

Everyone knows “The Y” ... or do you?

Building on a Strong Foundation, the New Nashua YMCA Will Provide Greater Access and Benefits for Our Entire Community.

By MARSHA BOTTINO

Associate Director of Development

The YMCA is an internationally recognized and respected organization, yet the depth of its mission and work is often unknown.

As one of the largest not-for-profits in the state of New Hampshire, the YMCA of Greater Nashua is a true community organization, serving over 23,000 individuals annually, providing services ranging from child care and camp to sports, arts, and wellness programs to an amazingly diverse group of individuals encompassing all ages, religions, cultures and economic backgrounds. Through the generous donations of local businesses and community members, the YMCA's Y Cares Financial Assistance program makes it possible for those facing financial hardship to participate in these valuable programs at the Nashua, Merrimack and Camp Sargent facilities, providing a place for children to thrive and families to spend quality time together.

In its commitment to continually improving the quality of life in our community, the YMCA of Greater Nashua will significantly expand its capacity to serve the Southern New Hampshire region by building a new, state-of-the-art YMCA. Groundbreaking is scheduled for April 2010 off Exit 5W, immediately adjacent to Stellos Stadium, Mine Falls Park and Conway Ice Arena. The new facility will open in the spring of 2011.

What will this new Y mean? Here are the

thoughts of a few community members.

Nashua native and long-time business owner, Jimmy Stellos, is one of the countless individuals impacted by the Y as a kid. “Everyone went to the Y,” according to Jimmy. He remembers the Friday night junior high dances at the Y and with no hot water at his parents Harbor Avenue home at the time, “What a pleasure it was to go to the Y on a Saturday night for a hot shower.” Off and on through the decades Jimmy was a Y member and his daughters swam, danced and were cheerleaders for their church's basketball team that played in a league at the Y; always stopping at their grandmother's house on the way as it was practically across the street from the Y on Prospect Street.

The Stellos Family is proudly supporting the YMCA's capital campaign with a lead gift to the new Nashua YMCA using the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority's Business Tax Credit Program. “The city and the people of Nashua have been good to us and that motivates my family to give back. The Y was a safe-haven for me as a kid and this community deserves a first class facility for the kids now and for years to come,” Jimmy says.

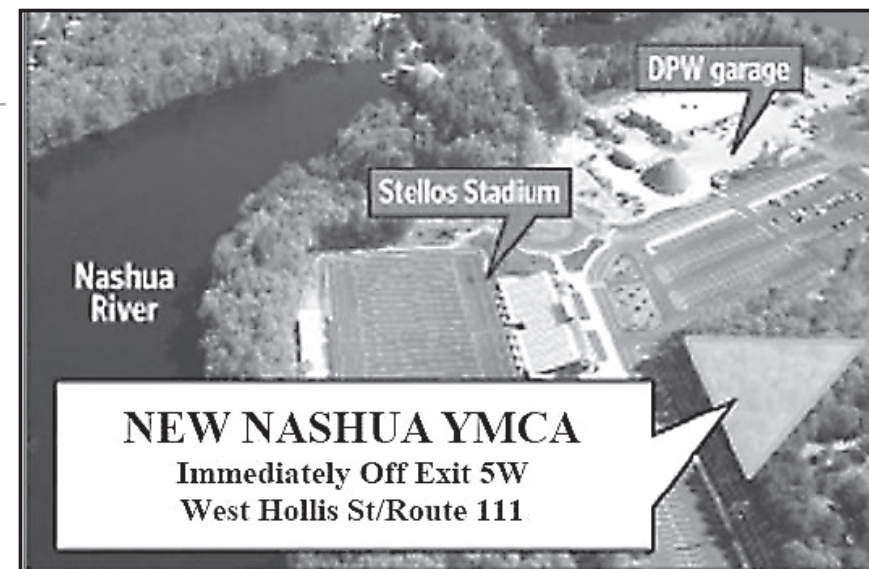
“Jimmy Stellos was the busiest guy in Nashua in the 50's and 60's,” recounts his long-time friend Tony Mandravelis.

Tony, the Nashua YMCA's longest standing member, has years of stories to share about the Y...66 years worth to be exact. Tony joined the Nashua Y on January 3, 1944 when it was located on Temple Street. Five years later, his brother Nick joined the Y and ever since the pair have been Y members.

“If I didn't have the Y, I don't know what I'd do each day,” Tony says. While racquetball is his game of choice now when he comes to the Y six days a week, Tony still remembers the thrill he got walking into the gym at the Temple Street Y for the first time as a kid and seeing a basketball court with actual metal rims. “The sound of the ball hitting that rim was something.”

Coming to the Y runs in the Mandravelis family as well. “When my kids were young they were Indian Guides and loved running around at the Y. My son was terrified of the water and dreaded those first swim lessons at the Y, but before you knew it, he was hooked; getting his scuba diving license at the Y at the age of 12 and he still loves the water – boating and swimming year round.”

“Because I've been around there so long, people often ask me the secret of staying motivated.” Tony's advice, “Find something active you like to do! I tell them. The Y has plenty of options to stay healthy and I've met more people through the Y.”



Nashua Telegraph Staff Photo by Don Himsel/Northstar Helicopter

Busy Nashua mother of two and owner of Sonance Communications, Kelly Dinoff, is another local resident who often calls the Y her home away from home. “The Y is so much more to my family than a place to workout, swim, shoot some hoops or take dance lessons, it's become an integral part of our lives as a place of learning, as a creative outlet, and as a place to connect with and give back to others.”

“I am proud to be a part of the capital campaign PR Committee and even more proud that my daughter's dance team, In Motion, has committed to raising \$50,000 to name one of the dance studios in the new facility,” comments Kelly. “It's invigorating to share in the excitement of the Y staff, volunteers, members young and old. I know already that the new Y is going to be a place where our family makes lasting memories together.”

To date, over \$8 million of the \$10.1 million project budget to build the new Y has been committed thanks to proceeds from the sale of the current Nashua Y, bond financing and capital campaign contributions. The Y is actively seeking charitable donations for the remaining \$2.1 million needed.

At the Y, no one is too young, too old, too rich, too poor or too disabled to take part.

Whether you are 3 or 103, at the Y YOU can improve your health, while making friends and learning something new in a family-friendly environment.

Don't delay; get to know your Y by stopping by for a tour or visiting on-line at www.nmymca.org. To make a tax-deductible donation to support the new Nashua YMCA, contact Mike LaChance, CEO at 598-1533 or mail a check to YMCA Capital Campaign, 6 Henry Clay Drive, Merrimack, NH 03054.

