



THE *Heart* OF THE TRIANGLE

Sharing the vision and supporting the mission of the Triangle area non-profit community.

YMCA of the Triangle Bridges Community Gaps

by Judy Liu, MPH



As we approach autumn many are getting back into a school routine—packing lunches, signing permission slips and making sure the kids are on time for the carpool or the school bus. For working families, one huge hurdle is finding convenient, quality child care. The YMCA of the Triangle is the area's leading provider of quality child care programs. The YMCA serves dozens of elementary and middle schools with After School programs in Wake, Chatham, Durham, Johnston, Lee and Orange counties. Programs are held at schools or at the YMCA, and the YMCA provides transportation as needed. YMCA Before School programs are held at Wake County schools or area YMCAs. Transportation to the school is provided by the YMCA as needed.

The YMCA currently serves nearly 130,000 children, families and adults through academic support programs and health and wellness initiatives. By 2020 YMCA of the Triangle will serve nearly 200,000 people in our region. That growth also represents a lot of need. The YMCA helps meet critical gaps through the Annual We Build People Campaign. This is the 26th year of the community-wide effort that allows adults, children and families to participate in YMCA programs regardless of their ability to pay.

Y Learning – Achievement Gap Program

Y Learning is a standardized tutorial program for students in grades K–8 who struggle to reach school-system benchmarks. Most Y Learning students lack financial and educational support at home.

Y Learning programs maintain a 1:6 staff-to-child ratio and include at least one certified teacher at each site. Students participate in Y Learning at no cost, thanks to community support and donations to the YMCAs' Annual Campaign. Today, more than 1,200 students in Wake, Chatham, Durham, Johnston, Lee, Orange and Pamlico Counties participate in Y Learning.

LIVESTRONG at the YMCA

LIVESTRONG is 12-week program for adult cancer survivors. Survivors participate in a health and fitness program with nine other survivors in a small group setting. Certified YMCA instructors help patients build muscle mass and strength, increase flexibility and endurance, and improve energy levels and self-esteem. LIVESTRONG focuses on the whole person, not the disease. YMCA instructors are trained in post-rehab exercise, nutrition and supportive cancer care. The program meets year-round at YMCAs throughout the Triangle. Classes meet twice weekly and last approximately 75 minutes. Sessions are limited to 12 participants.

Personal stories from YMCA members illustrate the true impact of the YMCA on the entire family:

“Our YMCA is so much more than a gym. I am deeply grateful that YMCA taught all three of my kids to swim. I am also grateful that some of the people I worked with had their first opportunity to learn to swim (as adults) at my local YMCA. My kids briefly attended YMCA school holiday camps when I needed to work and school was out of session.”

To make a tax deductible donation to support the YMCA's Annual We Build People Campaign, visit:
<https://www.ymcatriangle.org/campaign/ymca-annual-campaign>

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