

# HERE FOR GOOD



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Now serving Meriden, New Britain and Berlin communities

Meriden YMCA | 203 235 6386 | [meridenymca.org](http://meridenymca.org)

New Britain-Berlin YMCA | 860 229 3787 | [nbbymca.org](http://nbbymca.org)

Berlin YMCA Program Center | 860-357-2717 | [nbbymca.org](http://nbbymca.org)



Dear friends,

This year the Meriden YMCA is celebrating our 150th Anniversary. Everything we do is in service of our community mission to develop the potential of our youth, create healthier kids, families and adults, and give back to our neighbors in need.

As we celebrate our history of changing thousands of lives here in Meriden, we work even harder now in the present to carry on this legacy which can be seen in our community impact.

Looking to the future, the Meriden YMCA Board of Directors and the New Britain–Berlin YMCA Board of Directors have voted to join forces and combine into one association to better serve our communities. The goal is better service for members and community, economies of scale in purchasing and providing service, and access to talent and resources to expand service offerings and help more families.

Together we can change more lives. Please act today and give, join, and volunteer.

Sincerely,

John Benigni, CEO



John Benigni, CEO



**The Y.™ For a better us.™**  
meridenymca.org | (203) 235-6386



# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## Youth Development, Healthy Living, Social Responsibility

- More than 1,000 children learned to be safe and confident in the water last year. In our swim lessons, we not only teach kids to swim, we also build confidence.
- We nurture the development of 850 children in our programs for infants through school age children. The Y is more than a child care provider. We prepare your children for life.
- Biggest Winner Challenge participants lost over 1900 pounds to date and 150 children and families broke the cycle of childhood obesity through our free PACE program. The Y is more than a place to work out. We transform the health of our community.
- Our Friday night at the Y program serves up to 150 middle school students each week. The Y is more than a place to hang out. We provide a safe place for kids to be themselves.
- Last year 45% of our campers received financial assistance. Mountain Mist Day Camp is more than fun in the sun. We help kids discover who they want to be, and develop life skills - responsibility, self-reliance and how to work together with people from different backgrounds.
- More than 1,120 holiday meals were served and delivered during Thanksgiving and Christmas to help our neighbors in need.
- The Y is so much more than a gym. It is a place where our community's families gather for family time at our free monthly events such as Bounce Into the New Year, Dr. Seuss Night, Healthy Kids Day, Luau Night at the Pool and Family Fun Day at Mountain Mist.
- In 2015 the Meriden YMCA employed 510 employees.



# HELPING FAMILIES

## Maria (Maggie) Diaz

On July 29th of last year, I had two major surgeries for rare conditions. Imagine your tissues have lost the “glue” (collagen) to hold them together. It is called Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome or EDS which is a genetic defect in the collagen that is in the

connective tissue for organs, muscles, ligaments, skin... everything in your body. This is what is

happening all over my body and part of my brain had started to slide down into my spinal column which is called Chiari 1 Malformation.

The surgeries involved a “Brain Decompression and Craniocervical Fusion” by a specialist in New York. I am still recovering and still doing physical therapy.

Our kids, Devon and Delaney are very active 9 year olds. They do theater (MYT), dance, summer camp, swimming, and basketball. With me being out of work for medical reasons and my husband only able to take a limited time off, we had no idea how we were going to take care of the kids and keep them active. We needed Devon and Delaney to go to camp while I focused on recovering but we could not pay for it last year. The Meriden YMCA offered Devon and Delaney camp scholarships (with funds raised by the Annual Campaign) so they could go to camp for free last summer while I recovered from these major surgeries.

This was a very big deal to us. The Y helped us tremendously during a very tough time for our family. It took a lot of worries away. Thank you. It means so much to my family.



## Meriden YMCA, New Britain, Berlin YMCAs Work Together to Better Serve Three Communities

The Meriden YMCA board of directors and the New Britain–Berlin YMCA board of directors agreed to merge into one association effective June 30 to better serve all three communities.

YMCA's across the state and U.S. often collaborate on marketing, applying for grants, sharing ideas and resources. Numerous YMCAs across the country have merged and there are YMCA associations already here in Connecticut. The goal is better service for members and community, economies of scale in purchasing and providing service, and access to talent and resources to expand service offerings and help more families.

Committees from both boards spent several months examining the possibility in depth before voting May 25 to merge and form a new 30 person board with representation from all three communities.

In an association, each YMCA retains their identity, members and community relationships they have fostered through years of service while gaining greater benefits.

An association name of Nutmeg YMCA is still under review by the national YMCA. As an example of what the new name might look, you might see on letterhead that says, the Meriden YMCA, a member of the Nutmeg YMCA Association.

In this new association, Meriden, Berlin and New Britain members can take group classes at any of the three locations, and register for any children's youth sports or arts programs at the lower rate for full members. Normally, you would have to be a member of a particular YMCA branch to get the lower full member rate and take group exercise classes. All full members can take advantage of the New Britain YMCAs 24 hours a day 7 days a week fitness facility.

The New Britain–Berlin YMCA and Meriden YMCA offer different group exercise classes, all of which full members can access. For example, New Britain has S.W.E.A.T., Yoga, Bike–O–Vision, Silver Sneakers, Treadmill Bootcamp, Cut and Core, The

Bottom Line and Intro CrossFit. The Meriden YMCA offers Jump Fit, Combat Cardio Kickboxing, Piloxing and more.

The Berlin YMCA Program Center at 362 Main Street now offers convenient group exercise classes.

More offerings have been added in the Berlin–Kensington community. The Berlin YMCA Program Center now offers youth theater, Little Chefs, Crafty Kids and more. Starting in September, before and after school care will be available in Griswold Elementary, Hubbard Elementary, & Willard Elementary Schools in Berlin. Families can register for programs right at the Berlin YMCA Program Center, or at the Meriden and New Britain YMCAs.

The fundraising we do in each of our communities will continue to benefit children and families in each community. We are committed to continuing to operate in a fiscally responsible manner and being good stewards of the funds entrusted to us. While we believe the most generous gifts have no restrictions, we welcome donors to instruct us regarding how their gift should be used.

By working together we believe our YMCAs can deliver more services of the best quality in the most effective and efficient manner to strengthen the communities we serve.

### **About the Y**

As the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community, we are dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected and secure children, adults, families and communities. Every day our impact is felt when an individual makes a healthy choice, when a mentor inspires a child and when neighbors come together for the common good.

Everything the Y does is in service of making us—as individuals and a community—better. For a better you. For a better community. For a better country. For a better us.

# HEAD START PROGRAM

**2015 – 2016**

## **MERIDEN YMCA HEAD START PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT**

### **Funding**

Federal: \$1,157,172, State: \$175,311, School Readiness: \$255,024. The federal approved budget:

- Personnel - \$733,539 which consists of salaries for program managers, content specialists, teachers, teacher's aides, and nutrition services, substitutes, clerical and fiscal staff.
- Fringe benefits - \$247,106 which consists of taxes for social security, federal, state, workman's comp, health, dental, life insurance.
- Supplies - \$19,843 which consists of office supplies, child and family service supplies, food service, disability supplies, assessments, paper products.
- Contractual - \$8,938 which consist of contracts services, computer financial support software to assist with budgets, monthly statements.
- Other costs - \$128,808 which consist of utilities, insurance, general building maintenance repairs, local travel, staff training, child services consultants, parent services, accounting , legal services, publications/advertising and other minor expenses like the audit, payroll services, employee hiring, and administrative support.



# HEAD START PROGRAM

## Enrollment

We are funded for 161 children and fully enrolled on first day of school. The program served 191 children over the course of the year. The average monthly funded enrollment was 81.1% with actual monthly enrollment at 82.6%. There were 189 income eligible families and 2 over income children who receive special education services. We were still well below the 10% maximum over-income per regulations. 10 of those 189 were children were eligible due to being in foster care. 100% of enrolled children attending in the program are currently up to date with medical exams. 100% of enrolled children attending have documented dental care. Vision screenings were done and of the children referred 14 children were diagnosed as needing prescription glasses not previously identified.

We expanded collaborative efforts with CHC Meriden for both on-site behavioral health therapy for families (started spring 2016), and dental hygiene services for families (to start in the fall 2016). 2 Dental providers ( 1 private practice & UConn Dental School/Farmington) as well as a number of dental students came for on-site visits with children and classrooms doing dental health and oral exams/topical fluoride varnish.

## Parent Workshops

Parents were actively involved and received training/workshops on: Pedestrian Safety; Nutrition workshops; money matters including budgeting & saving workshop; fatherhood events; early childhood; health education; kindergarten transition and the breakfast with the principal's event; stranger danger awareness; basic first aid; oral hygiene; adult vision screenings; WIC; Energy Assistance; Dr. Seuss family literacy promotion. Additionally, newsletters were sent out on child passenger safety, pedestrian safety, foot care, oral health, nutrition, and just recently summer safety. We offered three workshops for parents and children who will be entering Kindergarten in

the fall. We discussed topic such as literacy, Math and Science. At each meeting parents meet other families, ask questions about Kindergarten and with their child do activities around that certain topic.

## Preparing Children for Kindergarten

One of our goals is to prepare children for Kindergarten. Our program develops school readiness goals based on the Head Start Frame Works, Head Start Performance Standards, State Standards, end of year Pre-K Expectations, Kindergarten Readiness profiles, observations and Parent input. There were 14 specific identified school readiness goals. They focused on social and emotional development, approached to learning, language and literacy, physical development health, cognitive and general / knowledge.



# HEAD START PROGRAM

These are assessed and reviewed three times a year to ensure we are on target. Teacher's also plan kindergarten school readiness skills that are aligned to the CT early Learning and Development Standards, such as writing their name, patterning and some children begin learning site words. We continue to work with the Board Of Education. This year some of our staff attended a meeting with other preschool staff as well as Kindergarten teacher's. There were 4 main topics regarding Preschool, Kindergarten and the transition to Kindergarten that were discussed at great length in effort to bridge the gap between pre-k and Kindergarten. For our parents at head start we held our Annual Breakfast with the Principals. Parent's had an opportunity to ask questions to board of Education staff about the transition to Kindergarten. We had a staff member from each school as well as some from central office. We also created and gave to parents a Help me Grow-A-Road-Map to Kindergarten for all families. These pamphlets targets 3 different areas that will help children be ready for Kindergarten

## Office of Head Start

We had a health and safety review conducted in October 2015. There were no findings from the review and we are in compliance of all regulations. There was no corrective action needed for continuation of the grant.



## MERIDEN YMCA

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