



# BUILDING the future

COLORADO YMCAs...Building an Active Colorado

We build strong **kids**, strong **families**, strong **communities**.

Volume 3, Issue 2 2009

## United States Figure Skating Club at the YMCA of Boulder Valley

With one of the few YMCA ice rinks in the country, the YMCA of Boulder Valley has a unique programming opportunity. While we have traditionally offered adult and youth hockey leagues, learn to skate programs, and recreational skating and freestyle (figure) skating, we have been working toward forming a program that takes the figure skating program to something more than just a "drop-in" venue. We wanted to provide an opportunity for participants to do what they love to do, while introducing them to the rest of the YMCA. Because most of the skaters at the YMCA are members at other clubs in order to be able to fulfill their USFS (United States Figure Skating) tests, we wanted to make sure that we were giving them the same opportunity. The YMCA of Boulder Valley has now formed a USFS sanctioned Figure Skating Club.



The next question was how to get people to switch from one club to ours. Since we are the YMCA, we have so much more to offer than just a sheet of ice. With that in mind, we started to build the program. For those skaters who just want to keep their member-

ship to USFS, we have offered a basic YMCA membership. Beyond that we worked with our health and wellness staff to build three other membership types. These memberships incorporate dance, cardio, personal training, and specialty classes, which help skaters focus on the whole body. In addition, this is YMCA programming at its best—adults interacting with children as role models, and the teaching of life long skills.

According to USFS rules, we needed to have 25 members to start a probationary membership. We are currently at 28 members, and have entered into the probationary period with USFS. This period lasts 6 months, and we should be voted in to USFS in January. At that time, the YMCA will be able to hold sanctioned events and testing sessions for our skaters.

## Denver YMCA receives grant for Hispanic/Latino Health and Well-Being Collaborative

*"For the vast majority of people in our society, the life circumstances leading to poor health are not adopted as a matter of personal choice. Rather, they are thrust upon people by the social and economic circumstances into which they are born."*

It is increasingly important that our society develop culturally competent and linguistically appropriate strategies to reduce or remove barriers to health, and well-being. Growing concerns about racial and ethnic disparities in health and about the need for health care systems to accommodate increasingly diverse communities, have positioned cultural competence as a national health concern.

The Hispanic/Latino Health and Wellness Collaborative is an effort of the YMCA movement to identify practices that successfully engage members of the majority-minority communities in making lifestyle choices that positively impact their health and well-being. The YMCA of Metropolitan Denver is one of ten YMCAs in the United States selected by the YMCA of the USA to receive

a \$45,000 grant to participate in this collaborative over the next eighteen months.

Alarming levels of obesity and chronic illness are evident among the Hispanic/Latino community. Hispanic/Latino adults are also more likely to suffer from chronic health conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes. Of particular concern among Hispanics is childhood obesity. The issue of these health challenges is a rallying point for the urgency and focus of this collaborative. Something must be done, and can be done, to counteract these negative health trends in the Hispanic/Latino community.

The YMCA of Metropolitan Denver will work together with the Hispanic/Latino community in Denver, and the Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, to focus on the health and well-being of Latino individuals and families by:

- Developing unique, culturally-competent approaches to engaging and supporting individuals and families in their pursuit of health and well-being
- Supporting a highly skilled staff team that is made up of individuals viewed as culturally competent, and whom children and adults consider credible role models
- Developing a program that will promote healthy lifestyle change in minority populations
- Developing a broad range of programs, activities, clubs, and events that help individuals and families develop in spirit, mind, and body
- Reaching beyond the walls of the YMCA to engage community partners
- Aligning the community resources necessary to support health and well-being by convening, and supporting, Latino-serving organizations.

The YMCA of Metropolitan Denver will work to become a trusted organization in the Denver Hispanic/Latino community, and to become an accepted and valued partner within the network of health and human service organizations that support the Hispanic/Latino community. The outcomes and learning from this collaborative will



be expected to generate leading practices that will be shared with other YMCAs, and individuals committed to making a difference in improving the lives and well-being of Latinos across the country.

### Pueblo YMCA "It's all about community."

Four year-old Sara's days begin early in the morning with a little bit of splashing, a little bit of sliding, and a whole lot of fun, as her and her mom wade around in the toddler pool. Just on the other side of the glass, Harold, an 89 year-old SilverSneaker®, argues politics with his buddy before they head in for a strength and conditioning class. It's time for noon basketball, as middle aged men attempt to keep their game fresh, running up and down the court with high school kids. School is out for the day, and 12 year-old Gavin runs rapidly through the lobby toward the climbing wall to get harnessed for his climb to the top. It truly is "all about community."

On April 20, 2009, Pueblo's newest crown jewel was christened at the grand opening of a project that was conceived by the community, for the benefit of the community - the new YMCA Community Campus!

The major goal for the YMCA Community Campus is to improve the quality of life, and support healthy family lifestyles for the residents of Pueblo County. A Human Investment Plan was developed to ascertain what was needed to improve the overall quality of life for the people of the Pueblo community. Some of the most alarming concerns are listed as follows:

- There is a great need to provide quality, affordable childcare.
- There is a critical decline in the integrity of the family structure.
- There is a lack of prevention programs.
- There is a high juvenile violent crime rate.
- Pueblo has a high incidence of early teen pregnancies.
- There is a lack of services targeted to family functioning and family strengthening efforts.
- Creating a youth friendly environment is essential.
- Pueblo has a higher percentage of people suffering from many diseases, e.g., diabetes, heart disease, obesity, etc., than found in other communities.

One of the main ways the YMCA will ac-

complish this goal will be the direct result of the power of partnerships. The campus has no less than 11 different partnerships with groups and organizations, including the library district, arts center, school districts, senior center, medical centers, girl scouts, and the city and county of Pueblo to name a few. These partnerships will be critical to the success and strength of the YMCA. The campus has brought the Pueblo community together to create a resource which no one entity could accomplish alone.

Phase I includes: Aquatic Center with a ramp entry warm-water therapy pool and hydro bench; a zero-entry toddler pool with an interactive pirate ship, slide and water geysers; an activity FUN pool with a rolling river feature for play and exercise, water basketball, areas for swim lessons and water exercise, cargo net feature with lily pads, two indoor water slides (1-150' open body slide and 1-162' tube slide), handicap lift and 2-15 yards lap lanes for leisure lap swimming; Gymnasium with two full size gyms for basketball, volleyball, large exercise classes, and indoor walking; Child Watch Area with indoor playground feature, activity room and quiet room; Fitness & Wellness Center including Nautilus One Strength equipment, free weight and stretching area, and PRECOR treadmills, elliptical climbers, AMT motion trainers, upright & recumbent cycles, and Expresso bikes all w/personalized TV viewing screens; 2 Exercise Studios for yoga, cycling, pilates, aerobics, group exercise and senior programs; Locker Rooms (5 areas) women's locker room with steam room, men's locker room with steam room, boys locker room, girls locker room, and eight assisted/family locker rooms; Boulderling and Climbing Wall in the lobby area, and members lounge area; Phase I of the First Tee, a values-based life-skills golf program, includes a practice range, chipping and putting area, and sports learning center; Parking for 430 vehicles, and by late summer a baseball/softball field and football field. Phase II, scheduled to open late summer, includes a library satellite, teen center, child development wing, community rooms, and coffee/refreshment bar. Through the use of these great tools, the YMCA is committed to serving the entire community for the next 50-100 years.

In the less than sixty days, since the opening, the YMCA's membership base doubled from just over 6,000 members to 12,774. Family memberships account for 75% of this base, proving that the Pueblo community wanted, and needed, a place for families to come together and engage in positive fam-

ily strengthening programs that reinforce the values of honesty, caring, respect, and responsibility. For 119 years the YMCA of Pueblo has been committed to the Pueblo community, and looks forward to continuing living up to the tagline "It's All About Community!"



### It's the season for new construction at YMCA of the Rockies – Estes Park Center.

#### Longs Peak Lodge

The first group will be staying in Longs Peak Lodge on June 12. Guests will experience granite countertops, a floor to ceiling lobby fireplace, historic style hickory furnishings, radiant floor heat, and amazing Rocky Mountain National Park views. "There will be a beautiful flow as guests come on grounds," said Kent Meyer, CEO and President of YMCA of the Rockies. "The design and mission honors who we are and where we are going." The lodge is built to LEED certifications, and will have 100 guest rooms and five meeting rooms for groups and retreats.

#### Mootz Family Craft & Design Center

100% donor funded, the Mootz Family Craft and Design Center is now open and inspiring creativity in guests of all ages. The \$1.2 million project features a double kiln room, silk painting area, jewelry & beading lessons, and the always popular tie-dye option. This summer thousands of guests will enjoy the center's natural light work spaces, open air freshness, and central location to other program facilities.

**All YMCA members will receive \$10 off the nightly rate for cabins and lodge rooms when staying at either Estes Park Center or Snow Mountain Ranch.**

#### Summer Special at Snow Mountain Ranch

Reserve 2 nights in a cabin or lodge room at Snow Mountain Ranch, and get the 3rd



night FREE. Valid until September 30, 2009. Not valid with any other rate package. Call 800-777-9622 or ymcarockies.org. Visit Colorado's Affordable Family Resort where free activities for guests include: mini-golf, indoor swimming, guided hikes, fishing, disc golf, tennis, volleyball, playgrounds, basketball, roller skating and more.



## Health Disparities in the Hispanic/Latino Community are a Rallying Point—New Partnership with Salud Family Health Centers and Longmont YMCA

*Once a week for six weeks, a dozen or more Longmont residents meet in the YMCA boardroom for a lecture on managing the onset of chronic illness.*

Some have high blood pressure; others are in the first phases of diabetes. The lecture is often two hours long.

It's also taught in the participants' first language: Spanish.

Longmont demographics, as well as those of Salud Family Health, point to a community with a high health risk. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) documents significant health disparities among racial and ethnic populations. Hispanics are twice as likely as Caucasians to develop diabetes, and are more likely to have high blood pressure.

Through a recently awarded grant from the Colorado Health Foundation, the Longmont YMCA, in partnership with Salud Family Health Centers, is facilitating a year-long program, Activate for Life, to address the needs of those who suffer from chronic illness. Patients are referred into the program by Salud's Longmont Clinic. Salud's local patient population is 66% Latino, the majority of whom are uninsured or under insured.

"We knew communication would be essential to this pilot," said Michele Haugh, Health and Wellness Director for the Longmont YMCA. "Luckily, we were able to tap two YMCA trainers who are fully bilingual – and Activate for Life was launched."

The Activate for Life program is unique in that it includes both an educational component and an exercise component. In order to teach participants to manage their illness, they attend the evidence-based six-week course known as the K. Lorig Chronic Disease Self Management Workshop. The course is also taught in English for another group of patients.

At the same time, the participants learn about appropriate exercises, and develop a fitness routine with a YMCA personal trainer. The emphasis is on increasing physical activity, along with helping each participant meet personal goals.

All participants are granted scholarships for themselves and their family to become YMCA members.

A key element is follow-through. After the first twelve-weeks, the personal trainers continue to keep in touch with the participants for an additional three months. One hundred patients will participate in the program during the first year, and will undergo behavioral, physiological, and fitness assessments at baseline: twelve weeks; six months and one-year.

A new grant, awarded last month by Pepsi and YMCA of the USA, will help further this important, new work. The Ed & Ruth Lehman YMCA of Longmont, along with the YMCA of Metropolitan Denver, and eight other YMCAs around the country have been selected to participate in an 18-month collaborative process aimed to address health disparities in Hispanic/Latino communities.

*"We are focused now on developing our staff to be more culturally competent," said Tony Shockency, Chief Executive Officer for the Longmont YMCA. "Our work with this collaborative will enable us to create strategies to meet this health concern head-on. And hopefully, it will allow us to reduce or remove the barriers to health and well-being for the Latino/Hispanic community in Longmont."*

This pilot addresses a critical community need: to help these health seekers gain the support, knowledge, and tools they need to adopt healthier lifestyle habits of increased physical activity. It is also aligned with Activate America's long term goal to reduce chronic disease through physical activity and improved nutrition.



## YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region

*The YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region continues to serve our youth in the Colorado Springs community, as it has for over 130 years. Our work with the Pioneering Healthier Community Initiative is an example of our latest collaborative programming to help make youth and their families even stronger.*

This community initiative involves a collaboration of ten local organizations across many sectors, including Harrison School District, The City of Colorado Springs, Community Partnership for Childhood Development, Pikes Peak United Way, US Bank, The Gazette, Peak Vista, and Kaiser Permanente and Goodwill Industries of Colorado Springs. We are in the process of engaging our two area hospitals as well.

Our objective is to focus on the prevention of childhood obesity (which often leads to childhood diabetes) by providing access to increased physical activity, and healthier foods for school age children. By giving our attention to the "next generation" we will create change for a lifetime in the Colorado Springs community.

Our attention is focused on an area within the southeast part of Colorado Springs where socio-economic factors, and ethnicity play a role in the issue of healthy lifestyle. In addition, we are focused on children in order to create change for our next generation. As research shows, children who combine healthy eating with increased physical activity, are better able to learn and be successful in school. As a result these children are more likely to become healthier adults.



We build strong **kids**, strong **families**, strong **communities**.

Page four

The PHC Team created the Keep it Moving (K.I.M.) Program. This program encourages children to increase their physical activity, and improve their eating habits during and after school, and at home. K.I.M. is a fun and motivating program created to empower children in the Harrison School District community. By occupying children in interactive, fun, non-competitive after-school activities, kids learned that "keeping it moving" and making healthy choices is fun.

From October 2008- May 2009, 240 third through fifth graders from three elementary

schools participated in the K.I.M. program, a 50% participation rate. These activities were led by school staff, with the help of volunteers, every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon after school. At the end of the school year, an award celebration took place to recognize all participants. Those who "kept it moving" the most were entered into a drawing to win a bike, and twelve elated boys and girls won mountain bikes and helmets donated by Wal-Mart.

We have recently been awarded a Live Well Colorado Planning and Mobilization grant,

with the potential of continued funding for another five years. Our challenge now is to effectively partner with other organizations in our community in order to sustain this work, and to expand it with nutritional education, policy change, and built environment improvements.

## Did You Know? Colorado YMCAs...

- **serve people of all incomes, all ages, all races, and all abilities**

Colorado YMCAs serve more than 280,476 people in diverse communities statewide. Ys bring together young and old, men and women, and people of all faiths, backgrounds, and incomes. In 2006, more than \$2.2 million was raised for scholarships, subsidies, and other community services.

- **serve nearly 165,000 youth in nonschool hours**

Colorado YMCAs give children and their parents the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities, including teen clubs, sports leagues, family nights, community service projects, and gang prevention programs. All youth activities incorporate the YMCA core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

- **provide child care statewide**

Colorado YMCAs are the largest provider of child care in the state, serving more than 7,900 children per day. Ys offer affordable, high-quality child care to working families, regardless of ability to pay. Scholarships, subsidies, and outreach provide critical assistance to low-income families.

- **encourages volunteerism**

Colorado YMCAs are volunteer-founded, volunteer-based, and volunteer-led.

A little over 9,000 Y volunteers give their time to help meet the needs of the Colorado community.

- **partner with neighborhood organizations**

Colorado YMCAs work with local and county governments, including police and fire departments, public housing developments and children's services; schools; churches; and other community and civic organizations.

- **promote health and wellness for the entire community**

Since their founding, Colorado YMCAs have provided health and fitness programs as an integral part of their mission. Y programs emphasize preventive health care, encourage healthy lifestyles, offer rehabilitative services, and are accessible to everyone in the community, regardless of ability to pay.

- **lives its mission every day**

The Colorado YMCAs join over 2,600 other independent YMCAs that are guided by the common mission: "To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all."

- **Celebrate more than 133 years of community service**

The year 2008 marks the 133rd anniversary of the YMCA movement in Colorado. YMCAs have touched the lives of virtually all our States residents through value-based programs in camping, aquatics, child care, fitness, youth sports, teen leadership, and volunteerism.



# Activate America®

**Activate America is the YMCA's response to our nation's growing health crisis. The YMCA is redefining itself, and engaging communities across the country to better support Americans of all ages who are struggling to achieve, and maintain, well-being of spirit, mind, and body.**

We are shifting how we focus all aspects of our work, both inside and outside the YMCA, to better engage health seekers. We define "health seekers" as all children, youth, teens, adults, and families whose successful pursuit of health and well-being requires continuously supportive relationships and environments.

Inside the YMCA, we are influencing and motivating health seekers to

make positive changes in their pursuit of well-being. And, outside the YMCA, we are helping create and sustain healthier communities.

- In the last 10 years, obesity rates in the United States have increased 60%.
- \* The current generation of American children could be the first to lead shorter lives than their parents, according to the New England Journal of Medicine.
- \* More than 50% of U.S. adults do not get enough physical activity to make a difference in their health.
- \* Health problems related to obesity cost our country an estimated \$117 billion a year, as well as the indirect economic costs of lost productivity.

JOIN LEARN GROW EXCEL VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY ORGANIZE PARTICIPATE  
VISION CLARITY JOIN LEARN GROW EXCEL VOLUNTEER  
Grow Excel Volunteer Community Organize Participate