

Y IMPACT



LANCASTER FAMILY YMCA ASSOCIATION | LANCASTERYMCA.ORG

SUMMER 2015 | IN THIS ISSUE: SUMMER LEARNING AND FUN

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

LEARNING DOESN'T TAKE A VACATION

Closing the Achievement Gap by Preventing Summer Learning Loss

To succeed in school and life, youth need ongoing learning opportunities especially during the summer months. According to the National Summer Learning Association, all young people will experience learning loss if they do not engage in enrichment activities during the summer. For many children, summer camp provides the perfect backdrop for continued education and important life lessons. When children attend camp their minds are opened to new ideas and they are supported by mentors who encourage them to gain new skills and try new things. Identifying plants during a nature hike, mastering the sport of archery, or working as a team to make it to the top of the climbing wall, not only builds a child's self-confidence, it also fosters a desire for learning and development that they carry with them into the coming school year.

More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities.

Children growing up in affluent households often have many opportunities to engage in fun enriching summer experiences like camp. As a result, they usually retain much of what they've learned in school, and can build on that learning during the summer months. Unfortunately, children from less affluent families often miss out on these opportunities, putting them at risk for summer learning loss. More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. With nearly 18,000 children living in poverty in Lancaster County, this is a problem the Lancaster Family YMCA is particularly dedicated to taking on.

The Y offers enriching camp programs at our three branches and YMCA Camp Shand. Our financial assistance program helps many lower income families send their children to Y camp, but we are dedicated to doing more.



We've chosen three signature programs for 2015 – existing Y programs that will be expanded this year in order to address pressing community needs. As part of our 2015 Summer Learning and Fun signature program, we are increasing financial assistance to offer 100 additional youth the opportunity to attend Y camp this summer.

To learn how you can support our Summer Learning and Fun opportunities at the Y, please visit lancasterymca.org/summer-learning-fun.

Y PARTNERS AND FRIENDS RALLY TO SEND KIDS IN NEED TO CAMP

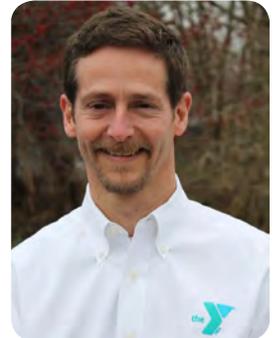
Every year approximately 300 kids attend overnight camp at YMCA Camp Shand, where they have the opportunity to become more independent, learn new skills and enjoy week-long adventures with mentors and friends. For two-thirds of these campers, financial assistance from the Lancaster Family YMCA is the only way they would be able to attend.

As part of our Summer Fun and Learning signature program, and in collaboration with community partner organizations, volunteers and donors, we set out to identify more children from low-income families and raise the additional funds needed to send them to camp. We reached out to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lancaster County, the Boys and Girls Club of Lancaster, Cross Connections Ministries and Penn Manor School District, asking them to identify disadvantaged children who would benefit from a week at Camp Shand. We were thrilled when these community partners nominated more than 60 kids.

A \$10,000 grant from the YMCA of the USA's Strategic Initiative Fund provided the resources to send 20 of the selected kids to a week of overnight camp for free, and was the catalyst for an even bigger impact. The grant required a 1:1 funding match. In order to raise the matching support needed to provide financial scholarships for at least 20 additional campers, Lancaster Family YMCA volunteer board members stepped in, making their own gifts and asking their friends and families to join them. Their generous support totaled over \$13,000 and resulted in many more happy campers this summer!

A NOTE FROM OUR CEO

Summer is camp season at the Y. It's one of our best opportunities to help children learn, grow and shape positive futures. But we can't make that impact if children don't attend camp.



In this issue of Y IMPACT, you'll learn about our Summer Learning and Fun Program, and our increased efforts in 2015 to make our valuable summer camp experiences available to more children from low-income households.

Thank you for your support in helping us bring potential to life for the youth in our community.

Jeffrey S. Kenderdine
President & CEO

SUPPORT SUMMER!

Learn how your gift can support summer camp programs at the Y, visit lancasterymca.org/give.





FOSTERING FUTURE LEADERS

Bamford Campership Fund and Lebanon Legacy Program

The Lancaster Family YMCA began addressing the issue of summer learning loss for disadvantaged children with the establishment of the Thomas H. Bamford Memorial Campership Fund in 2007. Every summer, this program provides a free week of overnight camp at YMCA Camp Shand for 26 at-risk students from the School District of Lancaster. Two students are selected from each elementary school in the District to participate in this program that recognizes the late Tom Bamford's significant contributions to the Y, and his commitment to improving opportunities for Lancaster City youth.

A similar program formed through a partnership with the Lebanon Valley Family YMCA and YMCA Camp Shand, offers a free week at Camp Shand for forty-four students from the Lebanon School district. In the Lebanon Legacy program, each Lebanon elementary school nominates two rising fifth grade students who have demonstrated good citizenship by helping others and the community, leadership

qualities and academic commitment. This program is funded by Camp Shand alumni from the Lebanon area whose lives were enriched by their camping experiences.

Kids selected for the Bamford campership and Lebanon Legacy programs enjoy all the traditional outdoor camping activities, and also participate in programs specifically designed to build self-confidence, independence, leadership skills and lifelong friendships. They attend the first week of overnight camp at Camp Shand each June, known collectively as Future Leaders Camp. At the end of the week, the campers' families are invited to join them for a special ceremony where the accomplishments of each cabin are celebrated and campers receive individual accolades for ways that they demonstrated personal growth and leadership skills.