



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Angie L. Reese-Hawkins

Summer 2008

Dear Friend of the YMCA:

Ahhh, camp.

Remember how the paper mache paste used to stick in your hair? Or how your mom pretended to know that your macramé project was a horse? What about the field days filled with nothing but sweat and water balloons?

Oh, how things have changed. Today's YMCA camps are so diverse, so unique and so engaging that the word camp doesn't even do them justice. They are adventures; they are true experiences; they are memories in the making. You can find whatever you are looking for and a lot of things you never dreamed of at one of the more than 150 camps we offer every summer.

BE GOOD

Losing Themselves

Rock climbing, kayaking, spelunking. Relays, pushups, sit ups, weight lifting. Is this the training regimen for the Olympic Rowing team? The workout secret of a super star athlete? No, it's the schedule for the YMCA's newest camp: Fit Camp.

Fit Camp paired outdoor adventure activities with more traditional wellness activities and nutrition education to get kids moving. The 30 children who participated literally lost themselves in Fit Camp. Fit Camp's inaugural summer was a resounding success thanks in large part to the generous funding from The United Way. The United Way remains committed to supporting the YMCA's ongoing efforts to fight the childhood obesity epidemic.

Into the Sunset

During the long days of summer in the heart of D.C., it's easy to forget that the city is just minutes from the waterfront and has a long and proud maritime history. YMCA National Capital partnered with the National Maritime Heritage Foundation (NMHF) to introduce urban children to the joys of water sports through a unique program called Kids Set Sail. This educational camp program helped young participants learn the fundamentals of sailing from certified instructors. The kids ran the boat and learned teamwork, communication and decision making skills.

Nutritious and ... Interesting

"Bugs, Bugs, Bugs!," yelled the YMCA Camp Letts campers. They weren't alerting their counselors to an infestation or even studying the wildlife on the more than 200-acre campus. They were clamoring for lunch. Campers got the unique opportunity to sample meal worm burgers and garlic pasta with sautéed crickets, all under the bright lights of Animal Planet's cameras. The footage will be part of "Insectize Me," an Animal Planet special on eating bugs expected to air this fall. Campers loved the truly once in a lifetime experience and were remarkably receptive to sampling the insects. But one bite was enough for some. "That was interesting, I guess," one young camper said after a bite of crunchy, cricket pasta salad.



DO GOOD

An Experience for All

YMCA camps are in the business of making memories, handcrafting happy faces and engineering experiences that won't soon be forgotten. An impressive 18,760 children attended YMCA day and overnight camps this summer. Whether they were learning to swim, discovering a new hobby or experiencing a new environment, every camper was learning the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

To ensure that the priceless summer camp experience is available to all children, the YMCA provides scholarships and subsidies to underprivileged and at-risk youth. More than 3,300 children received \$727,345 in financial assistance and subsidies this summer.

Searching the World Over

Where in the world are the YMCA Camp Letts counselors from? The answer could really be anywhere. With counselors from locations ranging from France to the Ukraine and from Brazil to New Zealand, Camp Letts is incredibly diverse. During the current camp season, 64 of Camp Letts 100 seasonal employees were from outside the United States. The diversity of the camp is thanks in no small part to the ongoing support of Allstate Foundation, which funds the Peace through Diversity program promoting tolerance and inclusion. Recently, Allstate generously donated \$45,000 to help YMCA Camp Letts continue and expand this amazing program.

Driven to Expand

The YMCA's nationally-renowned youth wellness program—PHD (Physical, Healthy and Driven)—is growing once again. With the support of M&T Bank, the PHD program will dramatically expand its services and offerings over the next five years. M&T recently pledged \$100,000 to fund the expansion of the program, allowing the YMCA to fight childhood obesity in underserved and impoverished communities, including those in Southeast Washington, D.C.

To ensure that the priceless summer camp experience was available to all, the YMCA provided scholarships and subsidies to 3,349 children this summer.

FEEL GOOD

Safe (and Fun) Summer Nights

YMCA Potomac Overlook was filled with the sweet, and often rare, sound of teen laughter this summer. Through a partnership with the Prince George's County Council and the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the branch was one of several locations chosen to host the new Safe Summer Program, which offers teens and young adults a variety of fun and engaging activities from 10 p.m. to midnight during the summer months. Thanks to the efforts of County Councilman Tony Knotts and other dedicated public officials, the branch received \$100,000 to fully cover the cost of the program.

Thinga Incredible

Even in its 14th year, the Thingamajig Invention Convention continues to be as unique as its name. More than 3,500 local children got the opportunity to create unique inventions and learn about the importance of protecting the environment this year as we focused on going "Green and Lean." The event was a resounding success thanks to the efforts of dedicated staff members and more than 270 volunteers from local businesses and organizations including Acme Auto Leasing, LLC; America's Promise; Best Buy; Borders Solution Group; CareFirst; Curiosity Zone; D.C. Department of Public Works; D.C. Fire and Rescue; Early, Cassidy & Schilling; Enterprise Rent-A-Car; F.S. Taylor & Associates; Kane Printing; Kohl's; Leadership Washington Class of 2007-2008; Long and Foster; Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission; M&T Bank; Prince George's County Government Recycling Team; Randstad USA; Wachovia Bank; Washington Gas; and Washington Divas.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without our Thingamajig sponsors. An enormous thank you goes out to our Title Sponsor, Kane Printing. Our heartfelt thanks also goes out to all our generous sponsors: Washington Gas; Corporate Express; F.S. Taylor & Associates; The Redwoods Group; Qorvis Communications; Silver Sneakers; Early, Cassidy & Schilling; Susan Corsini; GolinHarris; Kohl's; JFW Project Management; RLK Group, LLC; BSG; Brigitte Renaud; Robert Carney; Best Buy's Geek Squad; Fast Signs; SunDun, Chick-fil-A; Joe Ragan Coffee; Metro Janitorial; Crayola; State Farm; Solar Publications; and the Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation.

And as if that wasn't enough, media representatives showed up in record numbers this year. From a feature article in *The Gazette* and *The Washington Post* to impressive segments on News Channel 8 and Fox 5 News, Thingamajig was in the spotlight, and it was definitely shining.

Sincerely,



Mission

YMCA of Metropolitan Washington fosters the spiritual, mental and physical development of individuals, families and communities according to the ideals of inclusiveness, equality and mutual respect for all.