



THIS IS Y.

A Newsletter for Donors, Members, Volunteers and Friends of the Y • April 2022

OCCU Foundation propels fundraising for new Y

A \$100,000 gift from the OCCU Foundation propels our Y's fundraising efforts for a new Y forward and promises to support the financial literacy of our community's youth!

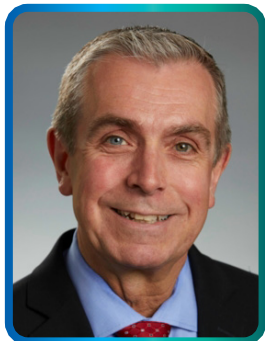
"We are beyond grateful for the vision of the OCCU Foundation," says Eugene Family YMCA CEO Brian Steffen. "The new Y will broaden the scope of our programs, services and collaborations in order to transform our community's abilities to meet acute needs, particularly the needs of youth. With OCCU Foundation's partnership, we will address the significant gaps in understanding personal finances for our youth and critical decision-making throughout a lifetime."

The donation means that OCCU Foundation will name the **1,150-square-foot Youth Learning Lab** and join us as a **Financial Literacy Partner**.

YOUTH LEARNING LAB



"Not only is it vital for our youth to be introduced to financial literacy at an early age, but studies also show that financial illiteracy negatively impacts the mental health of many adults," says Y Chief Development Officer Danielle Uhlhorn. **"This partnership creates opportunities to address this issue by incorporating learning activities in our various youth development programs** and in casual 'Lunch and Learn' sessions developed for different age groups."



The OCCU Foundation has granted more than \$2 million since 2018 to projects that advance learning, improve well-being and support communities.

"We are thrilled to contribute to an organization that supports so many people in our community at all stages of their lives," says Ron Neumann, OCCU Foundation Board Chair and OCCU President & CEO. **"We are excited to partner with the YMCA to expand young people's understanding of finances, while supporting their work to create healthy, thriving communities."**

GIFTS FROM THE HEART:

JOHN HAAKANSON has been using the Y for decades and knows the power of this community organization.

He lived across the street when he was 4 years old, and he and his daughter participated in infant-parent swim classes and his daughter played basketball through the Y. John himself relearned how to swim at the Eugene Y when he was an adult, and he now comes regularly to ride the bike and do strength workouts.

"I gravitated to the Y when I returned to Eugene in 1991," he says. **"The mission of the Y is evident. It brings families together and keeps people like me healthy!"**

One of his fondest memories is of his daughter sinking 7 of 8 free throws at age 11 in the Y gym during one of her games.

"It was pure magic," he says.

He donated to the Campaign for a New Y so that more families can experience the magic of the Y.



John's sentiments are echoed by other donors:

RAINBOW VALLEY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION donated \$25,000 to the project and secured the naming opportunity for the whirlpool in the new Y.

"We know intimately how flawed the current building is and yet the Y is able to do incredible work serving the community," says YMCA Board Member Chip Radebaugh, General Manager and one of 9 partners at Rainbow Valley. **"With a fully functioning, ADA-accessible, energy-efficient facility, the possibilities are endless.** It is like we have been serving the community with one hand tied behind our back."



Why Donors Give to the New Y

THE NEW Y

DEPLOYED LOGIX offered \$250,000 for a challenge match in early 2022 to continue the momentum.

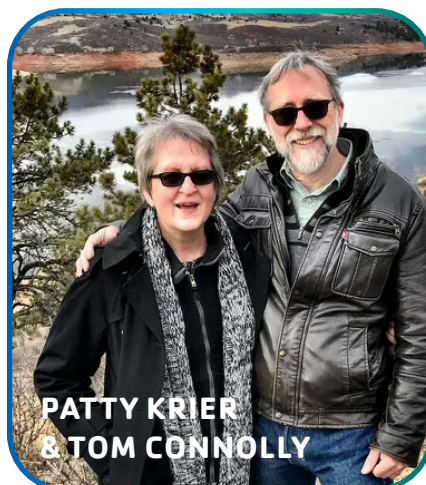
“We have really high hopes of more people having access to the Y and seeing the difference it can make in the community,” says Katie Urhausen, a lifelong Eugenean and spokesperson/co-founder for Deployed Logix (DLX), a company that provides equipment for first responders around the world. **“Without community, what do you have? COVID has really shown us that we need each other.”**



When Urhausen presented the donation opportunity to the DLX Board, they eagerly stepped forward to sponsor the warm-water Therapy Pool in the new Y's Aquatics Center.

“My oldest daughter is severely disabled—she was born missing part of her brain and also has a still-undiagnosed syndrome,” Katie says of her daughter, now 10. **“A big source of joy in her life is being in the water. The Therapy Pool will be in honor of my daughter Jovie and her friends. Our vision is that it provides a source of comfort and joy for all types of people.”**

The New Y project inspired DLX because it is poised to be a welcoming, easily-accessible, engaging facility for those with disabilities. Not only will **the warm-water pool provide access (through a lift) and opportunities for individuals with physical or developmental disabilities**, but also the Health & Wellness Center will have expanded adaptive equipment with programs specifically designed to accommodate those with mobility and other challenges.



Longtime Y members **PATTY KRIER AND HER HUSBAND TOM CONNOLLY** donated \$5,000 to the campaign for a new Y.

“The Y did not skip a beat in serving this community through the pandemic. Everything just blended seamlessly from being in-person at the Y to staying at home and being active,” Patty says. **“We can’t say enough good things about the Y. The new Y will offer a large, open community space that this 1950s building simply cannot provide.”**

Y Expands Health Programs to Combat High Blood Pressure



1 IN 3 American Adults have
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE



Only about **1/2** of people have their
condition under control

Launched in March, the YMCA's brand-new Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program is designed to help participants with hypertension lower their blood pressure by following an evidence-based program that combines:

- blood pressure self-monitoring
- nutrition education seminars
- personalized support

More than 26 percent of Lane County residents have hypertension, according to the county's 2019 Community Health Status Assessment.

When Dr. Paula Ciesielski's patients had an elevated blood pressure reading, she knew she needed more information.

"There are no symptoms of high blood pressure and yet it is a serious condition over time. I needed to know my patients' typical blood pressure reading to know if exercise, diet and nutrition was the appropriate intervention or if I needed to prescribe medication."

—Paula Ciesielski
Retired Physician
Y Board Member

This program is made possible by grant funding awarded by the US Department of Health & Human Services through Y-USA.



The program is facilitated by Healthy Heart Ambassadors, appointed and trained by the Y.



eugeneymca.org

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Y Steps Up in Response to Youth Mental Health Crisis

Hearing the call to support preteens during a years-long pandemic, the **Eugene Family YMCA has committed to offering regular Middle School Madness nights**, which provide opportunities for middle schoolers to socialize, be physically active, play new games and leave with a sense of belonging.

Middle School Madness gives youth a chance to play group games in the gym, eat snacks, play board and card games in the lobby, and try their hand at interactive video games—at a time when the facility is closed to members. Up to 60 middle schoolers can participate at a time.

“Middle schoolers need peer connection and guidance from trusted adults to thrive,” says Holly Kriz Anderson, Senior Director of Youth Programs for the Eugene Family YMCA. “Not only do these nights offer an exclusive opportunity for middle schoolers to experience the Y on their own, but they also help these youth make lasting connections with their peers and fun, caring adults.”



“Mental health challenges in children, adolescents, and young adults are real and widespread. The COVID-19 pandemic further altered their experiences at home, school, and in the community, and the effect on their mental health has been devastating. The future well-being of our country depends on how we support and invest in the next generation.”

—Dr. Vivek Murthy
U.S. Surgeon General



The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Children’s Hospital Association declared a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health in October 2021: **The pandemic has disrupted peer interactions that are a critical developmental task during adolescence**, leaving adolescents at higher risk for anxiety and depression because of social isolation and reliance on technology for social interactions.”

Y CEO Brian Steffen met with Dr. Murthy during a presentation in Eugene in 2019.

Artist of Iconic Pool Mural to Design Work in New Y

It was at the Y that Esteban Camacho Steffensen discovered his talent and passion for painting large-scale murals.

He was only in high school, and didn't even know that you could have a career as a muralist. But his design in 2005 for the entire length of the Y's **Aquatics Center east wall revealed what he was meant to do.**

Since then, Costa Rican-born Eugene artist Esteban has created murals around the world—in Costa Rica, Spain, Italy, France, China and the United States.

And just like the piece in the Y, he continues to focus on the natural world: often focusing on climate change, habitat degradation or indigenous peoples' relationship with the land.

Similar to the Y's mission to grow and nurture youth, **Esteban also connects art with education, working with local youth and students to design, paint and produce the final result.**

"Creating the Y's mural helped me hone my artistic practice, discover who I am and gave me an important sense of responsibility," he says. "I hope that the students who work with me learn something new about themselves, explore their creativity and impact the world."

After traveling the world for commissioned artwork, Esteban has been back in Eugene since June 2021 working with the Lane Arts Council—and spending some time thinking about designs for the new Y.

"To launch my career in the old Y facility and then bring all that I've learned since then to a piece in the new Y is a dream come true," he says.

"I'm thrilled that kids have been a part of the ocean landscape in the Y pool for the last 17 years, but I'm even more excited to breathe new landscapes and ideas into the new Y."

—Esteban Camacho Steffensen, Artist

Esteban's artwork and placement has not yet been determined inside the new Y although he would like to "use art to communicate the interconnectivity of the human and natural world."

"We regret that we can't bring the painted cinderblock wall in the pool area and all of the creativity, learning and passion that it represents to the new Y with us," says CEO Brian Steffen. **"But we cherish the still-to-come incredible gift from the same artist who was inspired to pursue his creativity here as a teenager.** We know that Esteban will create another memorable piece that thousands of families will enjoy for a century to come in the new Y."

Stay tuned as we discover how Esteban's art will be incorporated into spaces at the new Y! He is particularly excited to make sure youth are engaged with the pieces.

Look for prints and photographs of Esteban's artwork on the Y's Art for All Wall from August 1 to October 1.



The New Y: Creating Connections in a New Community Wellness Center



“The new Y is going to build social capital, which will spiral out in the community in ways that we won’t necessarily be able to quantify but will strengthen and grow the entire community.”

—Kendra Goldberg, Trustee of the Chambers Family Foundation and co-chair of the Community Phase of the New Y Capital Campaign

There is no doubt that humans are inherently social creatures and that being social is important for our health and wellness. The COVID-19 pandemic proved that isolation leads to loneliness, anxiety and depression, which has worsened and now affects one in every 3 American adults.

The antidote to isolation is connection.

The new Y has been designed with welcoming spaces where kids, seniors and families can gather and connect. The layout of the rooms allows for flexibility so that spaces can be connected or partitioned based on the activity inside.

The Teaching Kitchen and adjacent Community Room, for example, allows **families to learn about healthy, affordable meals** in a nutrition and cooking class and then eat together in a relaxed

environment. On other evenings, this same space will host a potluck for group fitness classes or the youth track team’s annual awards ceremony.

The Community Room alone can host afterschool clubs or a local service organization’s monthly meeting. It will be inviting enough for an individual to want to relax with a book or chat with other parents while their children finish swim practice.

A second floor Multi-Purpose Room allows for dedicated space for our **healthy living classes, such as Diabetes Prevention, Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring and LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA for cancer survivors**. This large community gathering space is central to bringing people together

to address a common concern.



Two dedicated youth development rooms spark creativity, passion and the imagination as the high-tech

maker spaces and cutting-edge STEM activities provide the opportunity for learning, tinkering and exploring.

Even the Welcome Center, where members will check in for classes, is open, airy and comfortable—with space for meeting a friend and catching up before a workout.

..... SEE BACK PAGE TO JOIN THE CAMPAIGN FOR A NEW Y!

SPONSORING THE EUGENE FAMILY YMCA



New partnership promises to serve more cancer survivors

The Willamette Valley Cancer Institute has generously donated \$25,000 to relaunch the **LIVESTRONG®** at the YMCA program and ensure its viability in the future.

LIVESTRONG at the YMCA is a research-based physical activity and well-being program **designed to help adult cancer survivors achieve their holistic health goals.**

"This generous donation could not have come at a better time," says **LIVESTRONG** Program

Coordinator Colleen Hogan. "When COVID-19 shuttered the Eugene Y, cancer patients lost access to a program proven to improve fitness and quality of life, decrease cancer-related fatigue and mitigate anxiety and depression. Isolation and loneliness have only gotten worse during COVID-19, while cancer diagnoses have continued to occur."

The Eugene Family YMCA was the first YMCA in Oregon to launch the evidence-based program, founded in partnership with the Livestrong

Foundation in 2007. Since its inception in January 2016, the Eugene Y's **LIVESTRONG** at the YMCA program has empowered more than 150 cancer survivors to improve functional capacity and to increase their quality of life through a 12-week, small group physical activity program led by specially trained instructors.

"Our oncologists refer patients to the **LIVESTRONG** at the YMCA program regularly because they trust the Y and know that exercise, community support and socialization leads to positive health outcomes," says Steve Baron, Executive Director of the Willamette Valley Cancer Institute. "We are thrilled to ensure the



"Our patients' care and well-being are paramount. We know the Y cares for our patients with the same level of compassion and understanding that we do, and offers exceptional expertise in the exercise arena. Knowing that our patients can enroll in the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program after their diagnosis, surgery or treatment gives us great peace of mind."

—Dr. Benjamin Cho, Willamette Valley Cancer Institute Oncologist



relaunch of this invaluable program and its sustainability into the future."

For more information, email: livestrong@eugeneymca.org

New Y Site Officially Owned by the Y



In February, the Eugene Family YMCA made the final land payment and signed the closing documents for the property on the **southwest corner of Hilyard Street and 24th Avenue—the future home of the new Y!**

The 5.42 acres of land were purchased from the 4J School District in four payments, totaling \$2.85 million, over the course of the last six years. The property was once home to Roosevelt Middle School, which was rebuilt on the adjacent land in 2016.

While the land was owned by the 4J School District, the Eugene Family YMCA acknowledges that the land is located on Kalapuya Ilihi, the traditional Indigenous homeland of the Kalapuya people. Following treaties between 1851 to 1855, Kalapuya people were dispossessed of their Indigenous homeland by the U.S. Government and were forcibly removed to what are now the Grand Ronde and Siletz reservations.

The purchase of the land signifies one of the last steps before groundbreaking, scheduled for July as long as the \$5 million in fundraising during the community phase is complete.

“The location of the new Y was not finalized at the start of our Capital Campaign 8 years ago,” says Eugene Family YMCA Board President Joe Carmichael. “We explored several sites over the years. We are thrilled to finally close on an ideal location adjacent to a middle school that offers views of Spencer Butte, a central location on a bus line and access to city walking paths and facilities.”



Y CEO Brian Steffen and Y Board President Joe Carmichael celebrate after signing the closing documents for the new Y property. The signing represents 6 years of work to secure the location!

Campaign for a New Y Endorsed by Lane County Medical Society

The Capital Campaign for a New Y has received a coveted endorsement from the Lane County Medical Society, a professional organization of physician members who advocate for the health of the community.



"We, as physicians, know the importance of health as well as community, and there is an institution that embodies both—our local YMCA," says Dr. Kevin Modeste, Lane County Medical Society 2022 Board President.

"The physicians at Lane County Medical Society have seen the benefits this institution brings to our community as a pillar of support for families and encouragement toward a healthy lifestyle. Some of us have even used the facilities at the beloved Y right next to our patients. LCMS is happy to endorse the YMCA and support their Capital Campaign for a new building."

The Lane County Medical Society has approximately 800 physician members. A 15-member board oversees the association, and votes on endorsements. **The New Y project is one of very few endorsements in the society's 133-year history.**

"Expansion of the Eugene Family YMCA's services represents a vital tool to address the social determinants of health and bend the medical cost curve. The New Y will be Grand Central Station for individuals' health journeys—some focused on maintaining fitness or getting started with exercise and others enrolled in programs

for specific health risks or medical conditions. Everyone at the Y will receive the mental health benefits of making new friends, being greeted warmly by Y staff and learning something new in their classes," says Eugene Family YMCA CEO Brian Steffen.

The Eugene Family YMCA, founded in Eugene in 1887, shares Lane County Medical Society's longevity in this community, which means both organizations have a unique understanding of Lane County and its evolving needs.

The Lane County Medical Society recognized not only the Y programming pre-COVID that serves more than 18,000 people a year, but also the Y's swift response to a global pandemic to prevent social isolation, loneliness and inactivity, which can all lead to a decline in mental health.

"COVID-19 showed the strength of the Y during incredible hardship," says Lane County Medical Society Executive Director Shondra Holliday. "Our community needs a strong, efficiently designed Y to focus on the situation at hand."



THIS IS Y Endorsed by:



Closer than Ever: Join Us and Donate to Your New Y!

Your support is critical for the completion of this campaign, which will help thousands more individuals find health and wellness in Lane County!

If you are interested in supporting the campaign for a new Y, consider the following:

- Make a one-time or monthly recurring donation
- Checks can be made payable to the Eugene Family YMCA, 2055 Patterson St., Eugene, OR 97405. Be sure to include "New Y Campaign" on the memo line.
- Online donations can be made by using your camera app on this code, or by visiting eugeneymca.org/donate
- Consider a letter writing campaign to friends, family and colleagues inviting them to join you in the campaign for a new Y
- Donate appreciated stock



Expand your impact by considering a multi-year pledge:

\$10/month for three years = \$360
 \$25/month for three years = \$900
 \$50/month for three years = \$1,800
 \$100/month for three years = \$3,600

QUESTIONS? Contact Danielle Uhlhorn, Chief Development Officer: danielle@eugeneymca.org

THIS IS Y.



BUILDING A THRIVING COMMUNITY WHERE EVERYONE REACHES THEIR FULL POTENTIAL