

YMCA OF GREATER FORT WAYNE
2021 BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

DEAR FRIENDS,

Our passion for service continues at the YMCA. Each day, our dedicated staff members and volunteers serve others through programs that build healthy spirits, minds and bodies. Ignited by a commitment to nurture the potential of each person we serve, the YMCA has continually grown and evolved alongside our communities.

We have always been optimistic about the future. Today, youth, adults and families alike need support to reach their full potential. We intentionally design our programs to help people grow in confidence, relationships, leadership and purpose. Our ability to see great potential in others has helped us to strengthen the foundation of community throughout the decades.

At the YMCA, we are rekindling relationships with neighbors and friends through programs that help individuals improve their health and well-being. We are awakening possibilities in youth through activities that instill a sense of leadership, promote academic success and support career development. We are sparking a spirit of giving in others through opportunities to financially support or volunteer in ways that build a stronger community.

Throughout our rich history, the support of this community has never let us down. The generosity of businesses, foundations and individuals has supported the Y, ensuring that everyone can participate. It is through this kind of support that the Y mission can continue to burn brightly into the future.

The fire that ignited a worldwide movement 178 years ago still burns inside each staff person and volunteer. The services we provide in Fort Wayne and surrounding communities are built on local needs with local volunteer board members guiding our work. The YMCA of tomorrow may not look like the YMCA of today, but we will hold true to our mission of putting Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirits, minds and bodies for all. We are passionate and optimistic about the future of the YMCA.

I hope you enjoy the stories of impact in this year's Benefits to the Community Report. Thank you for your support and dedication to the YMCA.

Chris Angellatta
President and CEO



Salena Scardina
Board Chair



ENLIGHTENING FUTURES

On November 16, 2021, the YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne hosted a press conference to introduce the YMCA Enterprise Zone to community members. This education curriculum will introduce youth and young adults to career fields that require technical expertise and hands-on work, including construction trades, computer science and culinary arts. Through partnerships and current YMCA programs, participants will also explore careers in manufacturing, health sciences, human services and media/communication.

The 20,000-square-foot building will be situated immediately north of the Renaissance Pointe YMCA on property generously donated by the McMillen Foundation. The location is ideal because it minimizes travel and provides a catalyst for neighborhood economic development. This three-phase project will include a Career Opportunities Center, an Outdoor Corner Park and Athletic and Special Event fields.





POSSIBILITIES

FOR EVERY CHILD AND TEEN

Growing through any kind of trauma can be incredibly difficult. YMCA Youth Advocates mentor vulnerable youth while demonstrating love, care and compassion. The trust they establish in these critical relationships helps young people overcome challenges, find healthier lifestyles and prepare for their bright futures.







INFUSING COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

I started coming to the YMCA after welcoming a 17-month-old child into our home, making us a family of six. I knew I needed to start focusing on my health, but to do that, I needed access to affordable, quality child care. Thankfully, the Y allowed me to prioritize my health while my youngest enjoyed Y child care programs.

For the first two years, I only used the fitness area. As I grew more comfortable with the many resources provided at the Y, I found myself following music I heard in the hallway, leading me to a Zumba class.

Thirteen months later, I'm proud to say that I still go to the same class, and I love it! When I started, I was awful. I still don't follow all the moves or stay on beat the whole time, but my confidence has grown, and I'm stronger for it. The instructor, Zarifa, is an encourager — never making anyone feel dumb but pushing us to give more — which is huge in a class like this.

The people in that class have become another little community for me, and I look forward to seeing them twice a week. And our youngest child always looks forward to child care — he just loves it. Whenever we walk in, staff members welcome him by name, and whenever we leave, he tells me which friends were there. I don't worry about whether he will be OK — I know he's safe.

- Shari, YMCA Member





SPARKING

The first step is sometimes the hardest. That's how the Maxwell family felt when they decided to apply for financial assistance. They knew a YMCA membership would benefit their family, but the full price was out of their budget. They felt the familiar struggle of not wanting to ask for help.

The day they received financial assistance from the YMCA, Tara made a promise that she would share that spirit of generosity with others and someday pay it forward. At the time, Tara was a full-time nursing student, commuting between Valparaiso and Fort Wayne during the week and working nights at Parkview on the weekends.



Once the Maxwells joined the Y, Tara and her husband, Jason, got involved in group exercise and aquatic fitness classes, while their kids began using the fitness equipment and playing basketball in the gym. "We love that the Y has something for our whole family at one location, and we all enjoy being there. We also feel safe letting our teenage son exercise on his own."

Recently, Tara graduated from nursing school and is now a Nurse-Family Partnership nurse helping first-time moms. The Maxwell family no longer needs financial assistance, and in November of 2021, Tara fulfilled the original promise she made — she called the Central Branch and arranged to pay for another family who needed assistance for the next two years. Tara was so overwhelmed with joy when being told about the family she would help, and the family who received the membership felt blown away that a stranger could provide such a generous gift.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to grow into the best version of themselves. The YMCA's financial assistance program is supported by generous donors like Tara who believe in the power of giving back.









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2021 MISSION PARTNERS





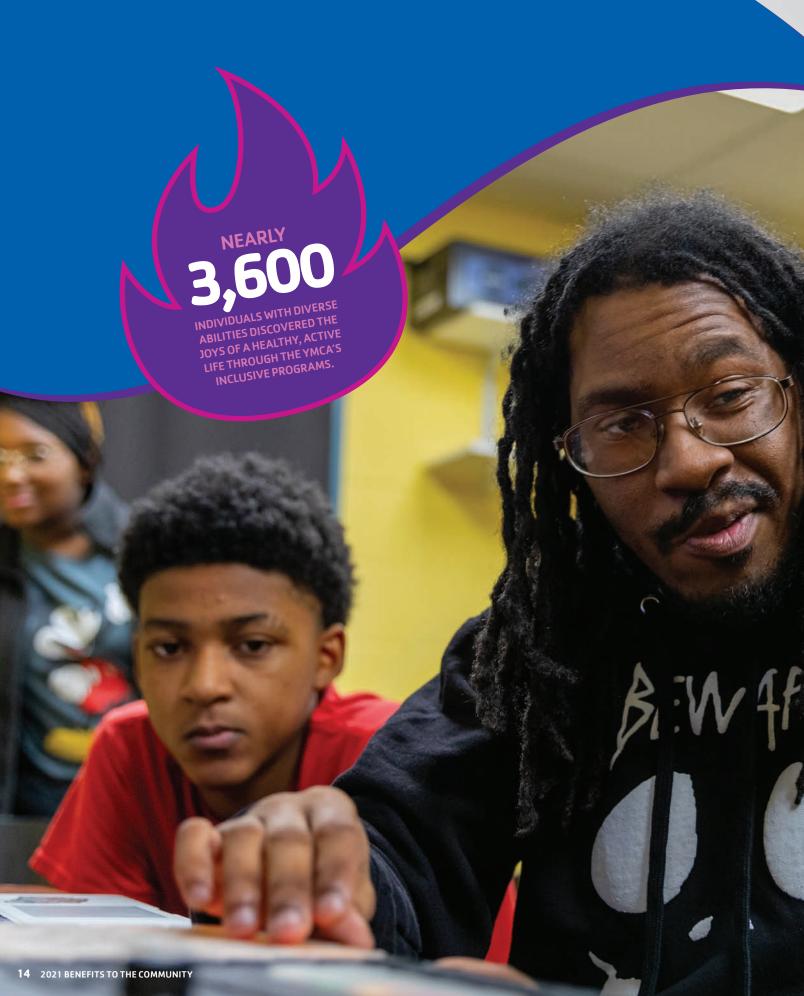














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