

DOWNTOWN/UPMC Hamot YMCA

2014 We Build People Campaign

Branch Goal: \$17,000

OUR IMPACT

Children are like sponges – they watch and absorb from everything around them. Children have to feel connected and supported in trying new things. At the Y, children learn how to be their best selves. That makes for confident kids today, and contributing and engaged adults tomorrow.

I'M MORE.

For Norma Santiago, saying “thank you” pours out naturally and often. “I grew up in the projects at Harbor Homes on East 18th Street,” she says. “We struggled. We were taught to be grateful for everyone and everything, and I teach my kids that.” Norma is bubbling over with gratitude for the Downtown YMCA’s afterschool program. Norma appreciates the fact that her children are in a secure, educational environment when Norma is at work. She is impressed because the Y’s program combines education, enrichment and service learning. The Y’s environment is in sharp contrast to the day-care center her kids previously attended where Norma observed “babies wandering around with diapers, with one shoe on and one shoe off. It didn’t smell so good. It was very chaotic. I cried every day, taking my kids there.” Quality childcare helps youngsters escape poverty and are critical for working parents like Norma, who has an associate degree in business and accounting. “I help people now to get off welfare. I’m the perfect example that you can do that,” she says.

- Only 9% of youth in Pennsylvania are enrolled in an afterschool program*
- 1 in 3 kids receives financial assistance for YMCA preschool and afterschool programs where they are surrounded by people who encourage their potential every day

The Y depends upon public support to further our mission. Your gift means financial resources to provide:

- **Membership for all**
- **Early Learning & Preschool**
- **After School**
- **Summer Camp**
- **Youth Sports**
- **Healthy Kids Day**
- **Teen Center**
- **Shower Pass Program**

Like us on facebook at [YMCAofGreaterErie](#) & visit us online at [WeBuildPeopleErie.org](#).

PLEASE CONSIDER GIVING A GIFT TO THE DOWNTOWN/UPMC HAMOT Y THROUGH OUR ANNUAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN SO THAT WE HAVE THE NECESSARY RESOURCES TO HELP FAMILIES, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR NEED, AND THEY’LL KNOW THE Y IS SO MUCH MORE TOO.

Excerpts from Erie Times News reporter Liz Allen’s column. *Cited statistics from Afterschool Alliance.