

AYP Directions

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Virginia AYP Chapter 25:
Dedicated to the support of
Virginia YMCA professional
staff.

 Find us on
Facebook

As part of our ongoing attempt at nurturing a community and continuing the conversation about our Y careers, we have created an AYP Chapter 25 “fan page” on Facebook. To start things off we posted a photo album of images from the Spring Conference. There is also a “Discussions” tab we encourage you to introduce yourself to and share something with the group. We want all of you currently using Facebook to become fans today!



Letter from our President, Bill Zazynski



In our profession, change sometimes wreaks havoc to the members and volunteers that we serve. Sometimes it takes a little hand-holding, a phone call to massage the change to be acceptable. Over the summer, our YMCA movement unleashed a new brand platform to help us tell our story better. Many of us are now making plans to change how we tell our stories of our mission, changing our marquee and just about everything else with our old brand logo. It’s an exciting time to convey our new voice through our new visual and verbal communications.

Not to be out done, our AYP National Offices have changed their address as well. In late August, AYP National Executive Director/CEO, Donna French Dunn moved the offices from Rhode Island to Springfield

College in Springfield, MA. The YMCA and Springfield College share a unique history, heritage, and partnership, which date back to the establishment of the College, then known as the School for Christian Workers in 1885. Over the years, hundreds of YMCA professionals and volunteers have graduated from Springfield College to go on and influence their communities through the work of their local YMCAs. Today, Springfield College offers a YMCA Professional Studies Program for YMCA career candidates to prepare students for positions in the YMCA. What a great opportunity for our AYP movement to directly connect to students and future YMCA leaders as they start their YMCA professional journey.

Besides the move, there are several new support staff whom will be behind the scenes to allow our movement to take the

next steps. Lindsey Lerit will be working as the Communications and Digital Media Specialist, and Lauren Anderson is the new Chapter and Member Program Coordinator. These changes are in place to continue to connect our members to the fast moving digital age of technology, thus advancing our movement.

Lastly, please note the information in this edition about our AYP Chapter 25 *Catch Your Limit* Challenge held at Camp Thunderbird in Chesterfield on October 29. I hope to see you there and please bring your teammates to learn and grow through change!

In the “Y” Spirit,
Bill

“Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”

—John F. Kennedy



The Y is advocating every day to promote healthy living, youth development and social responsibility in communities across the country. Share your story about how your Y makes a positive change in your community. (Submit your story to kwhite@ymcashr.org).

EAF Makes A Difference

Thanks to the generous support of AYP Chapter 25, the Emergency Assistance Fund (EAF) is helping more families in need. Unfortunately, the need is as great as ever with more and more people in our YMCAs facing adversity in their lives.

One member of our Y family who has benefited from the EAF is Sandy Wirt, a past Director of Student Programs at the YMCA of Virginia Tech. Sandy started her YMCA career as a Membership Representative at the YMCA of Roanoke Valley in 2005. Two years later, a full time position became available at the YMCA at Virginia Tech and Sandy jumped at the opportunity to work there even though her commute was over an hour. She was two years into her job when her life took a turn.

Sandy's husband Brad had been feeling overly tired for the last few months and had a large lump on his neck. In September 2009, he went to the doctor and was told it was a dangling lymph node and not to worry. Brad is a branch manager of a local heating and air conditioning company. They were about to change insurance plans so Sandy suggested he go back to the doctor just to make sure everything was okay. After getting the same diagnosis, Sandy told him to ask for a second opinion. Soon after that he had an appointment with an ears, nose, and throat doctor. Immediately upon seeing Brad, this new doctor was concerned about the size of the lump and the fact that

it wasn't painful. The doctor performed a biopsy in the office and Brad and Sandy had to wait four agonizing days to get the results. Sandy was at work one evening when Brad called and said, "I have CANCER". She was devastated by the news, but had to drive home from Blacksburg to Roanoke. To this day, Brad regrets calling her at work and giving her that news, knowing she would be upset on her long drive home.

On December 14, 2009 Brad was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. For a 36-year-old guy, this was a huge shock. Fortunately his parents and a twin brother live in Roanoke, and two other brothers from Texas and Hawaii flew in to be with him for support as he began his chemotherapy. Sandy was very thankful to the YMCA at Virginia Tech and Gail Billingsley, Executive Director for being so flexible while



Sandy Wirt with her husband Brad.

in the Perspective Magazine and asked Gail Billingsley and Bill Zazynski, District Executive Director, Great Bridge/Hickory Family YMCA about it. They suggested she apply for the EAF to help with medical expenses, so she did. Bill Zazynski and Cal Johnson, Executive Director of the YMCA of Roanoke Valley, wrote a letter in support to the fund review committee, and

are beginning to get their life back to "normal". Sandy is so thankful for the EAF donation. She vows when she is financially able, she will start giving back to the EAF fund. Sandy knows a life-altering situation can happen to anyone at anytime, and it's important to help others through difficult times.

Please remember to tell the story of EAF and encourage any AYP member to apply for a grant if they are in need of financial help. Also, if you'd like to give to the fund please contact Jackie Grant at (540) 342-2332 or jgrant@ymcaroanoke.org.

*You make a living by what you get.
You make a life by what you give.*

—Winston Churchill

Sandy's focus turned to caring for her husband and their 11-year-old son, Avery.

As we can all imagine, the cost of cancer treatment is incredibly high. Each chemotherapy treatment costs more than \$25,000, and Brad needed treatment every 24 days. The co-payments alone were quite expensive. Fortunately, Sandy remembered seeing an article about EAF

she was blessed with EAF's Maximum Assistance Grant which was solely used for medical bills.

This has been a long and difficult year for the Wirts, but this past July Brad's cancer officially went into remission. They are hopeful it stays in remission, but are aware that a reoccurrence could happen with his type of cancer. Brad has returned to work and they

Budget Reminder:

Now's the time; don't forget to budget for the AYP Chapter 25 Spring Conference in May 2011.

Autumn Seminar: Register Today!



The time to sign up for the Autumn Seminar is now; don't delay! Your Chapter 25 is thrilled about this year's speakers, Tom and Melissa Laughon from *Catch Your Limit Consulting*.

Tom and Melissa will lead our group through the *Catch Your Limit* Challenge. Plan to learn about the "6 Thinking Hats" that will help us solve problems creatively. Experience the value of celebrating your accomplishments and staff, and learn to lead through change. We will also be focusing on team dynamics and working in groups, so this will be a wonderful opportunity for staff teams to grow together. Tom and Melissa are committed to keeping our group engaged with dynamic activities (with LEGOs!) and opportunities to learn new leadership skills

with immediate application. This is one Autumn Seminar you won't want to miss.

The Autumn Seminar will be held on October 29 at YMCA Camp Thunderbird in Chesterfield, VA. The cost for current AYP members is \$50; non-members who join the day of the seminar will pay \$85. Registration forms are available at ayp25.org on the Training and Events page.

If you have any questions please email Anna Schemmel at schemmela@ymcarichmond.org.

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Save the Date!

AYP 2011 National Conference

Inspiring Leadership—Advancing Our Cause
July 20–22, 2011

Hilton Anatole Dallas
Dallas, TX

The goal is to provide learning opportunities both through the educational program and through the exhibitor offerings, where conference participants can walk away with information they can use immediately. The focus is to provide tools for the Y professional's toolkit.

\$550

*Discount for groups of four or more.

