

## TO HELP OTHERS



The generosity of others is at the core of our existence. Through the support of our hundreds of volunteers and public and private donors we are able to give back to the communities we serve.

In 2010, YMCA member Ginny Keim made up her mind that she was going to ride over 350 miles across the state of Pennsylvania to benefit the Y's We Build People annual scholarship fund. The challenge for Ginny was that she was not a cyclist – in fact she wasn't in shape to cycle half the block. Determined, Ginny set her course to raise over \$3000 for the ride and train for the journey – including losing 30 pounds.

"By Sept. 2011, I had ridden more than 1,300 miles, lost 30 pounds, built up my endurance and gathered enough sponsors to make this trip a reality. I met my fellow riders on Sept. 18, and rode the state of Pennsylvania as a group of friends who shared the bond of covering the countryside with the power of our muscles. Together, we raised thousands for the YMCA so it would never turn anyone away for inability to pay for membership. Individually, we tested ourselves both mentally and physically, and we all came up winners."

## WE ALL NEED A HAND

At one time or another in our life, we all need a hand. And, at the Y, we extend a hand every day as a welcoming place for those with differences, a support network for working parents, a summertime favorite spot for kids, and a home-away-from-home for healthy meals when there's not enough to go around.

How can we do all of this? We count on the generosity of our members and community to help people of all ages and from all walks of life. With your gifts, we provide vital community programs and extend financial assistance to the kids, adults and families that need us most.

When you give to the Y, your gift has a meaningful, enduring impact right in your own neighborhood.

## WE BUILD PEOPLE

A YMCA of Greater Erie Initiative

### OUR MISSION

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



## SUPPORT THE Y STRENGTHEN YOUR COMMUNITY

Just one way we help is through membership and program scholarships. The Y uses 100 percent of your gift to help those who need us most. Some examples of your gift at work:

- \$125 sponsors one child for one week of summer camp
- \$250 sponsors one membership at the Teen Center
- \$500 sponsors one adult member for one year of Y membership
- \$1000 sponsors one family for one year of Y membership
- \$1000 sponsors one child for one month of preschool

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Change from every dollar!  
**YMCA OF GREATER ERIE**  
[www.WeBuildPeopleErie.org](http://www.WeBuildPeopleErie.org)



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## WE ALL NEED A HAND...



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# TO FEEL WELCOME

The Y is made up of people of all ages and from every walk of life. We open our doors and work within neighborhoods to ensure everyone, regardless of gender, income, faith, or cultural background, has the opportunity to live life to its fullest. We share the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

**Retired phys ed teacher and swimming coach Merriane Gaber** volunteers her time teaching basic swimming skills to young adults living with severe autism. "The developmental progress is immeasurable. The lifelong skills learned in simply getting ready to go to the pool and follow directions are routine and the swimming experience enhances their senses, calms their being and is something they can enjoy forever. I love it!"

"Our program is teaching more than just swimming. Through the act of swimming, we are teaching independent living skills – getting dressed and showering; we are teaching community skills – appropriate behavior for public places and getting along with others – and work skills – following directions and respect for authority."

The Glenwood Y serves as a support resource for other community groups such as Erie Homes for Children and Adults, the Achievement Center, Barber National Institute, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Erie and Community Resources for Independence.

# TO FEEL SUPPORT

At the Y, serving families has always been at the heart of our mission. No child, family or adult is turned away.

**An Edinboro mom and her three children** are among the 41 kids and six families helped by the County Y's Christmas Giving Tree – a tree where Christmas wishes and everyday needs dangle on ornaments. This family had just lost their home. With donations received from Y members and the community, the Y was able to purchase new clothes and bedding for the boys, relocate the family from a shelter to a mobile home park, and provide enough money for two months of heating fuel. "This is a Gift from God," says this grateful Edinboro mom. In total, more than \$7000 was donated to the Y in gifts, services and cash for the Christmas Giving Tree.

**Bethany Marcy** has her hands full as a single mom of three school-age children and a full-time student at Mercyhurst College. Bethany's classes begin at 3 p.m., that critical time when the kids need picked up and their evening routine begins. Her children board the Y's bus for the ride to the Glenwood Y's Early Learning Center on Poplar where they remain until mom can pick them up. It's here that the kids finish their homework (and have it checked by Y staff), enjoy board games, arts and crafts and gym time, and gather around the table as a Y family for their supper. And, when Bethany arrives, it's a nightly exhale knowing she's had the support of the Y staff and our childcare program while she is working hard for their future.



# TO GET OUTDOORS AND HAVE FUN

A safe place after school and in the summer, the Y is providing kids meaningful opportunities to learn and grow today and become contributing adults tomorrow.

In the summertime, kids flock to **Rodger Young Park**, a popular neighborhood park and outdoor swimming pool in the City of Erie, located across the street from a public housing neighborhood where more than 500 youth live. Long known for behavioral issues and safety concerns, Rodger Young Pool was at risk of closing before the Y stepped in and expanded the summer recreation program in collaboration with the City of Erie.

"The Y not only came forward to run the pool, it transformed the entire neighborhood experience. What was once a very troubled program, emerged as a safe and supervised haven for youth. The Y worked with community agencies to offer workshops on bullying and violence and even created job experiences for neighborhood kids in the concession stand. With funding from the Erie Housing Authority, the swimming season was extended. Best of all, we established a trust and respect within the neighborhood. We can't wait until next summer!" - **Dean Brown, Y employee.**

## THREE CONVENIENT WAYS TO GIVE:

- **Donate by check or credit card**
- **Add to monthly membership bank draft**
- **Set up monthly withdrawal from bank account**

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# TO FILL-UP WITH THE GOOD STUFF

More than 150 years ago, the Y was created in response to social challenges. Today, we remain as a lifeline in communities around the world. We understand the challenges that keep individuals from reaching their full potential and respond with services and support that enhance the quality of life for thousands.

It is a common misconception that only the homeless and unemployed go hungry. There are 49 million Americans that work hard every day who simply cannot make ends meet. In the City of Erie, 77.4 percent of youth receive free or reduced lunches during the school year. What happens when school is out?

Through the **Summer Foods Nutrition Program**, the Y served meals throughout Erie County through partnerships with the PA Child & Adult Food Program, City of Erie, Erie Housing Authority, Neighborhood Watch Groups, schools and churches to serve more than 70,000 meals to Erie's youth (70% of whom are low-income) in just two months.