



COMPASSION IN ACTION

A Newsletter for Donors, Members, Volunteers and Friends of the Y • July 2021

Your support made pandemic child care possible

Enyo Dzata, a pediatric nurse practitioner, and her husband Sasha Smith who works at Slocum Center for Orthopedics & Sports Medicine, **needed to find care for their 2 young children in order to continue working** when school and their daycare abruptly closed in Spring 2020.

Because of the childcare collaboration between the Y, the city, Lane County and local school districts, Zoé, age 4, was enrolled in Y care for the first time.

"Our family hadn't used Y child care before," Enyo says. "It was a little challenging at first for me knowing that I was dropping off my child in a new environment and, because of COVID restrictions, I couldn't see her classroom."



Thank you, supporters!

In order to limit the spread of the virus, families left their children with Y staff at the door. Parents communicated with teachers through Zoom, email or phone calls.

"Zoé loved it," Enyo says. "She always talked about Miss Debbie and the walks they would go on. **I know how much work it is to take care of kids, and the Y staff did an exceptional job—they are gifted caregivers.** It was amazing to see how people's expertise, knowledge and gifts came out during this crisis."

They were so impressed with the Y's compassionate care that they've continued Zoé's enrollment since those first critical weeks—and added her sister Mercy for summer camp.

"Zoé always felt welcomed and excited," Enyo says. "**Y staff understood her energy level and what she needed. They nurtured her at a time when we all needed support.**"

When Enyo looks back on this pandemic year, she says she feels gratitude.

"It was such a scary time and yet it was beautiful to see how people came together to support each other," she says. "**The Y took on this new role out of love for the community.** The staff's expertise and knowledge about caring for kids during difficult situations meant that this past year has been a joy for Zoé."

A message from the Eugene Family YMCA Board President

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and I step into my new role as YMCA Board President, I am struck by an overwhelming sense of gratitude. This year has been incredibly difficult for an organization built on serving people in-person, and yet, **Y staff developed solutions to continue to support isolated individuals and working families.** Even with those innovative ideas, this transformative year would not have been **possible without the thousands of Y**

members, donors and supporters, standing by us as we navigated challenges—often daily.

And even with the crisis at hand, we've made significant progress toward a new flagship facility. The reauthorization of the state's \$15

million in lottery-backed bonds ensures that we will break ground in the near future and **launch a whole new era for the Eugene Family YMCA.**

This milestone is particularly important to me because I am following a tradition set by my grandmother, Ingrid Carmichael, who was born in Eugene in 1912. She joined the Y in 1955, with my grandfather Lorin, and helped raise capital funds for construction of the current Y facility at 2055 Patterson Street.

In 1962, at the age of 50, a physician's exam revealed Ingrid's weak heart. The doctor, a Y member who volunteered his services at the Y, prescribed an immediate **start to an exercise regimen to reverse the critical situation.**

Ingrid faithfully worked out at the Y and could be seen in fitness classes many days a week up to

the last week of her life in 2009. **She saw the Y as not just a place for fitness, but a place to find deep friendships, support and love.** Ingrid, who also served on the Y Board for 10 years, lived to 97 years old.

I joined the Board because I understand the power of our YMCA in this community. If it weren't for the YMCA, my grandmother would have likely died of heart failure in the 60s. Instead, I got 31 years with her and was able to see **how much fuller her life was because of the Y.**

Given my family's deep connections to the Y, it is incredibly meaningful to be able to honor my grandmother's legacy.

The future of the Y is bright! The coming years will see the Y not only construct a new facility, but also broaden and deepen community collaborations, launch new programs to fight illnesses and disease, and expand our work to help close the education opportunity gap that exists for far too many families.

Thank you for your support.

To a bright future,



Joe Carmichael
YMCA Board President

Please join us in welcoming Joe Carmichael as our new Board President. During the 2-year term, Matt Longtin will serve as President-Elect, former Board President Chip Radebaugh will take on the role of Treasurer, and Katie Gatlin will serve a third term as Secretary.

2021 Legislature reauthorized \$15M for new Y project

Thanks to the incredible support of our state legislators, the Legislature awarded \$15 million in state lottery-backed bonds to construct a new Y.

"We are beyond grateful that our legislators reaffirmed their confidence in this project and their commitment to our community," said Y CEO Brian Steffen. "COVID-19 had unforeseen consequences and the pause of this funding was one of them. **Thankfully, the community and donors continued to believe in the bold and impactful vision for the new Y.** They did not allow the global pandemic to disrupt the future of the Y's work in Lane County, which is critical to growing the Y's education services for children, expanding our healthy living classes, and deepening our connections and collaborations for teenagers, aging adults, and families."

In 2019, the state authorized \$15 million for the Eugene Family YMCA as part of \$273.2 million in lottery revenue bonds for 37 projects around the state. COVID-19 and the related economic decline stalled the sale of the bonds in 2020.

"The Eugene Y demonstrated its incredible community impact pre-pandemic," said Rep. Paul Holvey, D-Eugene. "The COVID crisis simply underscored the need for the Y's work in addressing critical needs. **Its rapid response for child care, virtual health and wellness, and connection for isolated individuals means that more people will emerge from COVID-19 ready to face future challenges.** I am grateful to see the Y step forward in response to the immediate challenges and to be able to significantly enhance its impact in vital ways through the new YMCA."

The \$15 million in funding, designated in Senate Bill 5534, passed the Legislature on June 26, 2021, as part of a \$445 million package. It is expected to be signed by Gov. Kate Brown by early August.

"The economic downturn due to COVID had many unintended consequences, including lengthening the timeline for building the much-needed new facility for the Eugene Family YMCA," said Rep. Nancy Nathanson, D-Eugene. "My colleagues and I took the first opportunity we could to reauthorize the state funding for the Y. **We recognize how vital this organization is for the well-being of our community,** and our community needs the Y all the more after COVID."

RECENT GIFTS TO THE NEW Y

Chambers Family Foundation

\$1,500,000

Norman and Olga Evelyn

Wildish Fund at OCF

\$100,000

Johan & Emel Mehlum

\$100,000

Jan Swanson

\$100,000

Anonymous

\$100,000

Don & Dolly Woolley

\$50,000



Families Enjoy Tuition Free Y Summer Programming

Y Summer

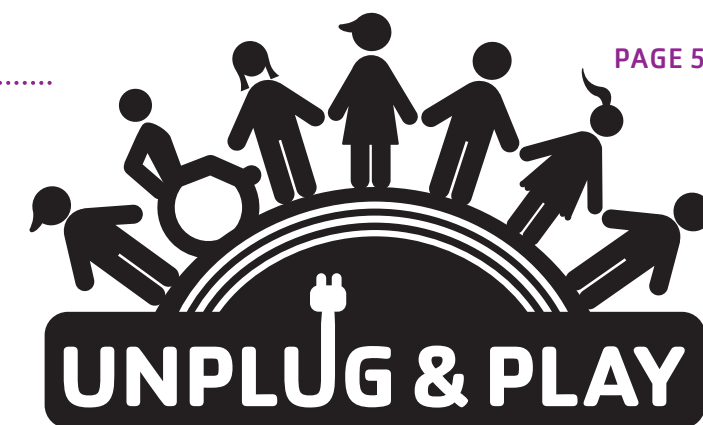


Our incredible partners have made it possible for the Y to offer summer camps and summer school enrichment programs tuition free to families.

"On the heels of a global pandemic that created so much stress for working families, it is an absolute pleasure to waive the cost to families of summer care," says Holly Kriz Anderson, Youth Development Director for the Eugene Family YMCA.

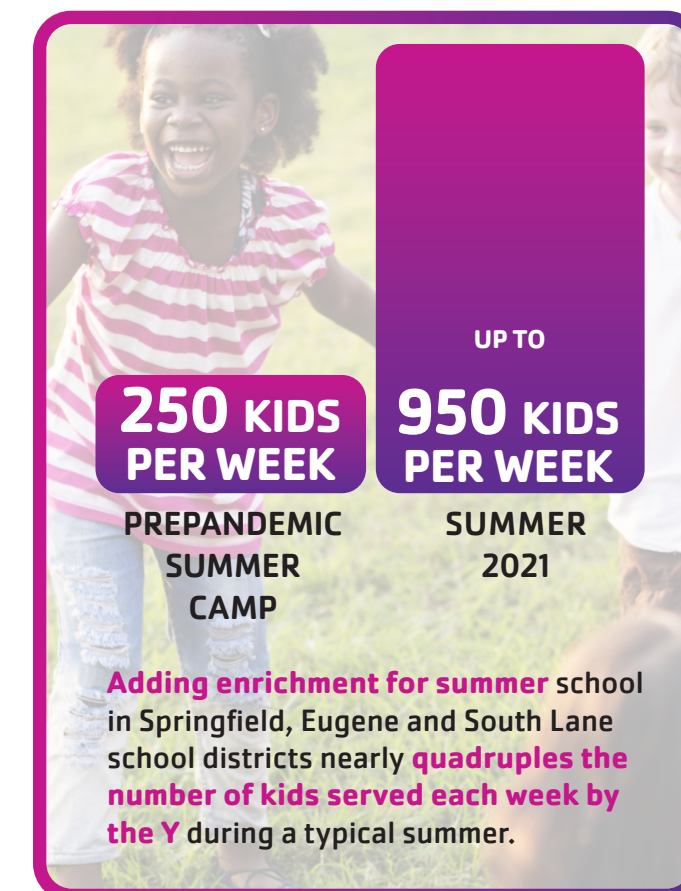
This is possible because of funding from Eugene School District 4J, Springfield and South Lane school districts, Oregon Community Foundation, Y members and longtime donors.

"We want to support giving kids their best chance to succeed academically, socially,



physically and emotionally when they return to school in the fall," said John Moriarty, Senior Program Officer for Oregon Community Foundation. "We know that high-quality programs like the Y's are exactly what children need this summer to set them up for success. Offering programs at no cost to participants means that more families can take advantage of the enrichment their children desperately need."

The Y is a recognized leader in summer programming and helping to prevent "summer slide," when children fall behind academically because they are not engaged in environments that drive their curiosity and challenge their minds. **Summer slide disproportionately affects minority youth.**



Experts predict that distance learning during COVID-19 closures have already resulted in learning loss—dubbed "COVID slide." A summer of inactivity and lack of engagement could compound the educational toll.

"Your Y is grateful that so many partners are working together to support families and children as we emerge from COVID-19," says Danielle Uhlhorn, Chief Development Officer of the Eugene Family YMCA. **"It truly takes a village to provide the breadth of programs and services the Y offers throughout Lane County and make them available to everyone regardless of financial barriers."**

Virtual classes vital to health

Without the Y's virtual fitness classes, **Richard Hildreth isn't sure he would have been able to cope physically or mentally through the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Richard, 77, took up swimming at the Y nine years ago when he needed low-impact exercise for his rheumatoid arthritis and low back pain.

He didn't know how to swim, but Y swim instructors taught Richard freestyle, which he incorporated into his exercise regimen.

To complement his lap swimming, Richard joined **Enhance@Fitness, an evidence-based senior fitness program at the Y** proven to increase cardiovascular health, muscle strength, bone density, mental sharpness, flexibility and balance.

Richard created a routine of walking to the Y three times a week for his 60-minute Enhance@Fitness class and then walking home.

When the pandemic closed businesses and isolated individuals, Richard was particularly fearful.

Not only did the virus disproportionately harm older adults, but it eliminated his access to the Y—the place where he found health and wellness.

The launch of the Y's virtual classes a few days into the government shutdown last spring was **a bright light during a dark time.**

"The Y was the only answer I knew of pre-vaccination," he says.

Richard attended the live virtual classes on Mondays and Wednesdays and found a recorded virtual class on Fridays.

"If it was not for the Y's chair fitness class, I think I would not be OK mentally and physically throughout this COVID experience," he says. "I would have deteriorated."

Richard credits the virtual chair fitness classes with his ability to travel to Washington, D.C. after he was fully vaccinated to help care for his grandson, who was born during the pandemic.

"If it was not for the Y's chair fitness class, I think I would not be OK mentally and physically throughout this COVID experience."

—Richard Hildreth



Walk It Off engages community



Terrie Pigeon and Debbie Bolton, sisters who walk every week, are so grateful WALK IT OFF is back!



The Eugene Family YMCA is thrilled to partner with Mix 94.5 to continue a decade-long tradition of encouraging movement, health and fun in Alton Baker Park every Wednesday throughout the summer: Walk It Off with the Morning Mix is now **Walk It Off With the Y.**

Terrie Pigeon and her sister Debbie Bolton are long-time Walk It Off participants and missed the **exercise, camaraderie and festive atmosphere** last year, when COVID-19 canceled the event for the safety of walkers.

"I love seeing my friends and family out there," says Terrie, a 5-year Walk It Off participant who is not a Y member. "I am active anyway with my job as a housekeeper and caregiver, but Walk It Off is special because it is a dedicated walk just for me."

Participants are welcome to walk as much or as little as they want and there are many different paths at varying lengths that can be taken from Alton Baker Park. Y fitness instructors also start and end the event with a **Y mini-class to engage participants in different kinds of movement.**

"We are so excited to be able to take this event on, especially this year when we want to walk off the social isolation from the last 18 months," says Kim Miller, Health & Wellness Director for the Eugene Family YMCA. **"Our staff are always excited to go beyond our traditional fitness offerings in our building and get out into the community to support health and well-being."**

Thank you, sponsors!



Thank you for your continued support and advocacy of your Y's work in Lane County!

TOGETHER WE CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

The Eugene Family YMCA has a vision that one day all kids, families, adults and seniors in Lane County will have equitable opportunities to improve their health and well-being and reach their full potential. Together with our supporters, we're tackling our community's most urgent needs—giving people hope for a better future and the means to achieve it. With your support, we can continue providing **Opportunities for All** by:

- Offering financial assistance for swim lessons because we believe that **every child** has a right to learn water safety skills
- Expanding our LIVE**STRONG**® at the YMCA program so that more cancer survivors can move beyond cancer in spirit, mind and body
- Providing **financial assistance** for afterschool care and summer camp to support working families
- Supporting the whole person—**emotionally, physically, mentally**—through classes like yoga, ENHANCE®FITNESS and the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program



Did you know your Y provides an average of \$35,000 in financial assistance EACH MONTH?

Please join us in continuing our impact by making a one-time gift or by becoming a monthly giver, a Y CHAMPION. With a monthly donation, you sustain critical services that the most vulnerable in our community rely on during difficult times. Creative ways to give include:

- Becoming a **Y CHAMPION**: make a one-time or monthly recurring donation.
- Giving appreciated stock: contact danielle@eugeneymca.org for details
- Legacy giving through a **bequest or charitable trust**

**DONATE
TODAY!**

