OUR MISSION
To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

MAKING OUR MISSION POSSIBLE
DEAR Y FRIENDS,

Happy New Year! It is hard to believe we are now in the year 2020! It seems like just yesterday I was writing this letter for our 2018 annual report. As a child I sometimes wondered what the world would be like in 2020...maybe flying cars, teleportation, the colonization of Mars, etc. While none of these things have happened yet, the future is certainly bright for our community thanks in large part to the work of the YMCA. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year as Board Chair and while I understood the mission and programming of the Y before this role, I now have an even greater appreciation for the impact the YMCA has on our community. I am very proud and grateful for the staff, board, members, and volunteers who make this all possible by dedicating time and financial resources to further our cause.

When I think of the New Year I like the quote mentioned above. While the New Year is a time for celebration and reflection, it is also a time to look at the year ahead with hope and optimism. While the YMCA has yet to start the next chapter, I am fully confident it will be one worth reading. But before moving forward I want to take a moment to look back at 2019. As you will see in the annual report, much was accomplished this past year. A few highlights include:
- Becoming debt free thanks to donors and Baker College
- Leadership transition and naming Mike Kelso as the new Executive Director
- Another sold out Dancing with the Y event

I could continue to list all the accomplishments of the Y this past year but instead please read them in the following annual report. Instead I would like to move forward to give you a preview of what our next chapter will entail. As you know, Dan Smith left us as executive director in May 2019. Dan did an exceptional job in this role and we knew it would be difficult to fill his shoes. However, Mike Kelso was selected as his replacement after a nation-wide search and Mike has been doing a phenomenal job. The Y is in good hands with Mike at the helm.

Another event upcoming in 2020 is the 10-year celebration of the opening of our facility. It’s hard to believe it has already been ten years! The building has been a great tool to allow us to fulfill our mission over the past decade. Stay tuned for an upcoming celebration this winter.

While it is time to celebrate the anniversary of our building, it is also important to recognize the challenges that come with this asset, such as space for programming and maintenance costs. These challenges arise because of the growing use of the facility, which is exactly its purpose. We are confident that we will be able to address these new challenges through community support that we are blessed to receive.

I want to end by thanking all of you for your continued support of the YMCA and our mission. I joined the Board and became Board Chair because I am truly a passionate believer in the cause and the work we do. The Y makes a difference in the lives of our youth and families and we could not do this without you. I’m excited to continue creating the stories of lives changed because of the Cadillac Area YMCA. So please join me in writing the next chapter of our book in 2020.

Sincerely,
Randy Hill, Board Chair
Cadillac Area YMCA
Dillon Community Center

THE NEW YEAR STANDS BEFORE US, LIKE A CHAPTER IN A BOOK, WAITING TO BE WRITTEN.” – MELODY BEATTIE

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MAKING OUR MISSION POSSIBLE
Cadillac Area YMCA Dillon Community Center
2009 to 2019

Ten years ago, we opened the doors of the Cadillac Area YMCA Dillon Community Center and it has been a great tool to fulfill our mission. With this facility, we are able to hold programs of all kinds from gymnastics to swim lessons, group exercise classes to drop-in sports, early childhood education to afterschool teen programs. These programs, and more, create great small communities of supportive people. Throughout this period of time, we have been able to meet many needs in our area around youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. We want to thank the community for their support in helping us serve others. With your continued support we hope to make an even greater impact over the next ten years.
Drowning is the second leading cause of deaths for kids ages 5–14.

Participation in a formal swimming lesson can reduce the risk of drowning by 88% among children one to four years old.

Drowning is preventable.

The YMCA pool is likely our most significant facility feature and brought an important asset to the community 10 years ago when we opened the doors. It is the only full-sized lap pool within 45 miles. We continue to have an impact on the community with aquatics programming. Over the past 10 years we have seen thousands of children, teens and adults participate in aquatics programs at the Y; not only for fun, but also gaining important skills in safety and fitness. Swimming is an essential, lifelong skill, which is why we conduct such varied aquatic programs and will continue to do so.

One program that has shown significant impact in recent years is our Safety Around Water program (SAW). It started with Lake City Area Schools four years ago, and has now expanded to five schools, positively affecting 225 youth each year. SAW is about preparing children for various scenarios around water and being able to react in ways to protect themselves. The water can, and should, be fun, but preparation is the key to safety.

The 4th grade teachers report that students’ academics have also improved as a result of their SAW program participation.

“In addition to learning swimming and aquatic safety skills, students are making improvements in the classroom as a result of the YMCA SAW program. Their teachers have noticed when a student overcomes his/her fears of a challenge, they now have the confidence to apply to other situations. ”

- Linda McGiness, SAW program advocate, retired educator
Another recent swim team development has been former Cadillac Currents swim team member Abraham Apfel signing his National Letter of Intent to swim at the collegiate level with Virginia Tech University. It’s so great for the Y to be an asset for a young man like Abraham. He was able to utilize his passion and talent for swimming and discover a broader world of opportunity. We don’t know how many youth from our community may go as far as Abraham has, but we see it as a shining example of the opportunities the Y can help facilitate.

FOR A SENSE OF BELONGING

2019 was the inaugural season of the Cadillac High School Girls Swim Team. This collaborative opportunity came to the Y from CAPS as they were exploring opportunities to expand athletic offerings for female students. This was a great addition, giving another opportunity for our youth beyond the YMCA Cadillac Currents swim team.

“The swim team offers a competitive opportunity for the girls in our community to continue growing and excelling in a lifetime sport. With the support of the Y, ten girls competed on our first annual girls swim team and finished 5th in the Coastal Conference. We anticipate program growth over the next several years and are excited to strengthen our partnership.”

– Jennifer Brown, Superintendent Cadillac Area Public Schools

2019 SUMMARY OF GRANTS

The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation in honor of Michael Campbell
AT&T Foundation -Teen STEM Programming
JC Penney Communities Foundation
MDHHS – HOST Afterschool Program
State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs – HASP Grant
United Way – Teen Center & Teen Impact
YMCA of the USA – Camp Capital Grant
YMCA of the USA & Walmart Foundation – Year Round Food Program
YMCA of the USA Strategic initiatives Fund– Camp Access Grant
YMCA of the USA – SWIMS
**COMMITMENT TO FITNESS**

**FREE WALKING WEDNESDAYS**

Since 2013 we have opened our indoor walking track to all community members to walk for free on Wednesdays from 11am-2pm.

**WORKSITE WELLNESS**

Worksite wellness is an opportunity for your business or corporation to utilize the resources of our YMCA. We offer fee-based employees’ wellness and healthy eating seminars to meet your employees busy schedules. Call Mary Spalding to inquire.

**YOUTH FIT**

With great support from Munson Healthcare Cadillac Hospital and CAPS, Youth Fit began in 2015 and has served over 125 students, including more than 26 students in 2019 alone. Youth Fit impacts the lives of 5th and 6th grade students who are not otherwise actively engaged in regular physical activity.

**GROUP EXERCISE**

Each week we offer over 35 group exercise classes for everyone in our community to attend. Since opening our facility in 2009, we have had more than 80,000 participant visits, with 7,000 of these visits occurring in 2019. Our participants enjoy a variety of classes, from intense sessions of Aqua Kickboxing to gentle unwinding yoga. Group exercise classes with one of our many instructors offers something for everyone!

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**CARDIO DRUMMING**

Where are you on Wednesdays at 5:30pm? Every Wednesday, Shanna Grimes and more than an average of 15 members and community members gather at the YMCA to participate in Cardio Drumming. Cardio Drumming transforms drumming into an incredibly effective, moderately intense workout. The stability balls act like a drum as you learn different rhythms to develop coordination and cardio endurance. Shanna began teaching Water Fitness at the YMCA in 2014, but early this year she began teaching on land. She never imagined that she would teach, but has found a passion for doing so. Her magnetic personality creates fun classes with plenty of modifications meant for everyone! Stop by or visit the YMCA website for more information and a full offering of group exercise classes offered at the Y!

“If you want to sweat and have fun doing it, then do cardio drumming. If I can do it, you can do it!”

David Brainerd, YMCA MEMBER

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**SENIOR FIT**

Senior Fit is designed for people who are 55 years of age or older with a chronic condition, and want to improve their health through exercise. We invite you to participate in this program held at the Cadillac Area YMCA.

A Senior Fit member has seen great benefits in the short time since they joined. “I joined Senior Fit in August 2019. I am so happy I did. It has done so much for me. So much stronger, standing straighter and walking much better. My family has really noticed and they keep telling me what a difference it has made. Maria does a great job, so caring and kind.”

If you or someone you know is interested in more information regarding the Senior Fit program, please call the YMCA.

Thank you Munson Healthcare Cadillac Hospital for your continued partnership and support in this successful program!
In August of 2017, due to a conflict at her former daycare, Amber was looking for a new, safe place where she could take her son Liam. That is when she learned about the childcare service at the Cadillac Area YMCA. “They approved my son and me for their new daycare site at Baker College.” Amber states, “It was a sudden relief for us because it was income efficient, friendly, and caring.” What started out as a safe place for Amber to send her son for childcare has now turned into a life changing decision for them both. “I had formed a sense of purpose and trust as they transferred my son to the YMCA building for daycare and head start when he turned 3 years old. I was reassured of the education my son has and will receive. Because I’ve trusted the YMCA so much and for so long I felt like I wanted to be a part of that as well,” Amber remembers. During that time a position opened up in our early childcare department and Amber applied. On January 15th of 2019, Amber joined our early childcare team. “She has become such an asset to us here at the Y,” states early childcare director Debbie Blake. “We are so glad that she has become part of our Y family and that she can come and feel like those struggles she has had in her life are not holding her back.”

Amber and Liam
IMPACTING THE COMMUNITY

Cadillac woman looking for help with health as part of Believe ... Christmas Wishes Do Come True campaign

By Rick Charmoli, Cadillac News
Permission to run from Cadillac News

CADILLAC — When life happens things can change in an instant, and a lot of life happened for Sheila Simerson in 2019. Like many of us, Sheila was looking to make some changes to improve her health. Her plan of attack was to rejoin the Cadillac Area YMCA and seek assistance from a personal trainer. As she was about to start on her journey for better health, her husband was diagnosed with cancer after a mass was found in his abdomen.

She said her husband had non-Hodgkins lymphoma and due to where it was in his abdomen, the mass couldn’t be removed. Instead, he had to have six months of chemotherapy and then six weeks of radiation treatments for five days each week at the Cowell Family Cancer Center in Traverse City.

When her world turned upside down, Sheila put her exercise plans on hold. Instead of working out, she was taking on all the major responsibilities at home. She was transporting her husband to Traverse City for monthly appointments, chemo treatments, and radiation treatments.

From July 2018 to March 2019, her time was dedicated to her husband’s cancer journey as well as working a part-time job. Due to her husband’s illness, Sheila said she was on indefinite leave from her other job working at the local Gordon Food Service store.

“I handled everything while my husband was dealing with cancer and now he has follow up appointments. It was hard to get ahead financially to get a membership at the Y,” she said. “We are just now getting back on our feet.”

With her husband on the mend and her return to Gordon Foods this past October, Sheila started to think about what she wanted to do to help her be healthier. While things are getting better, Sheila said she still is not able to afford a membership at the YMCA. She was close but not quite yet.

So that is when she decided to write a letter to Believe ... Christmas Wishes Do Come True campaign. Sheila said she was reluctant to submit her wish. She felt awkward and out of her comfort zone, but after some reassurance, she sent in her wish.

“I need to lose between 75-100 pounds. Over the last year, I have eaten out of stress. I want good direction to know what exercises to do to help tone and lose weight,” she said. “I also need to learn about nutrition that goes with that to help with my diabetes, but also so I’m not starving myself.”

To help Sheila on her physical fitness and nutrition journey, the Cadillac Area YMCA is providing her with a membership to the Dillon Community Center through March as well as multiple sessions with a personal trainer through the Believe campaign.

Cadillac Area YMCA Chief Executive Officer Mike Kelso said helping Sheila is a great example of how the organization is living out its mission and helping out people in the Cadillac community.

“She was a member years ago and had a rough patch with several things with her husband and health,” he said. “If we can give her a few months to get her started and a personal trainer to help her that is part of our mission.”

Kelso said he also is humbled that Sheila asked for a membership at the Y when she could have asked for anything to help her on her healthy journey.

“She recognized the value of her experience here and it feels great to be able to provide this for her,” he said.

After her membership is complete, Kelso said they will work with her to make sure she can continue with her journey at a price that will work for her budget.
DISCOVER
THE GREATNESS WITHIN

Damien Brooks first came to us at the Y through the Taekwon-Do program back in 2013. Later, Damien joined the Teen Impact program and became a regular at the YMCA Teen Center.

Beyond typical challenges of the teen years, Damien has cerebral palsy which adds a layer of complexity to his life. Some daily living skills, physical activity and communication are particularly challenging for him. At first it was hard for Damien to engage in an open peer setting at the Y Teen Center. Once the staff were able to build communication and rapport with Damien, we saw his personality and deep desire to connect with others. We had to challenge him a bit because Damien would, at times, take advantage of peoples’ perception of his disability. We realized this was a barrier for Damien in making the connections that he desired and really came from his own frustrations.

The Teen Impact program helped Damien take steps towards finding his place in the world. The program really facilitated Damien finding a group of other teens and adult mentors he could connect with on a more genuine level. We really started to see him shine and his confidence increase. He became more willing to do things for himself despite his physical challenges. After completing Phase 1 of the program, Damien continued as a peer mentor, supporting and challenging others.

As he continued to grow, we saw Damien take another leap forward as he joined the Wexford Missaukee Career Technical Center’s Digital Media Production program (DMP). This really brought Damien some focus on his education and he more seriously started contemplating his future. The excitement and passion he shared with the Y staff about his DMP work was encouraging for us all.

“If it wasn’t for the Y and Teen Impact I would not have found the confidence to try the DMP program. “
- Damien Brooks

“When Damien first entered our Digital Media classroom as a junior last year, we were not sure what the extent of his abilities would be. But with Damien’s persistence and his desire to try anything and everything we had available in this class, he has exceeded our expectations. With very few accommodations, he has been able to work many sporting events and gain pertinent experience. I know Teen Impact has had a profound effect on him, in fact when he sees a shy student in our class he tells them how much he has gained from the program and counsels them to join. He inspires our staff daily. They have been working with him to find a way for him to work towards getting a driver’s license. Damien has such a great work ethic and attitude that I do not have any doubt that he will accomplish all that he sets his mind to. We are better teachers and staff for having met Damien.”
- Kammy Cook, Digital Media Production Instructor,
Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center

“Nobody could be more proud of Damien than I am. His personality and sense of humor alone are unmatched, but the things I’ve seen and still see him overcome in this world amazes me every day. The sky is the limit for this kid. No matter where he goes or what he does in this world, I’ll always be his biggest fan.”
- Jason Brooks, Damien’s Father
At the Y, strengthening community is our cause.
Every day, we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.
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At the Y, strengthening is our cause.