

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER: Making a difference in people's lives

Racine YMCA | Posted: Wednesday, March 2, 2011 11:32 pm

The only truly important thing about any community service organization is the success it has in making a difference in the lives of the people it works with. If it's not making a difference, it shouldn't exist. For more than 135 years, the Racine Family YMCA has been making good things happen for people. Over the years there have been many great success stories ... times when the YMCA has been able to positively affect people's lives. Many have participated in YMCA, youth sports and swim programs and have experienced values oriented emphasis; there are many other Y opportunities that focus on important values.

Here's a recent letter from a parent expressing her appreciation for the YMCA's impact on her son:

"I would like to take the time to thank the YMCA for the improvement in my son, (name omitted). When he first started with YLA over a year ago, he was having trouble in school. He did not pay attention in school regarding both his homework and his general attitude. He was sometimes disrespectful to other children as well as teachers and other adults. All in all he was not to the level that it should have been for a boy his age and intelligence.

Since joining the YLA, (my son) has shown major improvement in all aspects of his life. He not only pays more attention in class, but his grades this year are far better than they were the year prior. We get less phone calls from the school regarding his behavior. He is more respectful to all others around him and helps out other children, which was not something he would have normally done before.

Overall, we are very impressed with his improvement and can attribute his attitude directly to his involvement with the YLA. This is a wonderful program and we hope that he has the opportunity to continue participating in it."

Another parent, again relating her son's experience with the YMCA's Young Leaders Academy writes:

"Since he has been in the program he has worked on organization, accountability, responsibility and respecting others. The program, the coordinator, the boys and other involved staff contribute to the holistic approach ... Just being a part of a group that talks about their issues like peer pressure and addresses his individual concerns, serves as a positive reinforcement.

Since he first started participating in the program, I have noticed a 180-degree change in his attitude which used to be quick to dismiss others, rude and disrespectful to adults at times. He now understands that he must respect others, be accountable for his behavior — and mediocrity is not acceptable when it comes to his grades and being competitive in sports. Overall, the (YMCA's YLA) program is a positive reinforcement in his life that I as a parent am very thankful for."

These are just a couple of success stories expressing how the Y has positively affected the lives of the kids and families, and thanks to the lead gift of \$6 million from the Diversey Corp., and the contributions currently being requested in the community, the YMCA will soon begin construction of a new, 70,000-square-foot second facility located next to Mount Pleasant's new Civic Campus. This second facility will allow the Y to meet community needs in another location, providing an increased capacity to remain vigorously focused on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

The Racine YMCA is a cause-driven organization that exists to strengthen the foundations of community. That's what the Y is all about. That's what we do, that's who we are.