



“y the w makes a difference”

www.ywcabergencounty.org

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**YWCA BERGEN COUNTY CELEBRATES 90 YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE
FOR WOMEN, GIRLS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

RIDGEWOOD/HACKENSACK/NJ/Rockland County NY– January 4, 2010 – Amid a year-long string of events celebrating the 90th anniversary of the YWCA of Bergen County (www.ywcabergencounty.org), and the launch of a viral marketing program “*Y the W Makes a Difference*” (www.facebook.com/pages/YWCA-of-Bergen-County/278474275022), YW leaders point to the significant strides that the YWCA has made on behalf of women, girls and their families, emphasizing the organization’s ongoing commitment and preparedness to meet the challenges that persist.

“The needs of working women, including access to affordable, quality child care and maintaining health and wellness, remain our top priorities”, says Monica Roers, CEO of the YWCA of Bergen County, which maintains 540 full-time and seasonal staff, supports a \$9M annual budget and serves over 5,000 members in northern New Jersey and Rockland County, NY. “It’s an ideal time to recognize our members, volunteers and donors – but it’s also a benchmark opportunity to re-dedicate ourselves to the mission of empowering women and eliminating racism.”

When the organization opened its doors in 1920, women had just earned the right to vote, and many were entering the workforce for the first time. Ninety-year-old Ridgewood resident Barbara Eaton reminisces about her involvement with the organization as a volunteer, starting in the 1950’s.

“When I was a girl, my mother instilled in me the value of helping others,” says Eaton, who moved to Ridgewood in 1950 and today lives just blocks from the YWCA. “My first volunteer job with the YWCA was working the switchboard at the welcome desk. In those days services like day care and after school programs didn’t exist. But our YW had recently become the nations’



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first to jointly run a facility with a YMCA. Staff and volunteers were challenged to stay true to the organization’s mission while partnering with the YMCA to serve the community.”

Over the years, YW programs and services have expanded dramatically. Roers explains, “In the early days, we supported young, working women by providing food services. Today, the YW offers a full range of programs including all-day child care, nursery school, before and after school care, fitness, dance, swimming, aqua-therapy, and special needs recreation. One indication of how we have responded to the changing needs of women was the opening of our 24/7 Rape Crisis Center and crisis intervention line, the only one in the County, which we have operated since 1979.”

Throughout 2010, the YW will host a variety of 90th year celebratory activities, including giveaways and special events to raise awareness of its programs and services that improve lives, inspire change and create opportunities (www.ywcabergencounty.org/90th.html).

“We recognize that making a difference is a two-way street,” says Roers. “We expect to create dialogue within our community about the ways that the YW is having a positive impact. Every day we help over 2,000 children and adults, making us the largest YWCA in the northeastern United States.”

About the YWCA Bergen County

The YWCA Bergen County is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. We are the area’s largest provider of child care services, a recognized leader in health and fitness programs, and operator of the county’s only Rape Crisis Center. Celebrating nearly a century of commitment to our community, today we improve the lives of thousands of women, girls, and their families.



Monica Roers, Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Bergen County

Monica Roers is the Chief Executive Officer of the YWCA Bergen County, a position she has held since February 2005. She oversees a staff of 540 employees who provide a wide array of programs and services to the Bergen County community, including child care, health and fitness, rape crisis services, diversity awareness programs and women's empowerment workshops.

Monica has devoted her career to helping build strong nonprofit organizations in communities across the country. Prior to joining the YWCA, she worked for the National Office of Friends of the Children based in Portland, Oregon. Serving in the number two capacity as Managing Director, Monica oversaw a growing network of Friends of the Children chapters across the United States.

She spent nine years leading the Center for Nonprofit Resources in New Orleans, which provided management training and consultation to thousands of nonprofit organizations across southeast Louisiana. In addition, she has worked for the United Way of Greater New Orleans, the United Way of Central Massachusetts, the America Council on Education, and the United States Census Bureau.

Monica received her bachelor's degree in Sociology with a minor in Business from the College of St. Catherine, the largest women's college in the country, and holds a Master's in Public and Private Management from Yale University.

She has served on various nonprofit boards, including the Advisory Board of the International Project Nonprofit Leadership at the University of New Orleans, the Mid South Collaborative for Nonprofit Development and Dismas House, a half-way house for formerly incarcerated individuals re-integrating into the community.

A native of Minnesota, Monica lives in Ridgewood, NJ.



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YWCA Bergen County: Y the W Makes a Difference

For **YWCA** Bergen County, the “W” is all about empowering women, girls and their families across all generations, abilities and walks of life. We do this by providing programs and services that improve lives, inspire change and create opportunities. And we’ve been doing it 24/7 since 1920, throughout Bergen County—and beyond.

The 5 “W’s”:

Who (we serve): Women, girls and their families, across all generations, abilities and walks of life.

What (we do): We provide programs and services that improve lives, inspire change and create opportunities.

When: 24/7 since 1920.

Where: Throughout Bergen County and beyond—wherever our programs take us.

Why: Because **We** stand for **You**: a force for peace, justice, freedom and dignity.

10 Ways Our YW Makes a Difference

1. **YWCA** is the world’s oldest & largest multicultural women’s organization.
2. **YWCA** Bergen County has been serving our community since 1920.
3. As the area’s largest childcare provider, we give the parents of 1,500+ children the peace of mind to pursue their professional and economic goals.
4. Children in 25+ schools throughout the county participate in our before & after care programs.
5. Our summer camps have provided fun & affordable family experiences since 1960.
6. We offer quality health & wellness programs to empower women, girls & families.
7. Our specially designed fitness and aqua-therapy programs serve mentally & physically challenged individuals of all ages.
8. We operate the only 24/7 Rape Crisis Center in Bergen County (hotline: 201-487-2227).
9. The community-wide Stand Against Racism is the most recent initiative undertaken by our YW to help eliminate racism in Bergen County.
10. The Annual Tribute to Women in Industry (**TWIN**) awards has honored more than 1,800 women and 200 companies since its inception in 1974.



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YWCA Bergen County: Milestones

1920 - Nell Doremus receives a Charter from the National **YWCA**. The Ridgewood YWCA is established in the Opera House in Ridgewood, NJ (now the site of the bus terminal), and provides food services to the community's young working women.

1928 - Growth in membership necessitates a move to larger quarters on E. Ridgewood Avenue, across from the present movie theater. Dues are \$1 and total membership is 207.

1930 - The **YWCA of Hackensack, NJ, affiliates with the national **YWCA**.**

1939 – The Ridgewood **YWCA** purchases a new building on the site now occupied by the Stop and Shop.

1947 - The Newcomers Club, with an enrollment of 44, begins at the **YWCA**.

1951 – The nation's first joint **YWCA and YMCA opens at our current 112 Oak Street, Ridgewood location.**

1954 - The **YWCA** of Hackensack separates from its joint operation with the YMCA. The Grannon Pool opens at 112 Oak Street, Ridgewood.

1957 – First **YWCA Nursery School opens with 50 children.**

1958 - Swimming programs for the developmentally disabled win national recognition.

1960 – Our first summer day camp, Camp Y-Oak-A, opens.

1966 - Small Fry Club begins in the **YWCA** of Hackensack gym, serving preschoolers whose mothers use the facility.

1970 - The Room Registry Service is established by the Hackensack **YWCA**, matching single working women with homeowners with rooms to rent. The Second Start Jail Program is also established, teaching grooming and yoga to women in the Bergen County Jail Annex.

1972 – First **YWCA child care center opens in the First Reformed Church on Prospect Street in Ridgewood to meet the needs of working women.**

1974 - The **YWCA** Women's Center gets underway.

1975 - Tribute to Women and INdustry (**TWIN**) is founded by **YWCA** board member Evelyn Atwater, honoring 50 professional women and the companies they work for.

1975 – After School Program begins for 1st through 3rd graders of working parents.

1979 - The Hackensack YWCA undertakes the sponsorship of a countywide rape intervention program (S.E.R.V.E.).

1983 - Although funding ceases, the **S.E.R.V.E.** program continues, staffed by volunteers.

1985 - With **YWCA** leadership, the Bergen County Coalition Against Sexual Assault (**CASA**) is organized and sponsors its first conference, "Violence Against Women." The Hackensack **YWCA** also begins to take an active role in the Bergen County Coalition to Shelter the Homeless.

1986 - The new Campbell Wing is dedicated at the **YWCA/YMCA** Ridgewood site, housing a second pool and the Center for Fitness.

1988 - The **YWCA** Martin Luther King Jr. Essay Contest is inaugurated.

1988 - The **YWCA** and The Valley Hospital offer an employer-sponsored child care program on the hospital grounds.

1989 - Camp Ma-Kee-Ya opens in Harriman State Park, NY.

1991 - The Ridgewood YWCA assumes the programs of the Hackensack YWCA, creating the YWCA of Bergen County.

1993 - The **YWCA** starts a Judo program for developmentally disabled and handicapped individuals. The National Judo Association recognizes the program as the first of its kind.

1995 - Encore Plus, a program that provides low cost breast cancer screening for medically uninsured women, is brought into the **YWCA**.

1995 - Senator Bill Bradley helps kick off our first "Week Without Violence."

1996 - Encore Plus receives the Johnson & Johnson Community Health Care Crystal Award and a two-year grant for \$100,000.

1997 - The first Study Circle on Racism is held.

1998 - A third **YWCA** childcare center opens in Haworth.

1999 - TWIN celebrates its 25th Anniversary of honoring professional women.

2001 - The **YWCA** provides support and free programming to families of 9/11 victims.

2001 - The Rodie Child Care Center opens in Upper Saddle River. A second **YWCA** day camp opens in Cresskill.

2005 – A joint YMCA/YWCA Capital Campaign to raise funds for 112 Oak Street building renovation is completed.

2007 – YWCA and YMCA celebrate grand re-opening of Oak Street facility. Improvements include the new Bolger Fitness Center, a handicapped accessible elevator in the new lobby, and central air conditioning.

2007 - **YWCA** consolidates its administrative offices in Hackensack, further extending its footprint in Bergen County.

2008 – YWCA Rape Crisis Center receives funding from the Division on Women and forms a county-wide collaborative, Sexual Assault Free Environment (S.A.F.E.) Coalition, which begins to develop strategies aimed at preventing sexual violence perpetration and victimization.

2008 – First annual “**Denim Day in NJ**” is observed on April 28, spearheaded by the Rape Crisis Center to raise awareness about consent and the prevention of sexual violence.

2009 - YWCA Bergen County holds its first Stand Against Racism, joining 14 sister YWCA’s in the northeast region in raising awareness about racial discrimination and celebrating diversity.

2009 – First Girl Power Camp is held in July, providing pre-teen girls with a unique, “girls-only” environment for building self-esteem and leadership skills.

2009 – **TWIN** turns 35, having honored 1,804 women and 213 corporations since its inception.

2009 – The **YWCA** After School Program expands to its 27th location in Bergen County, and now serves over 1,000 children daily.

**2010 – The YWCA celebrates
“90 Years of Making a Difference”
in the community!**

YWCA Bergen County: Fact Sheet

- The **YWCA** is the oldest and largest multicultural women's organization in the world, with more than 25 million members in 122 countries. In the U.S., 300 local associations serve 2.6 million members.
- The Ridgewood **YWCA** was founded in 1920. Upon assuming the programs of the Hackensack **YWCA** in 1991, the combined organization became the **YWCA** Bergen County.
- **YWCA** Bergen County serves 5,000 members and their families at 31 sites in Bergen County, NJ and Rockland County, NY.
- **YWCA** Bergen County is the area's largest provider of **Child Care** services, caring for an average of 1,500 children daily.
 - All Day Child Care is available for children ages six weeks to six years.
 - Three Nursery Schools provide education for children ages 18 months to four years.
 - Enrichment programs are offered for children ages two months to six years.
 - Before and After School programs provide supervision to almost 1,400 children in 27 locations.
- For over 40 years, **YWCA** Bergen County has provided fun and affordable **Summer Camp** experiences for children ages 2½ to 16, serving an average of 900 campers each summer at four day camps in Bergen County and one residential camp in Bear Mountain, NY.
- **YWCA Aquatics** provides American Red Cross Certified Swim Lessons for swimmers ages six months to adult in two indoor swimming pools.
- **YWCA Fitness and Dance** provides fitness and wellness classes for teens, adults and seniors and dance classes for children ages three to 14.
- **YWCA Special Needs Programs** offer adapted recreation classes for mentally and physically challenged individuals of all ages. These include group and private swim lessons and gym activities for youngsters.
- **YWCA Aqua-therapy** provides rehabilitation, recreation, and instruction for adults with neurological and orthopedic conditions. Programs include arthritis classes and no-fee swim instruction for cancer survivors.
- The **Bolger Fitness Center**, which the **YWCA** runs jointly with the Ridgewood YMCA, is a fully equipped fitness center with cardio and strength training equipment that serves 1,000 members.
- **YWCA Girls Programs** empower the women of tomorrow by helping them build self-esteem, develop healthy body images, and acquire leadership skills. These include fitness and wellness classes and a “girls only” summer camp for pre-teens.
- **YWCA** Bergen County provides **Community Programs** designed to enrich the lives of women, girls, and their families in all stages of life, including: the Ridgewood Newcomers Club, the Women for Sobriety support group, writing classes, and professional development workshops.
- Established in Bergen County in 1974, The **YWCA's Tribute to Women and Industry (TWIN)** awards honors managerial, executive, and professional women for their achievements and acknowledges the progressive policies of the companies that honor them. TWIN has honored more than 1,800 women and 200 corporations and been replicated in communities across the country.
- The **YWCA** operates Bergen County's only **Rape Crisis Center** and 24/7 crisis hotline, providing confidential crisis intervention, emotional support, information, and referrals to survivors of sexual assault, their families, and friends. The Center also offers support groups, prevention-oriented community education programs, and training for professionals and volunteers who work with survivors.
- The community-wide **Stand Against Racism** is the most recent initiative undertaken by the **YWCA** to help eliminate racism in Bergen County.