Dear YWCA Family and Friends:

As we approach the 118th anniversary of our YWCA in this community, we pause to reflect on women and girls we first met years ago. Doris called recently, to say it had been fifteen years since she was a part of “Women In Transition,” but that she remains free from addiction and earned her certification in substance abuse counseling. She is now working in the field and helping others to find the hope and help that has sustained her.

In this issue, you will read about Ashley, once a little girl in our youth programs over twenty years ago, now a human resources specialist at a partner non-profit. She writes, “I am comforted to know that a program that meant so much to me as a child is still being handled with authenticity and love. The woman I strive to be is a culmination of great examples I’ve encountered over time. Leaders like that inspire a revolving impact, encouraging women like me to show up in the world the way others have shown up for us as children. It matters and we never forget.”


In solidarity,

Soamoya N. Rankins
Board President

Kirsten D. Sikkelee
Chief Executive Officer

Healthy Cooking On A Budget

In the center of YWCA Central Carolinas’ Park Road facility is a kitchen, bustling with the creation of healthy foods prepared by Beverly McLaughlin and her team, Beverly’s Gourmet Foods. They create gourmet dishes that span gluten free, vegetarian and vegan meals, but Beverly isn’t just cooking with her team. The monthly workshop, “Healthy Cooking on a Budget,” equips participants of YWCA’s Women In Transition program with budget friendly recipes and useful cooking techniques. Beverly leads each class and instructs the participants, demonstrating how to create a week’s worth of meals.

“I wanted to show you something easy,” Beverly said as she began to show participants how to prepare an orange apple cider vinaigrette, “with items that you would have on hand. And you could make this quickly at night after work.”

The workshops cap at ten transitional housing participants, ensuring that each woman is able to ask questions about the recipe and cooking process for that month’s class. In November, the class focused on what ingredients are needed to make an organic spinach salad and chicken curry with roasted vegetables over rice.

Tips on how to best cut bell peppers, techniques for chopping onions, and how long food can be stored in a refrigerator are shared, as well as personal stories and inquiries on what participants would like to make next. After the food is created, Beverly sets dishes in front of each attendee and the group shares a meal with each other, building more community among them.

Beverly’s Gourmet Foods can be purchased from the cooler in YWCA’s lobby, as well as local farmer’s markets, Earth Fare, Whole Foods, and Reid’s.
A fear of water is a pretty common thing, but overcoming that fear can be easier than you think. Dylan McDonnell had a fear of pools until she was six years old, but this didn’t stop her from attending swim lessons at YWCA Central Carolinas. Though she was intimidated by the size of the pool, Dylan seemed to thrive in her private lessons at the age of three; so much so that after a year of lessons the swim instructor recommended she join the Orange Crush swim team.

“I was four years old,” Dylan said. “Back then the team only had 25 swimmers and I was the youngest. But I loved it and I haven’t stopped since. I like to say that Orange Crush is my winter tradition.”

Today, Dylan supports the Orange Crush swim team as a team mate and a coach. She competes in her age bracket and coaches swimmers in the 7 and 8 year old age group, and even works as a swim instructor for YWCA Central Carolinas. Her name remains on the record board above the pool, showing just how much one can conquer their fears.

“Because I had such a fear of the pool and I was able to get past that to realize how much I loved it, I want to share that with other people,” Dylan said. “And being able to see a swimmer progress is so fulfilling. You’ll get a kid who’s terrified of water when you meet him and then five lessons later he’s swimming on his own and you’ll think to yourself, ‘Wow, I did that.’”

This winter marks her 14th year on the Orange Crush swim team. Dylan hopes to compete and coach one more time next winter as an 18 year old, while attending UNC Charlotte double majoring in Social Work and Human Services Management.

**Crushing a Fear of Water**

Join Industrial Strength Fitness for this new adult swim program, designed as a structured team style workout, for all swim levels 18 years and older.

It’s not about how fast you are – experience Industrial Strength Fitness expert coaching, technique instruction, camaraderie, and more! The aim is to have fun while focusing on efficiency, endurance and speed with structured workouts designed for three different swim types: fitness swimming, competitive swimming, and triathlon swimming.

The program starts January 14 and ends March 31, meeting on Tuesdays from 6:30pm-7:30pm. You can register for the full 12 weeks for $100, drop-in to 5 classes for $50, or drop-in to an individual class for $15. Questions? Contact Jody Frazier at ydubtriclub@gmail.com

You can register at www.industrialstrengthfitness.com/classes

Although not required, you may bring paddles, fins, snorkels and other gear. Prerequisite is a 100 yard non-stop swim.

**New Adult Swim Class: Master Your Swim**

See more offerings online at www.ywcacentralcarolinas.org

**January’s Wellness Seminar: Emotional Eating**

Start the new year on the right foot and attend a YWCA seminar. January is Mental and Emotional Health Month, so we’ll be discussing the importance of mindful eating.

We all grab that piece of chocolate when we are feeling a little down or stressed. We ask ourselves why certain foods make us feel happier.

This seminar will be on January 9 from 11am - 12pm in YWCA’s Boardroom. Registration is $10! You can register on the Fitness Programs page of our site: ywcacentralcarolinas.org/fitness/special-programs/

**February’s Wellness Seminar: American Heart Month**

How can you prevent and manage cardiovascular disease? How do high cholesterol and high blood pressure affect the heart and brain? Starr, our Director of Fitness and a clinical exercise therapist, will discuss what cholesterol numbers really mean, how high blood pressure affects your heart and arteries and how exercise can lower both. Profile by Sanford will discuss what foods raise or help lower your cholesterol and blood pressure.

This seminar will take place on February 13 from 11am - 12pm in YWCA’s Boardroom. Registration is $10! Questions? Contact Director of Fitness, Starr Gargiullo, at sgargiullo@ywcacentralcarolinas.org
Sarah Belk Gambrell Gym & Swim
Winter 2020

**group exercise and aquatics schedule** - Pool is open to all YWCA members during swim lessons.

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<td>Aqua Arthritis Energizer</td>
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<td>Yoga I: Exploring the Details</td>
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<td>Aqua Power</td>
<td>Aqua Power Shallow &amp; Deep</td>
<td>Yoga I/II</td>
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<td>Align &amp; Refine Yoga</td>
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**Orange Crush Swim Season runs January through March. Check the Aquatics Calendar for daily pool activity!**

**Like and follow YWCA Fitness on Facebook to stay in the know about everything fitness!**

- Pop Up Classes continue so that you may try new classes! View classes on the website via the monthly event calendar.
- Visit the website for details on Swim Lessons!

**Pool Hours**
- Mon-Thurs 5:45am - 8pm
- Fri 5:45am - 7pm
- Sat 8am - 4:45pm
- Sun 1pm - 4:45pm
- 12:00pm - 1:00pm Mon-Fri
- Additional Lap Lane

**Childcare Hours**
- Mon-Thurs 9am - 12pm & 5pm - 7pm
- Fri 9am - 12pm
- Sat 9am - 12pm

**Get our email updates!**
sgargiullo@ywcacentralcarolinas.org
Supporting YWCA

Thank you to the
Philip L. Van Every
Foundation for donating $15,000 to support YWCA’s Transitional Housing Programs, Women In Transition and Families Together!

Save the Date!
February 13 - Book Club
6pm - 7:30pm @ YWCA
We’re reading Mindful of Race: Transforming Racism from the Inside Out by Ruth King, facilitated by the author!
Refreshments will be served, please RSVP on our site.
To learn more contact Claire Lechtenberg at 980-558-0502 or clichtenberg@ywcacentralcarolinas.org

YWCA’s Impact

In the fall of 2018, after moving to the United States from Jamaica, Antwane enrolled in YWCA Billingsville/Cotswold Youth Learning Center. He was in second grade but reading on a kindergarten level and had limited understanding of many English words and phrases. Early in the school year after an in-school vision exam, the nurse discovered that Antwane needed eyeglasses. The school would not be able to help Antwane until late January and his family could not afford to buy him eyeglasses.

The school’s nurse reached out to our Billingsville/Cotswold Youth Learning Center Coordinator, Gwen, to ask for support in any way. Gwen called our Youth Program’s Family Support Coordinator whose sole job it is to connect our children’s families to community resources. Our Coordinator knew of a program through LensCrafters that provides free eyeglasses to children in low-income households and Antwane was able to get his new pair of eyeglasses right away.

At the end of the school year, after reading instruction from our program and new eyeglasses, Antwane went from reading on a kindergarten grade level to reading on a mid-second grade level! The results from the i-Ready diagnostic testing were phenomenal as Antwane’s level of reading grew by 99 total points. While typical growth for a student his age is to reach 460 points and exceptional growth is to reach 497 points, Antwane’s end of year results totaled 515 points!

January’s Racial Justice Forums

In January, YWCA will partner with CMPD to host a CLEAR (Communication Law Enforcement Actions & Responsibilities) workshop series. These workshops will take place on three separate evenings to provide community members an inside understanding of CMPD’s processes, services, and operations.

The mission of the CMPD CLEAR workshop is to work towards strengthening community relationships, increasing the community understanding of police work, as well as equipping citizens to provide productive and meaningful input into how their police department functions.

Each evening, attendees will participate in exercises that put them behind the desk of a captain, in front of a roll call as a sergeant, or behind the body-worn camera of an officer. Along the way, participants will learn about staffing and deployment of officers, crime-fighting and community engagement strategies, arrest, search and use of force laws and policies, accountability and investigation of police misconduct.

The workshops will be held on January 23, January 30, and February 6 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. To attend the workshops, register on our site at www.ywcacentralcarolinas.org/events-2/