



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
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BUILDING COMMUNITY

YMCA OF SUPERIOR CALIFORNIA



A SPECIAL ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT

SPIRIT, MIND, BODY AND SO MUCH MORE

About the YMCA of Superior California

by Mike Blount

The YMCA is something that is familiar to everyone, but most people simply associate it with health and fitness. Yet, the Y is so much more than a gym.

For 160 years, the YMCA has worked across the nation to benefit people of all ages, faiths and socioeconomic backgrounds in the communities it serves. It operates a number of diverse programs that aim to improve quality of life, provide a foundation for healthy living, build relationships with others and demonstrate positive values in the community. Whether it's a youth sports team, a parent education program or a class teaching healthy eating habits, the YMCA is focused on helping community members build their spirit, mind and body.

The YMCA has served our region since 1866. The YMCA of Superior California was formed after the YMCA programs of Nevada, Placer, Yolo, Yuba, Sutter and Butte counties were combined with Greater Sacramento. Today, it serves the Oroville, Sacramento, Yolo and Feather River regions, and has programs available for youth, teens, adults and seniors.

Each program falls under one of three umbrellas: healthy living, youth development or social responsibility. The YMCA is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all, and offers scholarships through the Y-Assist fund to children, families and seniors who need financial assistance to participate in YMCA programs. The organization gave out more than \$495,000 in scholarships in 2013 — of the 29,000 people served by YMCA Superior California, 21,000 are under the age of 18.

In the last four years, the organization has tripled the number of people it serves. Jay Lowden, CEO of YMCA of Superior California, says his goal is to expand to serve even more people in the next four years. In the meantime, the organization will continue to improve facilities and the efficiency of its programs. A recent evaluation of the Central YMCA facility conducted by the company Carbon Lighthouse recommended several changes — including improvements of the current heating and air conditioning units and light fixtures — that will help save more than \$12,000 a year on energy costs. Lowden says this money will go back into the community.

The YMCA of Superior California is able to provide service for a diverse set of community needs due in large part to the partnerships it forms in the community. The organization is always looking for opportunities to strengthen its mission by teaming with local businesses, municipalities and nonprofits. For example, a partnership with the Sacramento Superior Court created a child care program for children whose parents are involved in the court system. To teach youth safety around water, the YMCA of Superior California partnered with the city of Sacramento to operate some of their public pools during the summer months.

With help from donors, volunteers and community partners, the YMCA of Superior California will continue to ensure that everyone in the community receives the services they need.



The Y's Local Impact

Every year, the YMCA of Superior California builds local community through programs focused on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Here's a look at what your Y accomplished this year:

- Has grown to serve **29,000 PEOPLE**. That's more than **3X** as many people as just four years ago!

- Taught **7,360 KIDS HOW TO SWIM**, keeping them safer in our area's pools, rivers and lakes



- Reached more than **21,000 KIDS AND TEENS**

- Granted nearly **\$500K** in program scholarships to children, families and seniors through the Y-Assist fund

- Helped **2,248 SENIORS** stay active and fit



- Celebrated **147 YEARS** serving the region

- Delivered programs with the help of **1,500 VOLUNTEERS**

- Developed leadership skills in **3,511 KIDS** through camps and sports



- Taught nearly **1,000 CHILDREN** at 10 community after-school program sites

NURTURING THE YOUTH OF TODAY, BUILDING A STRONG TOMORROW

YMCA helps young people develop skills to overcome challenges

by Evan Tuchinsky

Nah-Jahae Bolds had an eventful fifth-grade year. She'd moved from Texas to the Sacramento area, and during the three months that her mother lived at a homeless shelter, Nah-Jahae lived with her paternal grandmother. She also lived with cousins, then returned to her grandmother's house, before living again with her mom.

She was already a shy girl who stood out from classmates because of her height and her artistic bent. Moving around only added to the challenge of making friends.

Then in the summer of 2013, things changed. The Saint John's Program for Real Change and the YMCA partnered to provide a day camp for kids living at the shelter. A shelter shuttle picked up Nah-Jahae and other participants, took them to the YMCA camp, and picked them up at the end of the day.

Nah-Jahae flourished. She made friends. She swam. She worked on her art, created a comic book and taught campmates how to draw. She learned new ways to socialize with peers and developed leadership skills.

"I noticed her coming out of her shell," says her mom, Imani O'Neal. "Nah-Jahae's always been one of those types of girls who feels like nobody knows what she's really like, and she hasn't been in an environment where there's a lot of children. Her going to the YMCA, she got to experience being around other kids, helping other kids, and be able to show what she's all about."

Nah-Jahae is now 12 and almost as tall as her mother, who's 5-foot-9. She has two younger brothers — Gregory, 10, and

Trey'Vaughn, 5 — for whom she loves to cook. Now in sixth grade, Nah-Jahae's grades have improved, she's made friends, and she's playing for her school basketball team as well as singing in a choir.

"She wanted to branch out and do new things," Imani says. "You can't do that without good grades."

Nah-Jahae says she got a lot out of her camp experience and credits staff members with nurturing change.

"They helped me with my anger issues," she says, "because I used to have a bad temper. They were really supportive. They talked with me, and they gave me some stuff to take home to help me with my art."

Through art, she was able to work out issues that sparked anger. She says counselors also showed her how to reduce her stress during school exams and to communicate better with classmates.

"She's always been a natural leader, but her delivery was not good," Imani says. "At the YMCA, she learned how to lead children but without sounding bossy."

Imani calls the YMCA camp "a good program," and her daughter agrees.

"It's fun," Nah-Jahae says, "and a place where people would want to belong."

Nah-Jahae Bolds developed leadership skills and began to flourish through her participation in a day camp program for youth at the Y.

PHOTO BY RON NABITY

"It's fun, and a place where people would want to belong."

NAH-JAHAE BOLDS
YMCA youth program participant

Youth Development

All children should have the opportunity to realize their full potential. The YMCA offers several programs to foster positive growth in youth, so they can become successful adults who contribute to their community. Programs at the YMCA focus on building the whole person, working toward having a sound mind, good spirit and being physically fit. Here are some other facts about youth programs at the YMCA:

- In a typical month, 550 children participate in YMCA swim lessons.
- Numerous classes are available, including a comprehensive aquatics program which teaches kids how to swim and be safe around water.
- Nearly 1,000 children are enrolled in child care and after-school programs at the YMCA.
- Numerous organizations partner with the YMCA to make youth programs possible.
- Programs are open to all children, regardless of socioeconomic background.

FINDING STRENGTH IN GROUP CLASSES

Barbara Colton has been able to stop the progression of osteoporosis by taking group fitness classes at the YMCA.

PHOTO BY RON NABITY

Woman improves her health and physical fitness at the Y

by Meredith J. Graham

In 2011, about a year after Barbara Colton joined the YMCA, she received news from her physician. Her low bone density had gotten worse, and she was diagnosed with osteoporosis in her spine.

Barbara opted against medication, choosing instead to work on her osteoporosis on her own. She had been taking a few fitness classes at the Y, but after her diagnosis, she decided to try workouts that targeted her spine.

"I had another bone scan this past December, and it showed it hadn't gotten any worse," Barbara says. "It wasn't better, either — but you don't expect it to get any better."

Barbara credits her classes at the YMCA with helping her strengthen her spine to the point that the osteoporosis has stopped progressing. She started out with the Healthy Back class. When she got to talking with her instructor about why she was taking that class, he recommended Strength & Conditioning, which uses weights in a small group atmosphere.

She's also taken pilates, which strengthens the core, but the twice weekly Strength & Conditioning has kept her interest and motivation the most.

"There's no question that my upper

body strength has improved," Barbara says. "I can see it in what I'm able to do. As you get older, it's a battle to slow the progression of anything, as opposed to improving it. Like osteoporosis — if you can stop the progression, that's good."

The YMCA has offered Barbara more than just classes and improved physical fitness. It's a place where she feels comfortable trying new things and where she gets support from her peers as well as staff. She's become friendly with some of her regular classmates, making coming to the Y a social experience as well as one focused on her fitness and health.

"I just love the Y. It's a very diverse, community-oriented and friendly place," she says. "In contrast to other health clubs, which I have belonged to and not used over the years, the Y is very accommodating to a wide range of people."

Barbara points to the array of classes and activities for seniors as a reason she was attracted to the YMCA in the first place. The cost is affordable and Barbara appreciates the welcoming environment.

"There's a lot of attention to health. There are health fairs, senior fairs, classes specifically for people with

diabetes," Barbara says. "One woman was in one of my classes, and it turned out she'd lost more than 100 pounds. She came and engaged in a lot of activities, swam so many laps a day, walked so many steps. She used the Y for that. I think it's a wonderful resource."

"I just love the Y. It's a very diverse, community-oriented and friendly place."

BARBARA COLTON
YMCA member

Healthy Living

Teaching people how to be healthy is a key component of YMCA programs. Whether showing youth how to grow their own fruits and vegetables, offering seniors a fitness program or helping people learn how to manage their diabetes, the YMCA is committed to promoting healthy living through its programs and offerings. Here are some of the ways the YMCA helps people of all ages stay healthy:

- YMCA is becoming one of the largest providers of senior health and fitness programs. More than 2,200 seniors participate in YMCA programs.
- YMCA worked with first lady Michelle Obama's organization Partnership for a Healthy America to develop Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) guidelines for implementation in YMCA youth programs.
- Facilities include healthy vending machines. Water is the drink of choice for all activities.
- YMCA staff teach kids how to make healthy choices and balance work and play.

TAKING THE PLUNGE

YMCA unites friends who give back

by Edgar Sanchez

For years, Alex Aragon avoided rivers and other bodies of water. Unable to swim, he kept his distance. Until one day, when he stepped into the swimming pool at the Sacramento Central YMCA — and froze.

"Alex was so afraid, he stood in the shallow end — and no way would he take his feet off the bottom of the pool," remembers Alex's friend, Todd Burton.

The two met in 2002, after they started visiting the Y. Alex, a 1998 Kennedy High School graduate who has Down Syndrome, was in an exercise class. Todd was using the Y's pool to help relieve back pain. Among other woes, Todd suffers from seven herniated discs caused by motorcycle accidents. After meeting in the Y's weight room, the two became friends. Then, Alex asked Todd to teach him to swim.

"Alex said he didn't want to be afraid of water any more," Todd says.

After three years of almost weekly lessons, Alex was a swimmer. He learned freestyle swimming, the breaststroke and the backstroke. He went on to win at least two swimming medals in the Special Olympics.

Now, 12 years later, Alex is a volunteer swimming coach in the very pool where he first took the plunge.

"Alex has lost all fear," Todd says. "Now he helps other kids who are afraid of the water not to be afraid."

Todd helps them, too. Every Thursday, he and Alex coach students together through the Y's Special Needs Aquatics Program. Most of their students are bused to the Y from special-ed programs at local schools. Todd and Alex also coach youngsters without disabilities.

"I like to teach the kids how to swim," Alex says.

Alex and Todd work alongside other Y coaches and lifeguards. They demonstrate various techniques in the 75-foot-long pool, then swim beside the students as they practice.

Social responsibility is one of the tenets espoused by the YMCA — a principle Alex and Todd embrace by giving back to others. Alex has been a Y volunteer for four years; Todd for 10 years.

Todd says volunteering gives him back as much as he puts in.

"I'm in constant pain, and this makes life worth living," Todd says with tears in his eyes. "[Volunteering] just lifts my spirits."

Todd, a certified diver, dreams of opening his own swimming academy, while Alex wants to be a professional swim coach.

Alex's father, Crescencio Aragon, is grateful for the experiences and opportunities Alex has had thanks to the Y.

"The YMCA provides opportunities for all," he says. "And Todd is a formidable young man. He taught my son to swim and became his best friend. Todd is like family to us."

Alex and Todd's story inspires others, says Ali Amundson, YMCA Aquatics Coordinator for the Sacramento area.

"Their friendship and bond is something I admire greatly," she says.

"[Volunteering] just lifts my spirits."

TODD BURTON
YMCA member and volunteer



Alex Aragon, left, and Todd Burton are friends who have been YMCA members for years, and now give back as volunteer swimming instructors for youth.

PHOTO BY TARAS GARCIA

Social Responsibility

From volunteers to the staff, the YMCA adheres to four core values: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Modeling those behaviors to youth teaches them how to treat people with respect and to empathize. Kids at the YMCA also learn the importance of investing in their community and how to be good stewards of the environment. Here are some ways the YMCA embodies the four core values of social responsibility in its programs:

- Y-Assist fund provided \$495,000 in scholarships for underprivileged youth, families and seniors to participate in programs in 2013.
- The Counselor in Training program offers 60 youth a chance to get hands-on training and commit to providing 40 hours of volunteer service.
- YMCA employs 220 staff members, many of whom are students from Sacramento State, Sacramento City College or American River College, helping develop the future workforce of the region.
- YMCA partnered with Carbon Lighthouse to reduce its carbon footprint by replacing lighting fixtures and improving HVAC systems to be more energy efficient.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY

State Street Bank supports YMCA of Superior California

by Mike Blount

There's more to a job than working 9 to 5 every day, according to Victor Rappaselli. As a Vice President of State Street Bank in Sacramento, Victor works with his company to partner with local nonprofits and organize volunteer opportunities in the community.

"I like the YMCA because of how it gives back to the community," Victor says. "There are programs for everyone — from day care and youth programs to providing the elderly a safe place to meet and exercise. The YMCA encompasses everything State Street Bank was trying to do in the community."

Headquartered in Boston, State Street Bank is an international company with more than 29,000 employees worldwide. Over the last four years State Street Bank has contributed \$50,000 in grants and 950 volunteer hours through their Global Outreach program. In an effort to encourage volunteering in the community, the bank also offers three paid days off for volunteering.

"From my perspective, it's about establishing strong community partnerships and encouraging our staff to give back through good corporate citizenship," Victor

says. "For many of our staff, this is their first job out of college; we're cultivating more than a 9-to-5 mentality. We're teaching them the importance of becoming a part of the community and how to make a difference."

**"I like the YMCA
because of how it
gives back to the
community."**

VICTOR RAPPASELLI, CPA
Vice President of State Street Bank

Victor says he is proud of the work the company has accomplished in the community, and the YMCA values the contributions of corporate partners like State Street. As a nonprofit, the YMCA of Superior California funds its programs with help from donors

like State Street Bank.

Through grants and volunteer hours, State Street Bank renovated the outdoor playground and track at the Sacramento Central YMCA. Volunteers removed the old grass and weeds and replaced them with new sod, built retaining walls, put down crushed granite for the track and had steps built connecting the upper basketball court with the lower field. Volunteers took out old, unsafe playground equipment and installed new play structures. They also installed planter boxes so children could learn about healthy eating and sustainability.

Today, the track and field area has been revitalized and youth are using it for both sports and regular exercise. Now that the grass is green and the equipment is safe, the day care kids enjoy the field and playground throughout the year. The field is utilized during the summer for both youth sports and day camp. Year-round the area is filled with both kids and adults learning the value of exercise, healthy living and teamwork.

Victor Rappaselli, CPA, a Vice President of State Street Bank, says a large part of the company's mission is to give back to the community. State Street Bank has given the YMCA in Sacramento numerous grants and 950 volunteer hours over the last four years.

PHOTO BY RON NABITY



Support Your Local Y

There are several ways to give to YMCA of Superior California, including a regular gift through your employer or estate plan. You can donate weekly, monthly or make a one-time gift in person, online or over the telephone.

VISIT ymcasuperiorcal.org to donate online.

CALL 916.452.9622 to make a donation by phone.

DROP OFF or mail your donation to the YMCA of Superior California main office at 1926 V St., Sacramento, CA 95818.



Gregory Paxton gives \$3 to \$4 every week because he believes in what the YMCA of Superior California is doing in the communities it serves.

PHOTO BY RON NABITY

GIVING WHAT YOU CAN

Individuals make a difference by Mike Blount

Gregory Paxton believes in what the YMCA of Superior California is doing. Even though he doesn't have a large monthly income, he still makes a point to donate to the YMCA every week. On average, Gregory donates about \$3 to \$4 every week — sometimes more and sometimes less. But he gives what he can because he wants to ensure that everyone will have access to YMCA programs in the future.

Through his medical group, the 49-year-old gets access to the YMCA, where he works out everyday. At the YMCA, staff give Gregory his Body Mass Index (BMI) and help him with his weight loss goals.

"I struggle with my weight a lot, so I go to the YMCA to get a physical, vigorous workout," Gregory says. "I also go there to socialize

with my peers. I can give them pointers about working out or they can give me pointers. I really enjoy meeting people at the gym."

Gregory wants everyone to give to the YMCA because without its programs, he believes many people would not have any other resources. Gregory's contributions go toward the Y-Assist scholarship fund, which sponsors children and families who otherwise may not be able to participate due to financial hardship.

"Giving to the YMCA is important because it's giving back to the community," Gregory says. "I'm using the gym, and I want to feel like I'm giving back instead of just taking. No one has asked me to do it. I just want to give what I can. It's something that I want to do, and I hope more people that can give will donate to the YMCA. It's really benefiting the community."

A PLACE FOR EVERYONE

Q & A with YMCA CEO Jay Lowden

by Mike Blount

As CEO of the YMCA of Superior California, Jay Lowden oversees all of the programs and offerings serving a nine-county region in Northern California. More than 29,000 people were served by YMCA of Superior California programs in 2013. In order to continue to meet that demand, Jay collaborates with local organizations, businesses and individuals to identify the needs of the community and make it a better place for the people who live there.

How does the YMCA impact the region?

The YMCA of Superior California serves a lot of people in different areas. Since 2009, we have tripled the number of people involved in our programs, and our programs serve a very diverse set of community needs. We can't do it all on our own, so that's why it's important that we continue to develop partnerships in the community.

We partnered with the Sacramento Superior Court to provide child care for children involved in the court system. We work with the city of Sacramento to operate some of its municipal pools during the summer. We also employ 220 people locally. We have a lot of students from Sacramento State, Sacramento City College and American River College that work for us part time, and we have 1,500 volunteers that work with us annually. That includes people from our board of directors to sports coaches.

What are some future plans of the YMCA?

We're always looking for opportunities to work with others to serve the community. We've grown from 9,000 to 29,000 in the last four years. I think we can do that again in the next four years. We're committed to doing what we can to make life more positive for kids and families in the region. To do that, we feel we need to take those things that are our greatest assets — programming, working with volunteers and kids — and combine them with the strengths of a business or municipality to have a better chance to make a positive impact to the community.

What are the values of the YMCA and how are they embedded with programs?

We have four core values that we adhere to, from our volunteers all the way up to our staff: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Those values are carried out in everything that we do. We talk about those values with kids in our programs and we're teaching them to treat others how they want to be treated. They're learning how to resolve conflict in a positive manner, be good stewards of the earth and be socially responsible. It goes back to building a better person and being a value to their community.

How does the YMCA serve a diverse set of community needs?

We want everyone to be involved. We feel it's very important that if there's a segment of the population that's not being served, we find a way to serve them through our programs. We have an extremely diverse membership, both financial and background, and the environment at the Y is very inclusive.

When it comes to identifying community needs, sometimes it's a member or volunteer that brings something to our attention. Our board of directors also helps identify community needs. We also have regular focus groups and talk to key people in

the community to ask them where the YMCA needs to be moving forward and what we should be doing. We talk to and develop relationships with many people that lead us where we need to go.

How important are local partners to the YMCA mission?

We couldn't do what we do without them. Whether they are funding a program or partnering with us so we can utilize space they're not using, those relationships are extremely vital to our mission. In today's world where economics are still tough and everyone is trying to stretch everything they can out of every dollar, these partnerships are very important to us.

Jay Lowden is CEO of YMCA of Superior California.

PHOTO BY RON NABITY



IT'S YOUR YMCA

Since 1866, the YMCA of Superior California has worked to strengthen its local communities by developing youth, promoting healthy living and inspiring social responsibility. The Y is committed to addressing the needs of the whole community, from kids and teens to adults and seniors, and ensuring that all are welcome and able to participate. One in four participants receives some kind of financial assistance from the Y in order to access a broad range of programs, including child care, youth sports, aquatics, senior wellness, summer camps, fitness classes, community safety, after-school programs, and more. But the YMCA can't do this work alone. It relies on the support of members, donors and volunteers to continue building our communities together. Get involved with your Y — join, give or volunteer today.

FIND YOUR Y

The YMCA of Superior California serves Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties.

www.ymcasuperiorcal.org

info@ymcasuperiorcal.org

SACRAMENTO CENTRAL YMCA

2021 W St.
Sacramento, CA 95818
916.452.9622

OROVILLE YMCA

1684 Robinson St.
Oroville, CA 95965
530.533.9622

FEATHER RIVER YMCA

530.933.9423

YOLO COUNTY YMCA

1300 College St.
Woodland, CA 95695
530.662.1086

BEAR VALLEY Y CAMP

916.452.9622

YMCA OF SUPERIOR CALIFORNIA

Association Office
1926 V St.
Sacramento, CA 95818
916.452.9622

GIVE

Gifts from individuals and businesses help the YMCA keep its programs available for all. Every gift makes a difference. Visit www.ymcasuperiorcal.org and click "Give" or donate directly at your local Y.

JOIN

Anyone can join the YMCA. Go online at www.ymcasuperiorcal.org to find programs, facilities and services, or visit or call your local Y location. The Y offers financial assistance for those unable to pay fees in full.

VOLUNTEER

With a focus on Youth Development, Healthy Living and Social Responsibility, Y volunteers give youth, families and seniors the resources and support they need to be healthy, confident, connected and secure. Contact your local Y for opportunities.

