

News and Views

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

YWCA of White Plains & Central Westchester
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Welcome Back Letter from our CEO

It is with great pleasure that I welcome back our supportive members and friends to a new Fall season at the YWCA.

This year, we celebrated our 80th year of improving the lives of women, children and families in Westchester. With our Spring gala, "In the Company of Women", 450 dynamic women from across the county joined us at the Surf Club in New Rochelle to recognize our anniversary and the work that we do to eliminate racism and empower women. An inspirational keynote speech given by Ambassador Shabazz, daughter of Malcolm X and former GEMS coordinator, reminded us of the necessity of staying connected to our community and causes that we are passionate about.

President Obama has invited the YWCA, to be a leader in advocating community service and volunteering, which our YWCA participated in by running a food drive to gather food for our Women's Residence. A country-wide volunteering initiative has been under way this summer, culminating in a day of service on September 11, 2009. The YWCA hosted a special Volunteer Recognition Breakfast on Friday, September 11 to show our appreciation for those who have generously volunteered for our programs and events. This year, we will continue to encourage volunteering and offer opportunities for people to give their time to a good cause.

Summer Highlights



We've had a wonderful summer this year, with a fantastic session of **Camp Funkist** that included soccer, water slides, jumping castles, music, arts and crafts, games and more. Campers enjoyed special treats from tie dying to making ice-cream sundaes and participated in a number of off-site activities including bowling, rock climbing and group trips to Splash Down, The Greenburgh Nature Center, the Bronx Zoo, Lake Compounce, and Rye Playland. Leather crafts was a new activity introduced this year and campers enjoyed making creative masterpieces! Campers explored music as they learned and sang new songs to put together a special performance. It was incredible to hear our youth recorder ensemble! Campers also participated in a swim-a-thon on August 6th to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Thanks to all who came and supported our campers in reaching their swimming goals.

Upcoming Events

Fall into Fitness Day

(Saturday, 9/26—11am-3pm)

Participate in the kids Fit-a-Thon to raise money for the YWCA. Enjoy demos, clinics and more. A health and wellness expo will include local organizations promoting healthy and active lifestyles.

Financial Planning Workshop

(Saturday, 10/3—10am-12noon)

Join us in an important discussion on family financial planning and talking to your kids about money, led by Morgan Stanley Smith Barney Advisors.

Festivo de Vida y Comida

(Saturday, 10/3—10am-2pm)

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with a cultural festival - music, food and fun!

Take Back the Night

(Thursday, 10/1—6:30 PM)

The Alliance for Just Solutions, a project of the YWCA, will sponsor the first Westchester-based Take Back the Night; a rally, march and speak out about dating/domestic violence.

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

(Sunday, 10/18—10am)

This year, the YWCA is forming a team to walk for Breast Cancer at Manhattanville College. Please join our team! Email events@ywcawhiteplains.com for details.

Holiday Tagsale

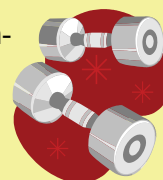
(Saturday, 11/14—10am-3pm)

Donate your kids old clothes, toys and books to a good cause! Proceeds will go to the YWCA Nursery School and other Programs.

September 2009

Our **Nursery School** Camp explored lots of fun activities as well, including soccer and art activities, with an extended day program this year that had twice the number of students as the previous year.

Our fitness department continues to offer the highest quality of programming to the community. **Family Fitness Fun Day** in June celebrated family fitness, health and wellness with soccer clinics, zumba classes, acupuncture, massages, a shuttle run and lots of other great activities. Our Fitness Center will be re-opening with a new and fresher “look” this Fall under the direction of our new Fitness Director, Mary Thomas.



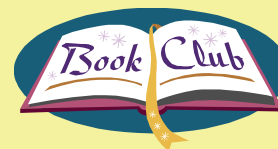
This Summer, we were happy to receive a great amount of support from our corporate supporters. In May, **volunteers from Heineken USA** gathered at our Women’s Residence to tackle a labor-intensive project of clearing out one of the residence halls to prepare for renovations. A special thank you goes out to Heather Pellegrino and the other Heineken USA employees who generously donated their time to help speed up the renovation process so the women who depend on our facility can move into a cleaner, safer home.

Con Edison awarded a \$12,000 grant to our YWCA in July to incorporate STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) education into our GEMS Program and to implement a new recycling plan for the building. We hope everyone will participate in our efforts to protect the planet and promote “green” initiatives by recycling paper, cans, bottles and plastic when in our facility.



I am proud to share information about our **GEMS** (Girls Empowered Through Meaningful Support) Program, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year of providing enrichment activities to girls that improves confidence, academic success, leadership skills and cultural competence. Girls in the program participated in the Juneteenth Parade for the City of White Plains on Saturday, June 13th down Mamaroneck Avenue, celebrating the commemoration of the end of slavery in the U.S. Five years ago, White Plains joined the growing number of cities across the country who participate in this event.

This Summer, the **GEMS** program participated in a book club and read the novel *Push* by Sapphire, exploring the story of an abused teen girl. A cooking component gave the girls a chance to learn how to prepare healthier dishes.



Our **Middies** Swim Team continues to excel in the water, with one member of the team breaking several former Middies records! Try outs are September 8, 9 and 10th, an exciting opportunity to join this highly competitive team.

I am happy to announce several promotions and degree completions among the YWCA staff members. In **Childcare**, Francine Thomas completed her AA degree, Linda Chisolm was promoted to Infant Head Teacher and Jennifer Robles was promoted to Preschool 2 Afternoon Supervisor. In **Aquatics**, Edison Rodriguez received his AA degree as well.

I am delighted to share all of these memorable summer highlights with you. I look forward to a wonderful Fall season and hope you will continue to be a part of our YWCA family and celebrate our 80th year with us!

Warmly,
Maria Imperial
CEO