

YMCA OF ROCK RIVER VALLEY

SHAPING TOMORROW

ANNUAL
REPORT
2022



OUR MISSION

To put Christian principles into practice through programs, services and relationships that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

OUR VALUES

CARING

HONESTY

RESPECT

RESPONSIBILITY

FAITH



Dear Friends,

Thank you for another remarkable year at our Y. Your donations, words of support, and your membership mean more to us than you could ever imagine.

Shaping Tomorrow is something we take seriously. The pandemic likely caused us to think a lot more about what the future might hold for each of us and our community, but the idea of making a difference and offering the chance for people in our community to grow and develop into their full potential is nothing new at the Y.

In fact, we were founded on the idea that every person can grow in body, mind, and spirit and we continue to focus all of our efforts on making that ideal possible.

This year:

- We added mental health support to many of our programs because we know people are struggling – the stressors of the pandemic and, often, everyday life can be a lot and a little extra support can make the difference between moving through the challenges and being crushed by them.
- Our chronic disease programming returned. Almost half of the people living in our country reported weight gain averaging 29 pounds during the pandemic; four in 10 Americans are living with a chronic disease and six in 10 are living with two. Through Y programming, people in our community are reaching their health goals and preventing future illness – and, more importantly, taking control of their lives.
- New and expanded neighborhood programs opened for youth and families in the northwest quadrant of our city. Going forward, those living around our North Rockton Avenue location (formerly the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd) have access to vibrant, after-school programming, health and wellness classes, and social activities allowing for connection and fun.

And, that's not all. In the pages of this Impact Report, you'll see how, together, we're Shaping Tomorrow in big and small ways. Nothing you see here would be possible without you, our valued members, donors, and friends. As it says in Hebrews 10:24, 25: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another."

Thanks for being a part of our today and our tomorrow,



BRENT PENTENBURG
Chief Executive Officer



AMY M. OTT
2022 Board Chair



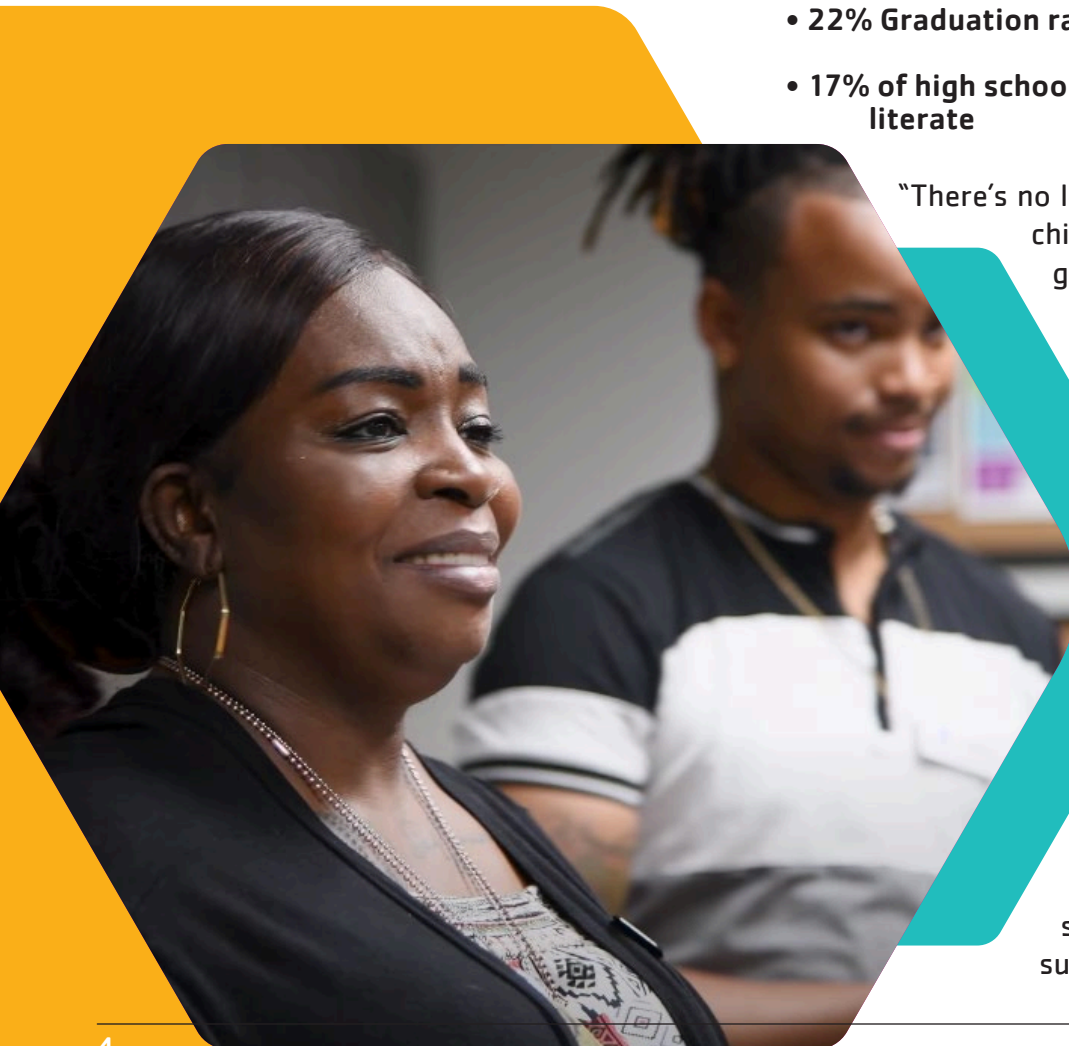
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SHAPING TOMORROW HELPING YOUTH EXCEL

When we look at the youth in our community, our hearts are filled with hope. We can see their potential, but they are fighting an uphill battle. For many kids, the path of least resistance wins and that often means negative influences, dropping out of school, and eventually crime. The statistics speak for themselves:

- **63% Graduation rate in Rockford Public Schools compared to 86% national average**
- **Graduation rates among Black/ African American students is approximately 53%**
- **61% RPS students are chronically absent, compared to 30% statewide**
- **1500 Children in foster care in Winnebago County**
- **22% Graduation rate for children in foster care**
- **17% of high school graduates are financially literate**



“There’s no love, we’re not showing our children love,” said Toni Gay, grandmother of a student enrolled in Jr. Achievers. “A lot of the kids that are doing bad things, it’s not their fault, it’s their upbringing. Someone has to come in and break that chain and show love.”

Youth Development is one of the three main areas of focus for the YMCA. We recognize the urgency of this moment and have rolled out new and expanded programs to nurture youth development. Raise and Achievers is for high school students to help them be successful in school and prepare

for college and beyond. We have expanded the program to younger students in middle and elementary schools to broaden our reach.

“We know the leading indicator of a child being resilient and thriving is a stable relationship with one committed, consistent, and caring adult,” said Brent Pentenburg, CEO, YMCA of Rock River Valley. “According to the website Youth.gov, for every \$1 invested in youth development, there is a return of \$3. I can’t think of a better investment for our community.”

Tamica Fricks is the Teen Director at the SwedishAmerican Riverfront YMCA. She understands first-hand the importance of these programs.

“My junior year, I dropped out of high school,” recalls Tamica. “If I would have had a program like this to learn different things, I probably would have gone down a different path as a child.”

Taylor Franklin is a former Achievers participant. She saw a flyer for a YMCA college tour while she was in high school. She was intrigued and went to the informational meeting.

“For people like me, who didn’t know what they wanted to do or weren’t familiar with the college

process, having this program gave me a safe place and a jump-start on that process”, said Taylor. “My parents didn’t get to go to a 4-year university, so this helped me navigate and focus on the future.”

Taylor not only went on the college tour, but she joined the Achiever program and it laid the foundation for her career.

“We would have different guest speakers come in and talk to us. A nursing student came in from Rockford University and it inspired me to look into nursing. I did end up becoming a nurse.”

Taylor now lives and practices in St. Louis, MO. She is just one of the success stories. Young people who engage in Achievers increase their likeliness of graduating by 25 to 75 percent. The program is free to youth with support from our donors.

“I feel that it’s very important that they’re here and they’re safe,” said Tamica. “They’re getting a meal and they’re not running the streets or joining gangs. It’s important to me and I know their parents appreciate that the Y is here to love their child and treat them as their own.”

Tamica did go back to high school and earned her GED. She is enrolled in college courses and uses her experience to motivate the children and help guide them.

“I tell them I don’t want them to be like me, I want them to be better,” said Tamica.



SCAN HERE
FOR MORE

SHAPING TOMORROW FEEDING OUR YOUTH

Access to quality, healthy meals is a barrier for many in our community. When youth programming started at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, the YMCA team soon realized that providing snacks and meals was one of the most basic necessities.

“We’re feeding kids who don’t necessarily have a lot of options. They don’t know if they’re going to get dinner or lunch,” said Lexi Claywell, YMCA Food Service Associate.

According to Feed America, “A child’s chance for a bright tomorrow starts with getting enough food to eat today. In the United States, one in eight children is at risk of hunger, and single-parent families are more likely to face hunger because they need to stretch their income further.”

Kids who are chronically hungry are more likely to be hospitalized and they face higher risks of health conditions like anemia and asthma. As they grow up, kids who consistently missed meals are more likely to fall behind in school and suffer from social and behavioral problems.

The Y saw an opportunity to not only feed the children, but give them the tools and resources to make healthy choices for themselves.

“We went with more fresh options - so fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and meals that are made daily for the kids,” said Kaela Wolfe, YMCA Nutrition Services Director.

Approximately, 25 snacks and 50 dinners were served daily to elementary and middle school participants in our afterschool program at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. Each dinner includes a serving of fruit, vegetables, a protein and whole-grain-rich option. These healthier snacks and dinners have been well received.

Katie Saegar, YMCA Food Service Associate, says, “The kids absolutely love when we come around. They get excited and call us ‘the lunch ladies.’” She adds that the kids have provided feedback as to what kinds of foods they like to see and, in turn, we’ve been able to deliver on many of those requests.

Furthermore, Katie states, “I feel like we’re changing the lives of these kids. They don’t necessarily have dinners after school or lunches on days when there’s no school. We’ve been able to fill this gap by providing snacks and meals to youth in the program, where youth have an option to choose the healthy foods they would like to eat. Seeing kids try new and colorful food items has been one of the most rewarding aspects of providing the meals.”





**“I REALLY LIKE THE SANDWICHES!”
- HARPER H.**

**“MY FAVORITE THING IS ALL THE BERRIES WE GET”
- TONY P.**



Currently, the snacks and meals are being prepared at the SwedishAmerican Riverfront YMCA in the space that was formerly Subway. In October 2021, the space suffered damage due to a flood in our facility. Since then, we’ve remodeled and taken over the full commercial kitchen area for our nutrition services food prep.

Kaela adds that the goal of this program is to be at all of our Kids’ Time sites, our summer camp locations and the Children’s Learning Center.

Throughout the school year, we serve approximately 1,200 children and teens in 26 locations across four school districts. In the summer, we’re serving closer to 850 children and teens across 5 locations. We see the need to expand our food program, so even more youth have access to quality, healthy snacks and meals.

“Starting this program from almost nothing and seeing where it already is in the first year, I can’t wait to see where it’s going to be in another 5 or 10 years,” said Kaela.

**“PIZZA DAY IS MY FAVORITE! AND THE PINEAPPLE!”
- MISTIQUE M.**



SCAN HERE FOR MORE



SHAPING TOMORROW CELEBRATING HEALTHY LIVING

YMCA member Donna Booker just celebrated a major milestone. She is 99 years old and very active. She is a regular at the Y and the pool is her go-to workout. In honor of her milestone birthday, her fellow aqua fitness friends threw her a birthday party.

"It was unbelievable," said Donna. "They had the biggest birthday cake, cards and flowers. To think they would go out just for me, that was unbelievable. That tells you what nice friends we have."

Donna attends two aqua fitness classes a week at the SwedishAmerican Riverfront YMCA. Fitness classes become more than a way for people to exercise - community is built, friendships are made and genuine care for one another is formed. We see how these friendships extend outside of our buildings.

"You connect with people and this particular class is a very connected class. Everyone came to her party," said Judy Ball, Aqua Fitness Instructor.

At 99, Donna is stronger today than she was 10 years ago.

"I had a lot of problems. I had surgery when I was 90 and lost my equilibrium - my thinking and everything," remembers Donna. "I went to rehab for a while and finally, I made it back to the Y. They took me by the arm and helped me in the water. I figured the water was what was going to help me and it has. If it hadn't been for the water here at the Y, I wouldn't be where I am today."

"You can do things in the water that you cannot do on land," shares Judy. "I really do believe she is moving because of the water."

The Y offers more than 40 aqua fitness classes a week between the SwedishAmerican Riverfront Y and Northeast Family Y. We are serving more than 250 members in these classes through more than 450 reservations a week. The classes focus on core strength and the intensity can be modified for all ability levels.

Aqua fitness classes are so popular because of the social connections, the ability to adapt to each person's needs, and the pool removes barriers when it comes to mobility issues.





"The warm water makes it easier for members who have limited mobility and/or joint pain to exercise without feeling the same level of pain they would if they were on land," said Jamie Lowery, Senior Director, Aquatics.

Donna shares that she is grateful to have the level of health that she does and she doesn't take it for granted.

"She is wonderful. We all watch her longingly and lovingly as she walks from the pool to the locker room because she has no fake parts - knees, hips or anything," said Virginia Polizzi, Aqua Fitness Instructor. "She is 99 and she stands straight and tall. She knows that we love seeing someone who the Lord has allowed to be alert and oriented, of clear and sound mind, and still able to get around. She loves the socialization aspect of the Y. She can be around people who encourage her and are kind to her. That's what the Y is all about."

"I wouldn't be where I am today. I wouldn't be able to function," said Donna. "The Y saved me."



SCAN HERE
FOR MORE

OUR REACH IN NUMBERS

The YMCA is a leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community by empowering young people, improving the health and wellbeing of people of all ages, and inspiring action.

One of the biggest challenges for our communities today is the increased cost of living and the additional financial burden that has been brought on by the pandemic. We believe that every family and individual deserves the opportunity to enjoy the YMCA and connect with their community. This is why we offer “choose your rate” financial assistance. And, members no longer have to prove their income. Members tell us what they can pay, which removes the barriers to membership.

Contributions to the YMCA Annual Fund allow us to make membership and programs affordable for everyone. These statistics reflect the number of individuals impacted through our financial assistance program. We know that when we work together, we move individuals, families and communities forward.

**TOTAL
HOUSEHOLDS**

9,108

(as of 12-31-22)

**PROVIDED
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

29% = 2,640

Households





CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER SCHOLARSHIPS

51

Children building social and emotional skills in an enriched environment.



KIDS' TIME SCHOLARSHIPS

43

YMCA after school care provides opportunities for children to learn, grow, and thrive.

SWIM LESSON SCHOLARSHIPS

74

Children in foster care acquiring a life-saving skill by learning to swim.



MEALS SERVED

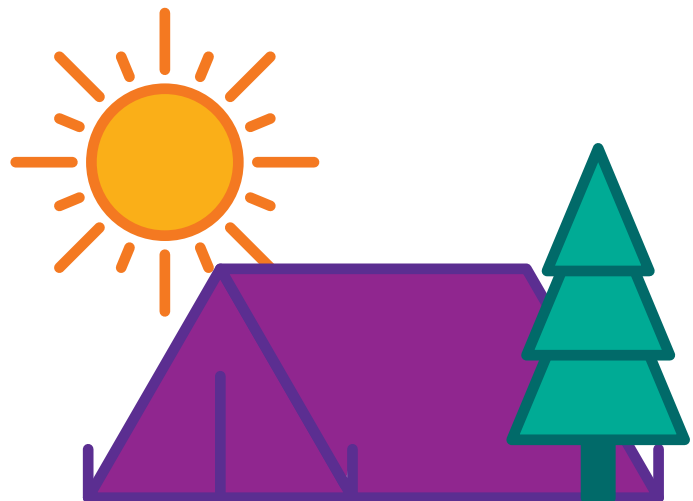
57,379

Nutritious and delicious meals provided to children at Good Shepherd, Children's Learning Center, summer camp at SwedishAmerican Riverfront Y and Maple Elementary School.

CAMPERSHIPS

144

Children experienced a summer filled with excitement & adventure at camp.



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

Greetings YMCA Donors,

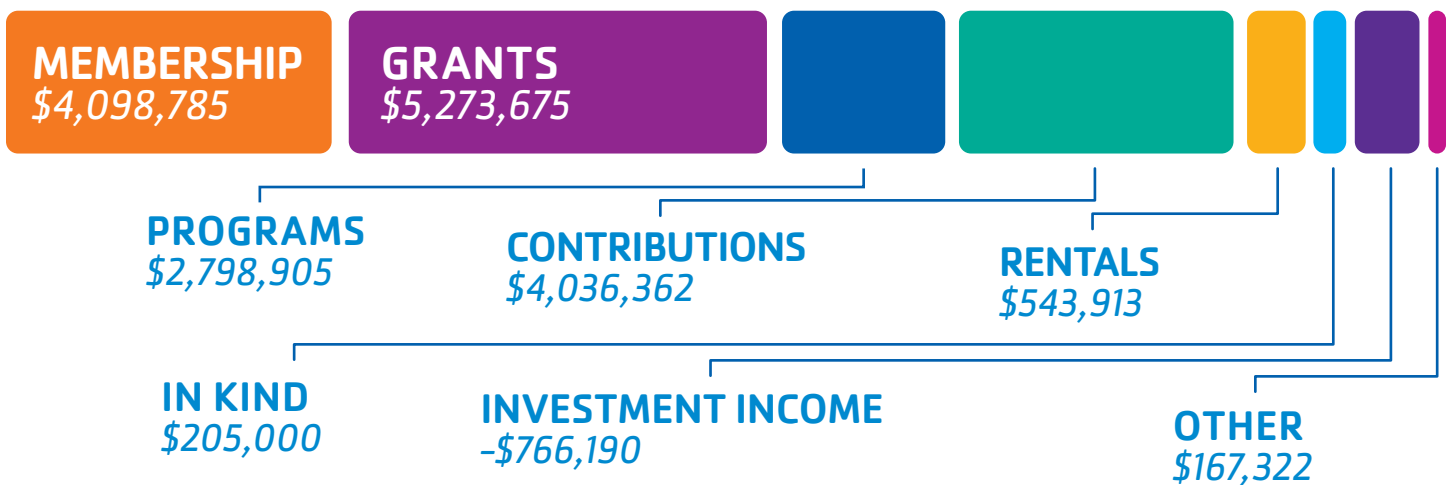
2022 was indeed an amazing year for recovery and growth. Through your steadfast support, we were able to expand our services and have an unprecedented impact on our community. Your commitment reads out in our improved financial strength despite temporary stock market fluctuations affecting our endowment. Our staff and volunteers transformed how we serve our members and community. We touch more lives now than at any other point in our history, and that is due in great part to your support. Thank you.

Please join me in prayer that 2023 will bring even greater opportunities to serve our community.

In Christ,

Alan Tsao,
Chief Financial Officer

2022 REVENUE: \$16,357,772 UNAUDITED FINANCIALS



2022 EXPENSES: \$14,602,195 UNAUDITED FINANCIALS



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Recognizing Membership

From the very start of the YMCA of Rock River Valley, generous friends have recognized the value of the Y's mission and have vowed to support it into the future. Heritage Club members have indicated their commitment to remembering the YMCA of Rock River Valley in their estate plans.

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Our Donors – The work we are doing requires dedication from our team and from generous donors, like you! Thank you to the following donors who invested in our community in 2022. Your gift Shapes the Future in many ways – big and small.

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