



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



CELEBRATING EVERYDAY HEROES

YMCA of Southern Maine | 2017–2018 Annual Report



EVERYDAY HEROES, EXTRAORDINARY LIVES

We believe that inside each of us resides a hero with the power to change the world. We know this to be true, because we see it every day at the Y.

In our experience, heroes don't wear capes or fly through the air. But they do change lives.

At the Y, heroes look like older adults who notice an absence and look in on each other. They look like a volunteer who's making sure that children in our community are ready to learn when they start kindergarten. And sometimes, heroes look like parents who are willing to face their fears in order to keep their child safe. In the following pages you can read more about these heroes.

Heroes show up disguised as our neighbors and friends, with their fears and hopes, their fatigue and excitement. These heroes—the volunteers, members, partners, donors, and staff who make up our Y—are changing lives for the better through our shared vision of a world where everyone has the chance to realize their full potential.

In fact, everyone who walks through our doors helps make our community a happier, healthier place to live through their acts of kindness and support—both small and extraordinary. This year, we're 31,000 heroes strong—and we're counting on you to join us in our mission, because we need heroes now more than ever. Not super heroes, but everyday heroes—folks like us who are committed to and believe in a world that supports the well-being and dignity of us all.

It doesn't take heroics to be a hero, but it does take a willingness to invest in each other. Invest your time as a volunteer, invest your support as a donor, and invest your word by talking about our cause with family and friends. Most of all, invest your belief in our capacity to change the world.

Your cape is optional, but you are not.

Join us.



Jenna Klein Jonsson
Chief Volunteer Officer



Helen L. Breña
Chief Executive Officer



**“A hero is someone who
has given his or her life
to something bigger
than oneself.”**

—Joseph Campbell



BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES

What does a retired educator do with her time? If you're Betsy Handley, chances are, you'll still be teaching. Through the Y's Early Learning Readiness (ELR) program, Betsy and other volunteers help families learn how to support their children's development.

"People hear 'literacy' and think we are teaching the alphabet," says Betsy. "We do some of that, but the whole concept of ELR is to learn how to help your child and how to teach your child something enriching through play."

The free program is open to families who wouldn't otherwise have access to this critical learning support. Research shows programs like ELR play a central role in ensuring children are developmentally, socially, and intellectually ready to learn when they enter elementary school.

Betsy was particularly moved by a New American family in the program. "[She] was a single mother with a family of four kids. She would come [to the Y] with her little girl, who at that point had almost no English. I would point out things and play and you could see the lights going on. It was wonderful."

Best of all, the program gave this young girl and her family the support they needed to improve their lives. "The mother got a job and the girl is in a nursery school program now. She is doing very well and her English has caught up. On her first day [of nursery school] she just started playing, she was part of the group."

Betsy recently taught Brad Spiegel and his family. As a stay at home father of twins Julia and Harrison, ELR has changed how Brad parents in subtle but significant ways. It's taught him "how to talk to them. We use adding and subtracting. I think we use things [from ELR] not always knowingly."

Brad wholeheartedly recommends ELR to others. "It's educational and can give you ideas to bring home. You really get it all." Best of all, Julia and Harrison love their teacher. "[Betsy] is a mentor for kids," Brad says. "She loves kids and loves to help."

Elizabeth Everett, ELR Teacher at the Y's Greater Portland branch, agrees. She says,

Betsy is a real hero to the Y community. She's devoted to the children and families we serve.

But Betsy will insist that she gets far more out of the program than the kids do. Watching children grow is "the best. For me, as a retired person looking for something new to fill my life, it was a renewal," she says. "It gives me just as much, if not more, than it gives the kids."



“A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.”

—Christopher Reeve





Many older adults face a number of challenges in staying connected with peers. Loss of mobility, shrinking social circles, and even changing self-identity can lead to social isolation, with serious health consequences. So when an acquaintance notices that you're missing from your daily routine—and reaches out to see if you're ok—it really stands out as something special.

This was the case for Alan Fink, 71. Alan had been a runner for much of his life. But after a heart attack in his early 50's, and knee trouble, he started swimming at the Y. And when he retired a few years ago, the Y filled another need—social connections. "There are other retired gentlemen my age [here] and you gradually get to know them and share bits of your life stories," Alan explains. "We keep tabs on each other."

One of those other gentleman was Arnold Boeklin, 75. Like Alan, Arnold comes to the Y most days of the week to work on strength training and for "the sense of community. There are a bunch of old duffs like me and there are some young Turks, [too]," Arnold quips. "I am a big fan of mixing age groups, I would hate to be stuck in a 75-year old world."

Don Pinette, 89, is a fellow retiree and Y regular. Don was the second person to join the Northern York County branch, a fact of which he is rightfully proud. "I find a lot of comfort in coming over here. My day isn't complete unless I start it [at the Y]," he shared. "I've made many friends here and developed close friendships. We've shared sad experiences and good ones, too."

So when a serious health condition suddenly stopped Alan's early morning visits to the Y, Arnold and Don noticed. And they did something even more extraordinary in this age of individualism—they tracked Alan down outside of the Y and continued to stay in touch with him throughout his months-long recovery. On a recent visit to the Y, Alan explained what this meant to him, sharing,

It was very touching that people who were acquaintances from the Y thought enough to reach out.

His friends continued to stay in touch throughout his recovery. "I was very, very touched. I credit the Y for a lot of that."

Peter Andersen, Membership Director at the Y's Northern York County branch agrees. "Community is at the heart of everything we do at the Y. Don, Alan and Arnold really exemplify this—they're invested in each other and they care enough to check in on one another. While their paths might not have crossed outside of the Y, they're most definitely a part of our family. We're lucky to have them."

While Arnold gruffly insists that staying in touch while Alan was ailing was "no big deal," even he admits how important his Y friendships are to him. "It is fulfilling to know that you have friends who care about you. There's quite a community here."



**“Anyone can be a hero.
You just have to have
faith in yourself.”**

—Masi Oka





SKILLS THAT SAVE LIVES

"If my daughter drowns, what would I do?" This is a serious question for JC Chattopadhyay, who nearly drowned as an infant when he crawled into a pond. By the time a relative saw his blue shirt in the water, he was unconscious. Doctors couldn't find his pulse. "My parents were told that I was dead."

That was the beginning, and seeming end, of JC's swimming experience. "After that, I was afraid of the water. I would go to the beach and stay on the shore."

His wife Swati didn't know how to swim, either. And as a new mother, "I worried about the baby."

The Chattopadhyay's weren't alone in their fear. In fact "at least a third of Americans don't know how to swim, and that's self-reported, so it's probably much greater," says Anne Hayton, retired physician and Y volunteer. "Most accidental drownings are adults, which people don't realize."

Determined to change this, Anne and her husband Robert Ashley, a fellow physician, worked with the Y to offer free adult swim lessons through a grant from the Swimming Saves Lives Foundation. More than 60 adults, ages 24 to 89, signed up. Anne was struck by her students' stories. "They told me about almost drowning as a kid, or hitting their head on the side of the pool, or being thrown in."

For most, fear was a huge obstacle. "Some literally needed their hands held as they walked down the stairs, or needed to sit on the bench for 20 minutes, before getting in the water," Anne recalls.

With support from 30 volunteers—all US Masters swimmers recruited by Anne and Robert—students

slowly overcame their fears. Some "put their faces in water for the first time in their lives, floated for the first time," shares Anne. "Overcoming fear and doing these things for the first time is really exciting."

"There is a lot of high fiving and hugging," she says. "Last night the pool was full of our families, husbands and wives [who are in lessons] and their kids. All these students are coming in to practice, it's amazing."

Before this class "I couldn't even float," says JC. "Within three or four sessions, I could swim."

JC and Swati aren't the only ones building confidence around water. Their two year old daughter Aishee is, too. "The first day, she was scared of the pool. Now, she doesn't want to get out! As a parent, it's the best thing."

So, too, is what Anne and her fellow volunteers accomplished. Scott Krouse, Casco Bay Branch Executive, explains,

They helped 60 adults learn water safety skills that may make a life or death difference to them, their children, or grandchildren.

2,276 YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOPED SKILLS TO BECOME OUR FUTURE LEADERS AT SUMMER CAMP AND SWIM TEAM.



364 VOLUNTEERS SERVED 5,983 HOURS.



WE ARE
31,000
HEROES STRONG

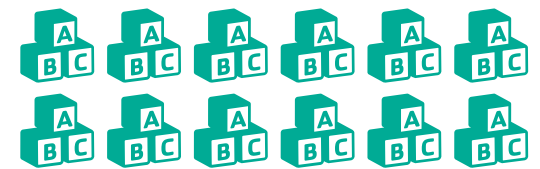


182 PEOPLE ESCAPED HOMELESSNESS AND BEGAN REBUILDING THEIR LIVES.

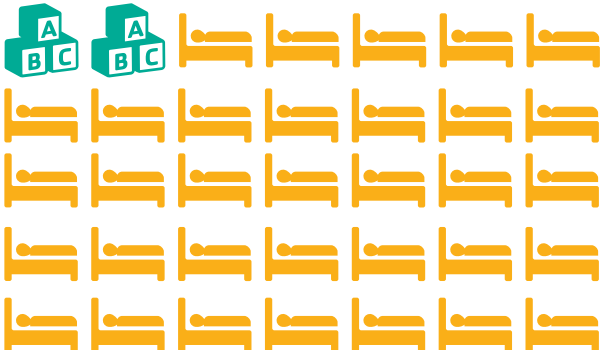


 ≈ 200 PEOPLE

62,013 CHILDCARE DAYS HELPED PARENTS WORK AND GO TO SCHOOL TO BETTER THEIR FAMILIES.



42,455 NIGHTS AT THE Y WERE SPENT IN A WARM BED INSTEAD OF ON THE STREETS.



59,742 HEALTHY MEALS AND SNACKS FOR KIDS NOURISHED FUTURE LEADERS.

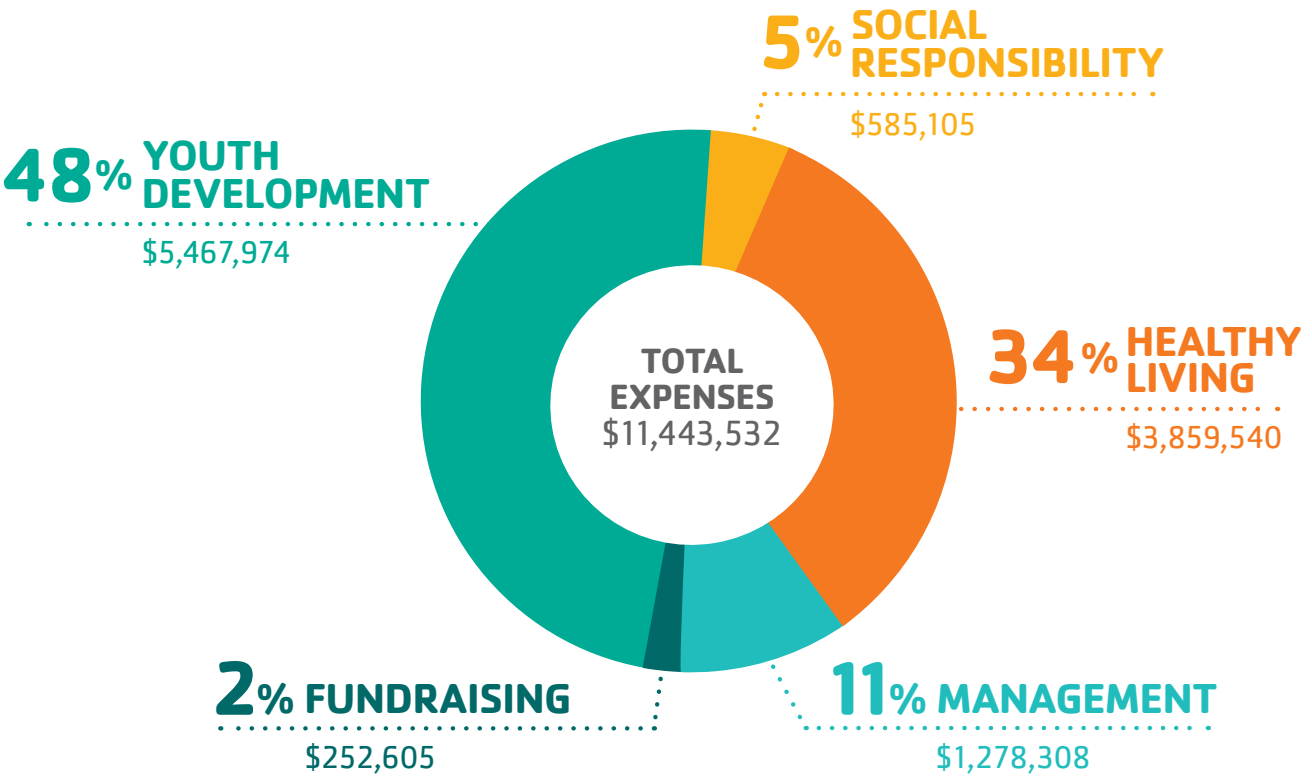
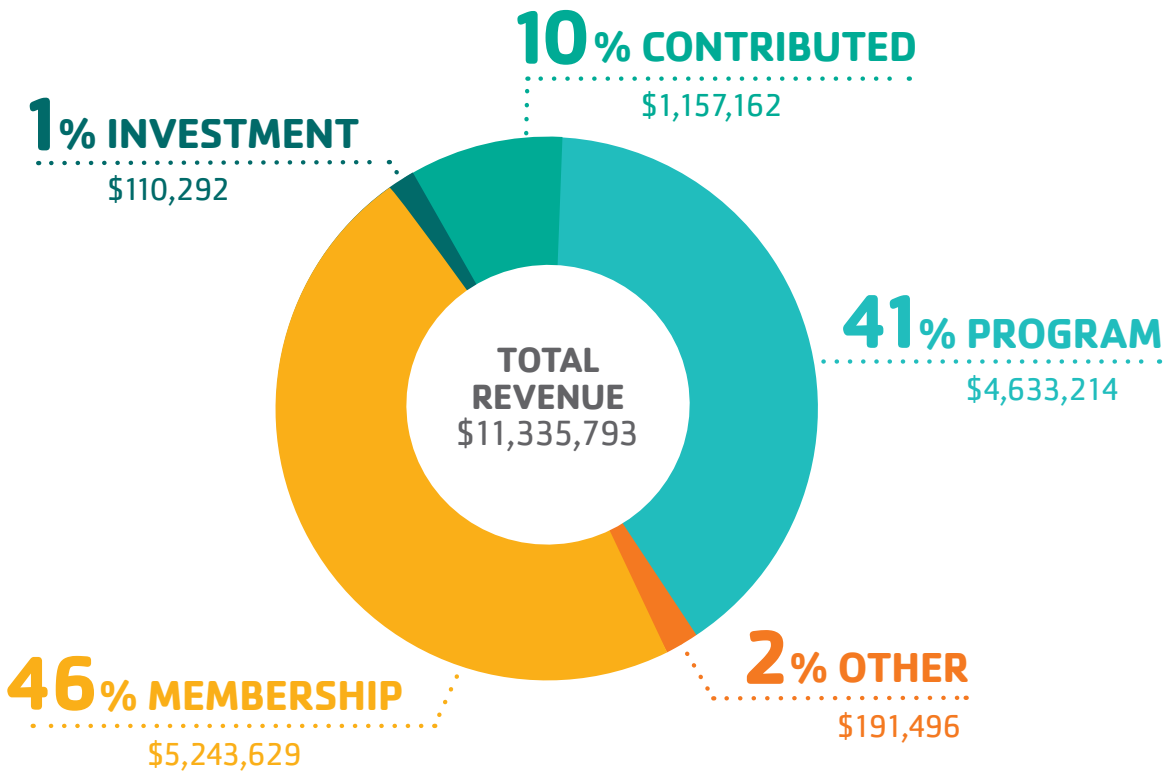


   ≈ 1,000 UNITS



FINANCIALS

NOTES
2017–2018 Depreciation: \$598,045
G+A expenses total 13% of total expenses



LEADERSHIP

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Jan DiMauro
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Scott Krouse
Casco Bay Branch Executive

Kate Noonan
Northern York County Branch Executive

Kelley Rich
Pineland Branch Executive

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Greater Portland Branch Executive

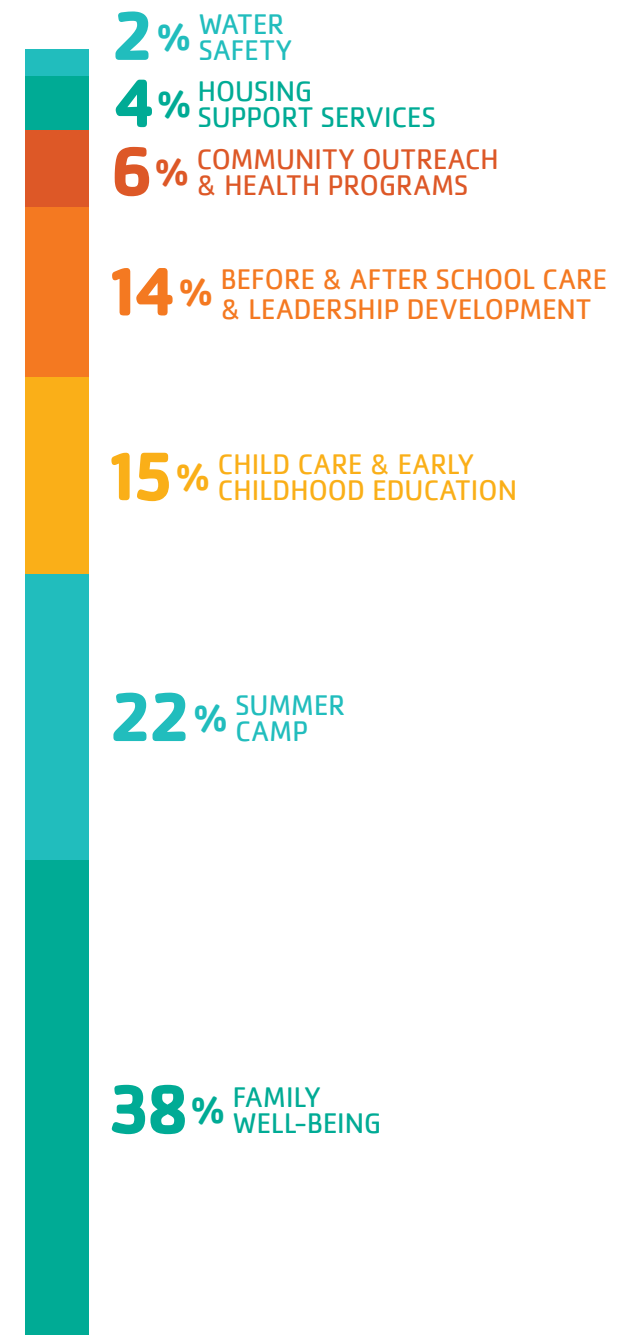




OUR MISSION

To build strong kids, individuals, families, and communities through programs and services that promote a healthy spirit, mind, & body for all, regardless of ability to pay.

\$2.2 MILLION
IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND PROGRAM SUPPORT



The YMCA of Southern Maine is dedicated to celebrating diversity and fostering an inclusive community for all.

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