

COMMUNITY REPORT



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA of ARLINGTON

1148 W. Pioneer Pkwy., Ste. H, Arlington, TX

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A newsletter for members, donors and volunteers of the Y



YMCA OWNS SUMMER

By Claude Cunningham, Ed.D., Board Chairman

It is the time of year that Texas does best – SUMMER! The sky is high and bright and blue. The days are at least warm. This is our time of year. The Y serves more folks in more ways in the summer than any other organization. The YMCA owns the summer.

In April, the YMCA of Arlington had its annual meeting and celebrated the successes of 2010. We have entered a new two-year leadership cycle and I've been given the honor and privilege of leading the board of directors of this great organization for the next two years. Many of you don't know anything about me, so a little introduction might be in order. I'm a former public school executive with nearly 40 years service to the children of Texas. I have been a member of the Y Board for eight years and was a charter member of the Cooper Y Advisory Board. My first experiences with the YMCA were attending day camp in Sycamore Park and taking swimming lessons at the Downtown Fort Worth YMCA when I was in elementary school. The Y and I go back a long, LONG way.

The YMCA is all about youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. The summer is a wonderful time for us to lay the foundation for healthier living. For years, our families have let their health slide, and we've put healthy living behind all the other things that demand our attention. We've done this to the point that one out of every three people in America is overweight or obese. The proportion of overweight tweens and teens is much higher. It's a national health crisis.

So what?

It's summer, the time that families traditionally spend more time together. Kids are out of school, it's time for vacations or "staycations," and the days are long. The time is right for families to get healthy together. Now I understand that families generally don't want or need to be bodybuilders, but I believe that they seek to be healthy. I have never heard a parent say that they wanted their children to be sick, obese or weak. But many kids are, and the parents don't know what to do.

It is time for the Y. Join a sports league, take the family to a "dive-in movie" or swim at one of our two pools, participate in the Father/Child program or attend a family night at the Y. The Y can help make this summer a memorable one for your family. Grab your family, your neighbors and your friends and head for the Y.

Let's make this summer special!

2ND ANNUAL SENIOR PLAY DAY

The second-annual Senior Play Day was held at the Cooper Street Branch on May 11. More than 80 active older adults participated in activities that included food and nutrition demonstrations, a relay race, horseshoes, washer toss, croquet, a dance contest and more! Event sponsors included: Matlock Place Health and Rehabilitation Center, Baylor Orthopedic and Spine Hospital at Arlington, Arlington Orthopedic Associates, Texas Eye and Laser Center and DFW Senior Care.



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TEEN LEADERSHIP COUNCIL GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

One of the YMCA's premiere teen programs is our Teen Leadership Council (TLC). Through this program, we offer area teens and "tweens" ages 11-17 the opportunity to learn about their community, become involved with their city and learn how to become a leader to affect change. With community service projects, educational opportunities and fieldtrips, the YMCA strives to help build our community's leaders of tomorrow today by teaching caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith.

At the Central Branch, Executive Director Kevin Cartwright and several volunteers are working to build a council that represents students who may be missed by traditional leadership programs. "TLC is for any kid who wants to be actively involved in a program that helps them develop important skills for their future," he says. This new group of teens started in February of 2011, and represents youth from diverse backgrounds and neighborhoods from all over the city. In just a few months, they have made great strides toward their planned goals.

Community projects included a TLC health fair, held on March 18, where they worked to share the Y's commitment to healthy living. They also worked in conjunction with the City of Arlington's Weed and Seed program to distribute information to residents in their own East Arlington neighborhoods. They planned and participated in a service day at Mission Arlington. TLC isn't all just work! Teens participated in exciting fieldtrips including attending Rangers and UTA baseball games, as well as an afternoon at Putt-Putt® Golf. TLC members are growing their ranks with "recruit-a-friend" nights, where they invite their peers to join them for video games and fellowship, and encourage them to join the program. This summer, the group will be working on nomination and election of officers and planning career development fieldtrips for the fall.



James Hollis, with coaches Heidi Steltzer, Kim Johnson, Lisa Collins, Holly Daniels and Ann Thompson

JAMES HOLLIS TO LEAD YMCA'S DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM

James Hollis, former membership director for the North Branch YMCA, has been promoted to Health Initiatives Director for the YMCA of Arlington. James served in a variety of roles over the past seven years with the Y. He brings a tremendous passion for servant leadership to his role in the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program (YDPP).

"I am happy to announce that we are primed and ready for enrollment! We have recruited and trained six Lifestyle Coaches, established sites for our classes, and started spreading the word to our community about this great program" says James. Sue White, vice president and chief operating officer, oversees the program.

YDPP is an innovative, evidence-based lifestyle intervention program designed to help reduce the burden of chronic disease in communities across the nation. The YMCA of the USA is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), UnitedHealth Group and others to expand the program and bring it to as many communities as possible.

UnitedHealth Group offers YDPP to employers and other insurers who are seeking to reduce their health costs due to diabetes. YDPP has launched through the Arlington, Dallas, and Fort Worth Ys. To find out more about this life-changing program, email: jamesh@ymca-arlington.org, or call 817.299.9629 ext. 31.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Individuals who meet at least two of the following criteria may be eligible for YDPP:

- Blood pressure at 140/90 or higher, elevated cholesterol levels, low physical activity levels (less than 2 times per week)
- Parent or sibling with diabetes
- Diagnosed with prediabetes
- Had gestational diabetes during pregnancy, or given birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds
- 45 years of age or older
- Overweight/obese
- High risk for developing Type 2 Diabetes



FROM THE CEO STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

By Willie Dean, Ph.D.

Dear Supporters:

The Y is a cause-driven organization that strengthens communities. We do this in three areas of focus: youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Youth development programs like swimming lessons, sports leagues, sports camps, Father/Child activities, leadership development and apartment outreach programs, teach skills and nurture the development of youth and teens. Healthy living programs like the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program (YDPP) address chronic disease, while active older adult programs improve health and well-being for senior adults in our community. Social responsibility programs facilitate neighbors helping neighbors by giving back to the community through volunteering, fundraising and service learning projects.

The YMCA of Arlington is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that serves Arlington, Mansfield and surrounding communities. We're a charity that is worthy of support.

We're proud of the work we do to strengthen our community. But ... we can't do it alone. We're grateful for the support we receive from hundreds of volunteers and thousands of donors each year. Thank you for your investment of time, talents and treasures to help us strengthen our community!

God bless,

Willie Dean, Ph.D.
President/CEO

COOPER STREET OUTBACK PROJECT

When the Cooper Street Branch was built in 2003, the property acquired for the project included an undeveloped section of land behind the building that is currently unused.

When advisory board members at the branch recently looked into developing this property, they wanted to retain the beauty of the land and create something natural, sustainable, and a model for urban outdoor development.

Under the leadership of Cooper Branch advisory board member John Moore, volunteers and staff began an ambitious plan to transform this 14-acre tract. John contacted the Urban Design Center through the City of Arlington and UTA and worked to develop a master plan to transform the "Outback" into a multi-use urban outdoor center. They are currently working on a budget and timeline for the implementation of the project.

Initial plan includes:

- Hiking/walking trails
(Rustic trail opens September 1!)
- PAR exercise stations
- Sports fields
- Low-ropes course
- Covered pavilion
- Lighting
- Camping areas



SEND A KID TO CAMP

Summertime can be a risky time for some kids. Many children in our community live in homes where resources are limited. Many families can't afford supervised, safe summertime activities for their children. Many local youths, unfortunately, are left to fend for themselves during summer days while their parents work. YMCA Summer Camp offers an alternative to unsupervised summer days. Our Y operates licensed day camps at four area schools and specialty camps at each of our three branches this summer. YMCA Summer Camp is full of fun and creative activities that engage children's minds while improving their health and well-being, all in a supervised, safe environment.

This year, more than half of our day camp participants have applied for financial aid, and many of them are qualifying for our highest level of aid. With families struggling to make ends meet in a down economy, will you help us make sure that no child gets turned away from a fun and safe summer at the Y?

Donations to the Strong Community Campaign, through our "Send A Kid to Camp" promotion, can help ensure that our community's youth stay safe and active over the summer. Return the enclosed envelope, or visit our website at www.ymca-arlington.org/donate.asp to make a donation today.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT THE Y

Get involved in your community! We need your help to keep our events going strong. If you have a few hours, please consider volunteering at one of our upcoming events.

Father/Child Program Annual

Carnival – August 27. Bring the whole family for fun and games, and to learn more about this fabulous program for dads and kids. Call Rodney Smith at 817-274-9622 or email rodneys@ymca-arlington.org.

Community Prayer Breakfast –

September 14. This is a faith-focused morning for the entire community, with prayers, a guest speaker, music and fellowship. Call Shawanna Brooks at 817-299-9629, ext. 10, or email shawannab@ymca-arlington.org.

Fall Kids Fest at the Y –

October 21. A fun evening for everyone! Fall Kids Fest – an Arlington-Mansfield FitFuture® initiative – features games, bounce houses, local businesses, activity demonstrations, food and much more. Call Sue White at 817-299-9629, ext 30.

Taste of Arlington – October 25.

We have volunteer spots open for this year's Taste of Arlington – Trick or Taste, Part Boo! If you volunteer an hour of your time, you get one free ticket to the event! Call Kevin Cartwright at 817-274-9622, ext 46 for more information.

All volunteers must complete a volunteer application and background check.

APARTMENT COMMUNITY OUTREACH UPDATE

Artisan and Rush Creek Apartment Programs

At the Artisan and Rush Creek apartment communities, the Y is making a difference in the lives of youth and families! We're proud to partner with the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation, Mansfield ISD, Arlington South Rotary Club, PepsiCo, New Life Fellowship Church, Koinonia Church and donors to the Strong Community Campaign to fund this great program, now in its fourth year.

Thanks to our partners we were able to install new basketball hoops at the apartments, and provide balls, sneakers and jerseys to the youth in the program. The Rotary Club installed two square-foot gardens that youth are responsible for tending. Youth learned about nutrition while they watched their gardens grow. Many children have parents who work during afterschool hours, so Mansfield ISD provided onsite tutoring to help elementary students with their homework during the 2010-2011 school year. The Arlington Public Library helped promote literacy by bringing its mobile library to the sites once a month so students could check out books. The teachers who worked with these students noted that they were more successful in the classroom as a result.

Artisan and Rush Creek youth participated in several special events promoting educational and career development. They attended a "lock-in" at UTA's Maverick Athletic Center, which was sponsored by the Mayor's Youth Commission. The event included the "Rachel's Challenge" curriculum, an anti-bullying education program. All of the students who attended pledged to promote acts of kindness in their community and stand up to bullying. After the event, many of the students expressed an interest in attending UTA in the future. Six of the students attended a YMCA board meeting to share their experiences and personal reflections after attending the Rachel's Challenge presentation. They also took a behind-the-scenes tour of a local pizza kitchen to learn about jobs in the restaurant industry.

We specifically focus on creating youth leaders in their community! None of the students who have attended this innovative YMCA program are known to be directly associated with risky behavior like gang involvement or crime. We believe this is because of the positive alternative we provide.



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