

YLINK

YMCA OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA



A great
PLACE TO belong



Heritage Club Members Honored

Letter From Paul

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have hired and trained close to 100 new YMCA summer staff members. These fine individuals will have committed their summer to making a difference in the lives of children and families. Our community, as a whole, will be stronger because of their work. Our organization will be richer because of the relationships we have developed. I hope you will take time to stop and observe our work and celebrate the impact of the YMCA in this community.

We are very excited about some recent reports and data within our YMCA that are supporting the strategies put in place by our board and staff three years ago. We introduced the FitLinxx software and thus the FitQuest program. We implemented our Coach Approach program for the "health seeker" population. We recommitted our focus on the importance of relationship-building with members, volunteers, and program participants. These steps are strengthening our relationships throughout the organization. We are very excited to see our retention rates higher than ever and have played an active role in the community's recent resurgence in staying active through programs like Mission Hospital's Fit 4 Life, Chamber Challenge, and Downtown on the Move.

Recently, the YMCA received good news about funding for programs and services to help us reach out to those who are challenged in our community. We were awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Community Foundation of WNC and the Peterson Endowment Fund to expand our Project Youth Outreach in South Buncombe County. The United Way awarded the YMCA \$145,787 for support of our summer day camp scholarships, Youth Fit For Life (addressing youth obesity), and our historical Project Youth Outreach (serving the needs of at-risk youth). Finally, the YMCA of Western North Carolina was one of seven YMCAs from across the country chosen to be part of the development of the curriculum for the Healthy Family Home project supported by the National YMCA. This honor came with a \$10,000 grant to support our efforts locally.

Once again, thank you for your support and commitment to the YMCA of Western North Carolina. We are happy to have you as part of this great organization.

Sincerely,

Paul Vest
President and CEO
YMCA of Western North Carolina

The YMCA celebrated the members of our Heritage Club at a reception and dinner at Deepark Restaurant on The Biltmore Estate in May. "It was one of the most memorable YMCA events I have participated in since coming to Asheville 12 years ago," says President & CEO Paul Vest.

The Heritage Club's mission is to provide charitable and institutional support for the YMCA of Western North Carolina for present and future generations. Member contributions, through estate planning or cash donations, ensure the long-range financial stability of the organization.

"The Endowment Fund is becoming more important as we continue to grow because we're able to provide more and more support to young people for scholarships and other programs," says Raymond McClinton, chair of the Endowment Committee.



Seven new members were welcomed into the Heritage Club increasing total membership to 56 representing nearly 100 individuals. The event also marked the announcement of five new named funds in honor of Phil Sales, Joe Mongovis, John Abbott, Charlotte Carlisle, and The Vest Family Fund. Named funds are contributions of more than \$10,000 to the YMCA's endowment.

Sales, Mongovis, and Abbott were historical supporters of the YMCA whose contributions are the foundation of the Endowment Fund. After their passing, their families honored their planned gift to the YMCA with a generous donation. The Heritage Club Event marked the first significant public recognition of these individuals. It was a sentimental testament for the families to their loved ones for their impact in the community.

Raymond adds, "What was so special about this evening was that many of the families recognized had contributed to the YMCA many years ago before we had a formal Heritage Club. There wasn't a way to acknowledge them and we were able to honor these families after many years."

Phil Sales was a member of the "10,000 Mile Club." Known for his dedication and passion for running, Phil was a regular at the downtown Asheville track, so it was only natural that he supported the capital campaign for the outdoor track. His wife Louise, son David, and daughters Nancy and Ann attended the Heritage Club event with their families recognizing husband and father after many years.

At the heart of Abbott Construction was the man with the passion and commitment to make a difference - John Abbott. He supported the YMCA in many ways including the construction of the pool addition at the downtown Asheville branch. But his greatest legacy was his support of the endowment program through his planned gift.

Charlotte Carlisle was dedicated to building strong kids, strong families, and strong communities and committed much of her life to the YMCA before losing her brave battle with cancer in 2007. In recent months, Charlotte's life has been celebrated by an unbelievable outpouring of love and support for the YMCA by those touched by her service to our mission.

Pat and Angie Vest are longtime YMCA supporters and parents to CEO Paul Vest. Their consistent contributions reached the \$10,000 milestone this year. Through The Vest Family Fund, their legacy to the YMCA of WNC will continue to grow during their lifetimes as well as through their estate plan.

Our thanks to the event hosts who made the evening special: Jim Dalton, Ken and Nancy Glass, George and Barbara Groome, Raymond and Sue McClinton, Pat and Angie Vest, and Chuck and Mary Wood.

YMCA of WNC Represented at 2008 YMCA Europe Festival

The 2008 YMCA Europe Festival will be held August 3-9 in Prague, Czech Republic. The festival aims to unify young people from around the globe by bringing together thousands of teens in Christian fellowship. Eleven youth delegates from the YMCA of Western North Carolina will be attending the festival. Teens were invited based on their involvement with the YMCA as well as their exemplary leadership skills and potential.

"I'm really excited about the opportunity to meet so many new people and learn how we can bring the international program back to our YMCA," says Ashley Kiviniemi. Ashley has been involved with the YMCA since age eight and at thirteen began participating in the Leader's Club. She also works in child watch at the Reuter Family branch.

The festival is full of interactive activities and workshops to get participants communicating and learning from each other. It also features a global village to bring together cultures from around the world. Through the festival's programming, we hope to strengthen our local movement with new sources of motivation, new projects, and new resources.



Kristen Weaver Named Director of Association Wellness Advancement

Kristen Weaver has been named director of association wellness advancement for the YMCA of Western North Carolina. Kristen has been with the YMCA for nearly five years and previously served as wellness director for the Reuter Family branch.

"I'm thrilled to take on this responsibility and hope to improve wellness programming even more. The first area we are going to tackle is the development of Healthy Family Home, a YUSA initiative, that gives us the opportunity to assist families in their quest to create a healthy living environment in their busy lives with limited budgets," notes Kristen.

In this new organizational position, Kristen will serve as a resource for all branches in the development of association-wide wellness initiatives. She'll create systems and training to support wellness practices. At Reuter, Kristen was instrumental in pioneering wellness initiatives like FitQuest, Coach Approach, LEAP, the Total Health Internship program, HOPSports, the ActiPed Activity Partner program, Youth Fit For Life, and many other outstanding programs.

Contact Kristen at (828) 210-9658 or kweaver@ymcawnc.org



Partner Highlight

YMCA Partners are special donors who are as dedicated to imparting the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility on our community's youth as we are. Their generous support is fundamental to our mission; however, our relationship with our Partners goes beyond dollars contributed. It's an ongoing commitment to building strong kids, strong families, and strong communities by strengthening spirit, mind, and body.

John Teeter, Pepsi's executive vice-president, is a third generation Pepsi bottler and understands that communities are what support area businesses. Taught by his father and grandfather that giving back to the community is a key element in business success, John and Pepsi support countless organizations across the Western North Carolina region. Some of these include: United Way, Jr. Achievement, Eblen Foundation, American Red Cross, and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

"We think youth are the leaders of the future," John says. "In turn, we heavily support schools and youth-related activities and programs."



Through their gift of more than \$17,000 annually over the next five years, Pepsi Cola Bottling Company is the only Platinum Partner of our Strong Kids Campaign. The company's support of YMCA programs is unique because it is not earmarked for a select program. Rather, contributions are used where needs are greatest. Often, contributors are looking to fund a specific or new program. While the YMCA has needs for those opportunities, subsidizing programs with a proven history to maintain their viability is a constant need. A great example is the SPLASH program offering free swim lessons to children in Buncombe and McDowell Counties. Pepsi's generous support will ensure that Splash, as well as other established programs, continues to be accessible to those in need.

Pepsi partners with the YMCA because it offers a safe, yet fun, atmosphere for kids. John adds, "Having a place to go that fosters good behavior and offers an opportunity to grow not only physically, but mentally, helps kids make the right lifetime decisions that will shape their future."

Through their partnership with the YMCA, Pepsi is directly re-shaping the lives of our area's youth, and in turn, their families and our communities. Their support is truly making a difference today!

Children First Partnership Brings Summer Camp Adventure

The YMCA is partnering with Children First of Buncombe County for the second year to give 36 kids the chance to attend summer adventure camp. The partnership completely subsidizes camp programs for youth who may not have been able to afford the opportunity.

“Our partnership with the YMCA is a great fit because kids are receiving services and having experiences they would not otherwise and we’re efficiently utilizing the resources of both organizations,” says Allison Jordan, executive director of Children First. “The goal is to give the students outdoor experiences and open their eyes to the many free outdoor activities that are literally in their backyard,” she adds.

Each day, YMCA camp staff takes participants on mini adventures. Nikki, a new camper, went hiking in the Pisgah National Forest

and it was the first time she’d ever been “in the woods.” Nikki had never pushed herself that hard. “This was really fun,” she told her counselor, “I’ve never done anything outside. If I weren’t doing this, I would be bored sitting at home watching TV.”

The YMCA’s summer adventure camp programs bring out the potential in every child by building character, addressing conflict resolution, teaching health and wellness, and developing integrity. Through the collaboration with Children First, dozens of additional children like Nikki will learn these skills and take them into adulthood.



Taking the LEAP – Lee’s Story

One of LEAP’s (Lifestyle, Education & Activity Program) first graduates is Lee Gentry, 12 years-old and entering 7th grade this fall at Enka Middle School. Lee participated in the program with his mom Connie and his brother Bill (14).

LEAP, a collaboration with Mission Children’s Hospital and funded in part by the YMCA’s Endowment Fund, is bringing change to the lives of kids struggling with their weight. Geared towards 8-12 year-olds, the program is unique because it involves the entire family. Licensed professionals including exercise specialists, registered dietitians, and social workers teach families nutrition education, behavior modification, and the importance of exercise.

Nutrition and good eating practices are a top focus of the program. “We talked about eating right, feelings associated with food, and portion control,” Lee says. He and his family are bringing the skills they learned into the home as well. “We don’t eat out as much, we pack our lunches, eat leaner meats, and more fruits and vegetables,” adds Lee. His mom agrees that the family

is building upon the lessons learned during the LEAP program noting that they watch the calories, fat, and sugar content of their meals and snacks.

One essential lesson the kids learned was that it’s okay to stop eating when you’re full. “You don’t have to be a clean-plater,” says Connie.

Connie, a registered nurse, feels the program reinforced her discussions with her kids about leading healthy lifestyles. “The professionals were saying the same things about eating healthy and changing nutritional habits. LEAP helped the kids listen.”

Lee also now knows the importance exercising regularly. He says, “We learned that we should try to fit in exercise even if we’re busy – even if it’s during commercials while watching TV.” The kids were also taught how to exercise the right way and how long they should exercise to see benefits.

The pilot program, held in October 2007, graduated seven families and subsequent

classes have served 12 families. The goal is to increase knowledge of healthy lifestyle changes, increase self-confidence, and normalize BMI (body mass index) percentiles.

Connie definitely sees a change in Lee saying, “He makes good choices. I think LEAP is a great program and hope that other kids will benefit like we have.”



But it’s Lee who sums it up best. “It’s easy to make the right choices now that I know what they are.”

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Our thanks to past and present CEOs, their wives, and families for more than 34 years of service and leadership in Western North Carolina.

- Bill and Jean Fesperman (1974-1986)
- Bill and Jennifer Kantonen (1986-1996)
- Paul and Vicki Vest (1996 - present)

Looking for the perfect gift for someone who has everything? Enclosed is an envelope for the endowment program. Whether it is a birthday, wedding, or another special occasion, a contribution to the YMCA's Endowment Program is a gift that will keep giving for years to come!

**A great
PLACE TO
leave a legacy**

For more information on making a difference in our community, please contact Dana Davis, director of financial development, at ddavis@ymcawnc.org or 210-9656

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YMCA Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Financial Assistance: The YMCA of Western North Carolina is a non-profit organization open to all people. Financial assistance, to the fullest extent possible, is available to those in need. If you cannot afford the full cost of a YMCA program or membership, please request a confidential scholarship application at any YMCA location.



We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.



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