to subsidize free or reduced-fee memberships, programs, and scholarships.

The Y's mission – for *Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility* – encourages and enables people to be active, healthy, and involved. Its values – *Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility* – remind people of their duty to themselves and to others.

The Y's strength is in its tradition as a vital community asset, an institution with a mission and values that exemplify what good people, doing good things, can achieve. Individuals wishing to give to their communities can do so by giving through the Y.

Thank you again for helping the Y at this time and in this way. Y leaders, staff, volunteers, and members share a commitment to serving our community, and you are an important part of that effort. Welcome to the team!



Rose Cushing
President and CEO

Paul Edgcomb
Fund Development Chair

GETTING TO KNOW THE Y ABOUT YMCA OF MEWSA

OUR MISSION

The YMCA of MEWSA is a charitable organization devoted to supporting individuals and families in their quest to realize their full potential through programs and services that foster youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

OUR CAUSE

Strengthening community is our cause. We believe that lasting personal and social change can only come about when we all work together to invest in our kids, our health and our neighbors.

AREAS OF FOCUS

We focus our work in three key areas, because nurturing the potential of kids, helping people live healthier, and supporting our neighbors are fundamental to strengthening communities.

Youth Development

We help children and teens realize their potential by encouraging them to become active, engaged, and thriving members of our community.

Healthy Living

We encourage and engage our community to foster healthier lifestyles by elevating well-being, prevention, and health maintenance.

Social Responsibility

We strengthen the social fabric of the community by supporting and encouraging greater social connectedness, civic involvement and philanthropy.

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

The Y is made up of people of all ages and from every walk of life working side-by-side to strengthen communities. Together we work to ensure everyone, regardless of gender, income, faith, sexual orientation or cultural background has the opportunity to live life to its fullest.

ABOUT US

The YMCA of MEWSA was established in 1921 and impacted over 25,000 people in our community in 2023.



2023 IMPACT NUMBERS

Provided nearly
\$500,000 in
financial assistance
800 Y participants



Supported ongoing
educational learning for
1025 students through
early education and
afterschool programs

Encouraged
sportsmanship and
enrichment to over
1,000 in youth
programs



Collected and delivered
10,000 units of food and
necessary items through
Togetherhood and other Y
collection boxes

Created memories for
1,012 youth in
summer day camps



Over **5,089** learned water safety
skills and swim lessons to prevent
drowninn accidents



BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

YMCA ANNUAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW



WHAT IT IS

The Annual Campaign is conducted annually by dedicated volunteers to secure charitable donations from individuals, companies, foundations and community organizations. These funds help to ensure that **no one is turned away** regardless of their financial circumstance. With your support, the YMCA of MEWSA will raise over \$700,000 dollars to provide programming and scholarships for youth, families and seniors. Together we will build stronger communities.

YOUR ROLE

Throughout the year, and especially during the Annual Support Campaign, we rely on our volunteers to be advocates and champions of our mission. This is achieved through sharing our stories, communicating our impact, connecting people to our cause and providing them the opportunity to give back to their community by volunteering and donating.

WHO IT HELPS

When you give to the Y, you are providing children, teens, adults and families in our community the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive. In 2023, our YMCA has provided more than \$500,000 in scholarships and fee subsidies for its programs/services to hundreds of individuals in our YMCA community.



Example script for making an appointment:

“Hello! My name is Kate. I am calling as a volunteer with the YMCA’s Annual Support Campaign. Will you be available to meet with me for 30 minutes next Monday to talk about the Y?”

CAMPAIGNER ROLE AND CHECKLIST

- ✓ **Make your own pledge before asking others:** After making a personal gift, it is much easier to ask someone else to do the same. An Advocate’s pledge demonstrates commitment and belief in the YMCA
- ✓ **Review Campaign Handbook:** Review the handbook and use the resources to help determine your activities and increase the impact of your efforts.
- ✓ **Make the call and set the appointment:** There are only a few weeks in the campaign - no time like the present to get started.
- ✓ **Know (and understand) the case for support:** Too often we move forward without really understanding the key aspects of our case for support. Think impact, think community.
- ✓ **Prepare an outline script for yourself:** Then practice. Identify 2-3 key messages but be flexible.



ENCOURAGE GIVING SOCIETIES DONOR RECOGNITION

Giving to the Y not only enables positive change in our community, it also allows our community to see firsthand who makes it all possible. Donors receive the rewards of making a difference in our community. **Because of YOU**, youth can achieve their potential, and people of all ages will be empowered to lead healthier lives and foster a sense of social responsibility

Donors of ALL giving levels will receive gratitude letters and newsletters detailing the impact their gift has on our YMCA. In addition, all donors are listed in the YMCA of MEWSA's annual report.

- Donors who give **\$500+** will be listed on the Annual Donor Wall at the YMCA Branch.

The Chair's Roundtable

As a thank you and a way to raise awareness for an individual's or organization's support of the Y, Chair's Roundtable donors (**those donating \$1,000+**) will receive:

- A **recognition banner** hung for the year in the YMCA of your choice
- Special invites to the YMCA of MEWSA's Annual Dinner, Golf Outing, 5K and more!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE Y'S MISSION?

We are dedicated to building strong kids, strong families and strong communities through programs that develop values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. The YMCA serves all people, regardless of age, religion, gender or financial means and is committed to helping everyone develop a healthy spirit, mind, and body.

WHY SHOULD I GIVE MONEY TO THE Y WHEN I ALREADY PAY MEMBERSHIP DUES?

Your membership dues cover the cost of your facility but do not support the additional cost of our financial assistance scholarships to reach out into the community and help those in need. Access for all is possible only through the additional funds we raise from Y friends and members like you who want to help others.

IS THE Y A CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION and IS MY CONTRIBUTION TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

Yes. The YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge and South Amboy is a not-for-profit organization classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) corporation. All contributions to the YMCA are considered tax-deductible. Our Tax ID Number is 22-148 7616. Yes, gifts to the Y are 100% tax deductible.

WHY SHOULD I GIVE TO THE Y IF I'M NOT A MEMBER?

Your support is still needed. You benefit by having a strong Y in your community that provides meaningful opportunities to help young people learn, grow and thrive. The Y makes your community a better place to live and work, making people of all ages and abilities feel more healthy, confident, connected and secure.

CAN GIFTS BE MADE OVER THE COURSE OF THE YEAR?

Yes, for many, a pledge is the preferred way to make a generous gift. It allows you to pay later or spread your payments over a period of time.

YOUR GIFT IN ACTION

Every dollar donated to the YMCA of MEWSA's Annual Support Campaign has a lasting impact on our community. In 2023, nearly \$500,000 allowed over 800 families to participate in the Y activities because of financial assistance and program support.

\$100

Gives a pre-teen an outlet for anxiety and stress through group classes



\$500

Gives 2 teens access to leadership and mentorship programs



\$750

Provides connection and healthy living for a cancer survivor through LIVESTRONG



\$300

Gives outdoor fun and enrichment through one week of summer camp



\$1,200

Eases the burden of child care for a parent of two with one month of child care



\$3,000

Underwrites Swim Safety Lessons for a class of young children



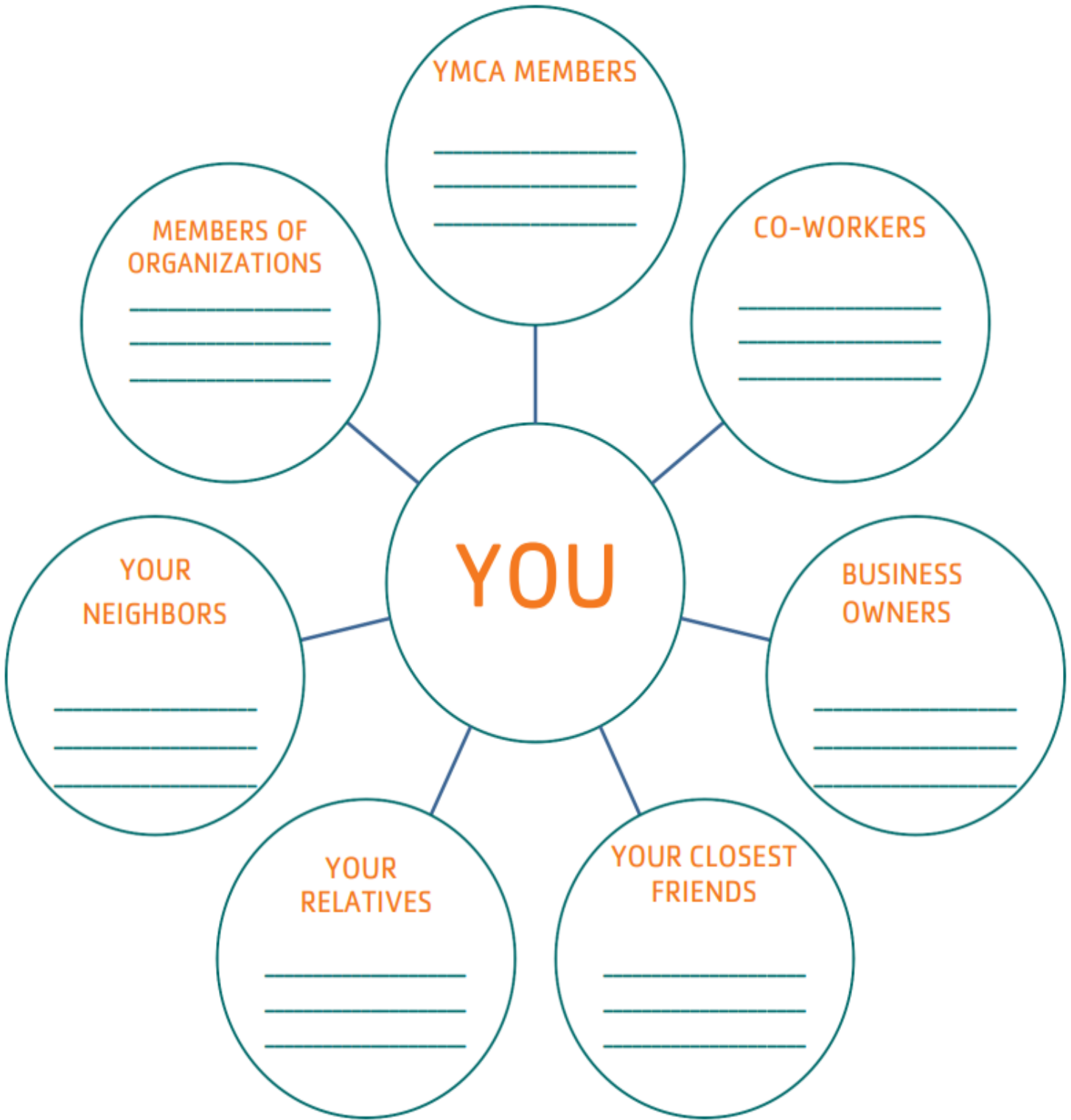


The YMCA of Metuchen, Edison, Woodbridge and South Amboy

2024 Annual Support Campaign

CAMPAIGNER RESOURCES







RESOURCES

My campaign planning / tracking

Prospective Donor	Last Year's Gift	This Year's Target	Method of Ask / Solicit	Date of Meeting	This Year's Gift / Pledge

My Campaign Goal: _____

Weekly Progress	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Total
# of asks							
# of Gifts / Pledges							
\$ Sum of Gifts / Pledges							

Be sure to turn in your gifts/pledges each week.





IMPORTANT CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

Association Goal	Branch Goal	Team Goal	My Personal Goal
\$420,000	\$	\$	\$

My Branch Campaign Contacts

Branch Leaders	Name	Email	Phone
Campaign Chair			
Branch Executive			

Volunteer Leader, Teammates and Staff	Email	Phone
Liz Bennett (Director of Development)	Elizabeth.Bennett@ymcaofmewsa.org	732-516-2087
Cathy Haugh (Development Associate)	Catherine.Haugh@ymcaofmewsa.org	732-516-2083



RESOURCES:

MAKING THE ASK: BUILDING THE SCRIPT

1. INTRODUCE YOURSELF

“Hi, (prospective donor name), I’m (your name). As you may know, I’m a donor and volunteer with the YMCA Annual Campaign. Thanks for taking the time to talk with me about the great impact of the YMCA in our community. I’m a volunteer in the Y Campaign because” (tell about your Y involvement, as appropriate)

“Do you have any experiences with the YMCA?”

- If “Yes”...“Tell me about your experience with the Y.” (Respond appropriately to the experiences related with positive statements about the Y’s values.)
- If “No”...“Are you familiar with all the work that the Y does in our community?” (Wait for response and respond appropriately.)

2. SELECT A CASE BASED ON THE DONOR’S EXPERIENCE OR YOUR PASSIONS.

3. MAKE THE ASK-Examples & Script

A) “You mentioned that your kids learned to swim at the Y. Mine did too. Learning safety around water is so important for kids. Did you know that drowning is the second-leading cause of death for children under 14? I made my gift to help make swim lessons available to all kids. Would you be willing to join me and help another child learn to swim? A \$50 gift could do that.”

B) “You were generous last year with a gift of \$650 to support water safety. Over 3,000 kids participated in swim lessons or water safety initiatives last summer with help from people like you. This year, would you consider supporting more kids for water safety helping to reduce drownings? Your gift of \$1,300 could make that happen. You could even spread it out over multiple payments until year-end.”

C) I’m helping my YMCA raise money for _____ that will/can _____
(Do What?)
I believe this program makes a significant impact in our community. Would you consider joining me in support of the Y by helping _____
(# of kids/adults/participants)
with a gift of _____?”
(ask for a specific \$ amount)

(Wait for the donor to respond...then proceed appropriately.)

4. THANK DONOR AND CONFIRM CONTACT INFO, THE GIFT/PLEDGE AMOUNT, PAYMENT METHOD AND SCHEDULE.

- “Thank you so much. You’ll receive an acknowledgement for your gift/pledge of \$_____ from the Y in the very near future.”
- “Let me make sure I have your correct contact information.”
- “Would you prefer to pay your gift in full or on some other basis?” “When would you like to be reminded to pay your pledge?”
- “Thanks again. The YMCA really appreciates your generous support, as do I.”

RESOURCES: SAMPLE EMAILS

Dear [Name],

I am thrilled to share that, as a supporter of the YMCA, I am participating in this year's Annual Support Campaign to continue making the YMCA accessible to everyone in our community. [As you know,] I became involved with the Y because [insert your personal connection, or why you personally support the Y]. The Y's mission is important to me because I care about creating a place for everyone in our community to belong - to improve themselves, learn healthy habits and build new friendships. The Y makes that possible. The Y's reach is tremendous - and your support of the Annual Campaign will help ensure that everyone has access, regardless of financial ability.

My personal goal is to raise \$[insert goal] by [date]. Every donation makes a difference - no matter the amount. With these donations, we are able to make sure that everyone has access to programs and services regardless of financial ability. To contribute, please visit my personal fundraising page: [insert directURL].

Sincerely, [Your Name]

P.S. If you'd like to learn more about the Y, let me know- I'd be glad to set you up with a 20-minute tour and show you how the Y is so much more than a gym. Thanks again for helping ensure that everyone in our community can access the Y.

Follow-up Email

Subject: [X] more weeks to reach my goal

Dear Friend,

As you may know, in [insert countdown, i.e. 14 days] the YMCA's Annual Campaign will reach its last day of the official campaign!

While you can still give year-round, giving before this date is especially important to help us reach our goal by the campaign deadline. The YMCA is an important resource to so many individuals and families who benefit from access to afterschool care, early learning, senior health and fitness activities, and more.

Financial assistance is important because it makes the Y accessible to everyone. When you give to the Y's Annual Campaign, you're helping your neighbors and community thrive. I choose to support the Y because it makes such a big difference in our area, and I hope you will too.

Please consider contributing to my campaign, which you can find via this link:[insertURL]. An incredible 100% of your contribution will be used towards financial assistance. And, no donation is too small - every dollar truly makes a difference.

Thank you in advance!





RESOURCES:

Best Practices for Online Fundraising

Online fundraising is a great option for family members or out-of-state friends who have a relationship with you but may not be connected with our YMCA.

- A) Use the YMCA website to direct people who want to make their donation online:
www.ymcaofmewsa.org/give

- B) Set up a personal fundraising page and use your page URL

Make calls to your assigned donors and prospects first – get commitments. Incorporate your personal fundraising page after calls have been completed.

Sending a link to your personal fundraising page is a good way to follow-up once you have made a personal ask for a specific dollar amount or if someone was hesitant about giving during your initial ask.

Email your donors and prospects pictures, videos, stories...which help educate and inspire them to give.

After the campaign ends, circle back around and let your donors know how much you raised online.

Best practice is to develop a long-term relationship that will encourage increased giving over time

Top Ten Reasons People Give

- 10 Charitable gifts are tax deductible.
- 9 It makes them feel good to do something for others in their community.
- 8 They have a desire to protect others and make their community better.
- 7 They feel morally or socially obligated to do something for people in need.
- 6 You demonstrated your commitment with your gift.
- 5 They respect you, the person asking them.
- 4 They believe in the objectives and future direction of the YMCA.
- 3 They have received something from the Y and now want to "give back."
- 2 They have a personal involvement with the Y.
- 1 BECAUSE SOMEONE ASKS!

RESOURCES: SOCIAL MEDIA SUGGESTED POSTS

Take a look at the below examples of social media posts. For greatest impact and post-interaction personalize your posts. Tell people why the Y is important to you and your family. If you are comfortable share a photo of its impact. Online Giving Links can be shared via social media. Each campaigner has a personalized online giving link. You can replace the general link with your personal link if you would like.

Facebook/Instagram Posts

The Y believes everyone deserves the same opportunities, no matter who you are or where you are from. Learn more about the work the YMCA of MEWSA is doing in our local community, and how you can support these efforts. Give online at <http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/giving>

The YMCA of MEWSA [or change to your branch name] continues to lean in to the needs of our community. From food drives to vaccines and booster and blood drives, we are here. Are you ready to lean in with us? Visit us at <http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/giving>.

Did you know that the Y is the largest child care provider in Middlesex County serving over 2000 families? Many of those kids come from families who may struggle to pay for the program. A gift of \$300 helps pay for a week of care for a child in our community. Giving online at <http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/giving>.

Summer Camp has been an amazing experience for [insert your child's name]. It's given him/her confidence and friends. This year we're giving to the Y so every kid in our community can experience camp. Will you join us in donating to the YMCA? Give online at <http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/giving>.

Learning to swim provides kids with lifesaving skills. But it also gives children more confidence out of the water. A gift of \$60 provides lessons to a child in our Swim Program. Give online at

As a parent, it's important to me that my kids are in a safe, nurturing environment after school. The Y provides that for our family. But some families struggle to afford that care. Make a gift to the YMCA today and let's make sure every child in our community has access to this critical program. Give online at <http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/giving>.

I am supporting the Y this year because I grew up in YMCA programs and want all children to have the same opportunities as I had when I was younger. Give today at <http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/giving>.

I met [tag a Y friend or friends] at the [branch name] YMCA and I couldn't imagine my life without him/her. I am supporting the YMCA to make sure everyone belongs no matter their ability to afford it. Give online at <http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/giving>.

For cancer survivors, recovery is about more than just the physical. LiveSTRONG at the YMCA, a free program supported by donors like you, provides group fitness and emotional support to cancer survivors. Make a gift to the YMCA of MEWSA today to support cancer survivors. Give online at <http://www.ymcaofmewsa.org/giving>.

DONATION METHODS

Cash, Check or Credit Card: Attach to pledge card and turn in to the branch within 48 hours.

Online: Pledge online at www.ymcaofmewsa.org/give

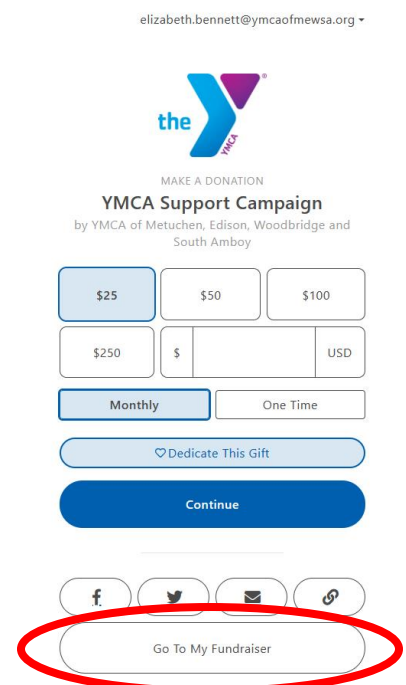
Pledging: Make a monthly gift online at www.ymcaofmewsa.org/give or spread your gift over the year.

Matching Gifts: The Y is eligible to receive matching gifts which doubles or even triples contributions made by employees or retirees. Please instruct donors to obtain the appropriate forms from their human resources departments.

Donations of Stock: We accept gifts of stock which often provide tax benefits to the donor. To make a gift of stock, please refer donors to Mariam Lesnewski or call 732-516-9200

Will/Bequest: We accept gifts of stock which often provide tax benefits to the donor. To make a gift of stock, please refer donors to Mariam Lesnewski or call 732-516-9200

Create your own Fundraising Page at www.ymcaofmewsa.org/give



Questions? Need support? YMCA professional staff are here to help!

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