

Metro Atlanta YMCA

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# President's Letter

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Fred L. Bradley

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## Sharing news and events with friends of the Metropolitan Atlanta YMCA

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December 2008

As we approach the end of the year, I am pleased to report the Metro Atlanta YMCA has grown to become the fourth largest YMCA in the United States. Here are some of our **2008 highlights and accomplishments**:

### Civic leaders honored

**Metro Atlanta YMCA Board Chairman David Homrich**, of **AMB Group LLC**, received the **2008 Bransby Christian Leadership Award**, our highest volunteer award. David became a Y volunteer in 1986 and joined the Metro board in 1995. He served the past four years as board chairman and has provided exceptional leadership. We appreciate his dedication and commitment.

**Glenn Thomson**, a partner at **Alston & Bird**, was recognized as the **2008 Volunteer of the Year**. For nearly 30 years, Glenn has been a board member at a local branch or on the Metro board. He chaired the Partner With Youth annual campaign for two years and remains involved.

### Responding to community needs

In 2008 **\$30 million** was raised for the **Partner With Youth Comprehensive Campaign – Wave II**. It includes the annual campaign, endowment fund and new or expanded facilities. These generous contributions will help to meet the growing wellness challenge of developing healthier, more active kids; address the on-going need for supervised, affordable programs when school is out; and prepare young children for school by providing an early childhood education foundation. **Bill Holby of King & Spalding** is the campaign chairman.

Volunteers raised \$3.6 million during the 2008 **Partner With Youth annual campaign**. Thanks to the outstanding leadership of **Melanie Platt, AGL Resources**, the Metro board surpassed its \$750,000 goal. We are grateful to our donors because more people are requesting financial assistance for YMCA programs and services than ever before.

### New YMCA for Stone Mountain residents

The DeKalb County Board of Commissioners approved the **YMCA's Wade Walker Park** project, a public/private partnership. **DeKalb County** will build a new recreation center in south DeKalb which the Y will operate and maintain.

### Falcons Fitness Zones expand at local Ys

At the Metro Atlanta YMCA, our focus is on building strong kids and reducing childhood obesity. Much of this work is accomplished through partnerships with organizations like the **Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation (AFYF)**. This year the AFYF expanded its Falcons Fitness Zones to 30 sites around metro Atlanta: five are connected with the **Centennial Place YMCA** and two with the **East Lake YMCA**. Our Ys are engaging kids during the school day and out-of-school times in all kinds of organized physical activity including dance, swimming, running, flag football, and HOPSports.

### Resident camp expanding

We look forward to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers executing the lease for a new YMCA resident camp site on Lake Lanier. The agreement should be complete by the first quarter 2009 and follows a six-year effort to develop a youth camp and family center at Bethel Park in Forsyth County. The cultivation for fundraising will begin next year, under the leadership of **Dave Stockert, Post Properties**.

### Child care news

**Pine Ridge Elementary School** in DeKalb County became the first Metro Atlanta YMCA after-school site to be accredited. It is one of 20 in the state to receive this distinction. The **College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center**, a Decatur-DeKalb Family YMCA preschool program, received accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Accreditation identifies the best childcare programs and is a benchmark for quality standards and excellence.

Child care expanded into Paulding County this summer. The **YMCA Paulding Early Childhood Development Academy**, a preschool on Hiram Road, offers full-day, licensed child care and enrichment for children ages six weeks to five years, along with summer day camp.

### 2008 Y-CEO produces outstanding results

**Denis Duncan, PricewaterhouseCoopers, and Kevin Race, Wells Real Estate Funds**, tournament committee co-chairs, raised **\$210,000** at this year's **Y-CEO Heritage Invitational Golf Tournament**. A full field of 86 players participated in a great day at East Lake Golf Club.

### Metro Teen Initiatives

**Teen leadership programs** are expanding throughout our Ys. Teens joined together for international excursions (2008 trips involved 24 teens in India, Costa Rica and Prague); Mission: Atlanta, which served homeless children and families in downtown Atlanta; the YMCA's week-long Blue Ridge Leaders' School in N.C., attended by 58 teens; and the annual teen leadership film festival.

### Anniversary celebrations

The Metro Atlanta YMCA celebrated **150 years** of service in 2008. Also this year was the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the **Centennial Place** and **Ed Isakson/Alpharetta Family YMCAs**.

### Looking ahead to 2009

**Charlie Yates Jr.** begins his term January 2009 as **chairman of the Metro board of directors**. Charlie has been an active board member since 2000. Effective January 1, 2009, **Ed Munster** will be the Metro Atlanta YMCA **president and CEO**. He brings 33 years of successful Y leadership to the position.

### A fond farewell

In my 40-year YMCA career, I have learned it is the commitment of volunteers, donors, partners, and staff members that makes the YMCA relevant for each generation. I've been reflecting on the past 15 years in this association...

It's the **mission**. YMCA programs and services demonstrate the Y's mission in action, along with the higher purpose of serving others. Our mission is to help each person – adult or child – reach his or her full, God-given potential in spirit, mind and body. There is no job or cause more important than molding young people so their character takes shape in a positive manner as they prepare to lead future generations.

There is a **magic** about the Y, and it is volunteers – thousands throughout the metro area – coming together for a common cause. We are here for a moment in time to contribute and make a difference. It truly is the community – through our volunteers – who owns the YMCA. They entrust the organization to staff members to help drive the growth and the Y's impact in our communities.

Individually and collectively, you are caring and constructive leaders. No matter your role, you are **investing in the lives of those who need Y programs and services**, and I thank each of you for your continuing involvement, dedication and service.

The beauty of Christmas reaches every little corner of the world. Wishing you all the joys of the season in yours,

Fred L. Bradley