



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



20
24



2024 YMCA OF SOUTHERN MAINE

**REASONS to
CELEBRATE**



20
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OUR MISSION

Building an inclusive, healthy community
for all, regardless of ability to pay.



REASONS TO CELEBRATE

As we reflect on 2024, we are filled with gratitude for the many reasons to celebrate at the YMCA of Southern Maine. Under the leadership of our President and CEO Helen L. Breña, this year has been marked by extraordinary growth, steadfast service to our community, and positive transitions that position us for an even stronger future. Through focused, strategic direction and a commitment to excellence, we are thrilled to report nearly 20% growth in both membership and revenue – a testament to the vital role our Y plays in Southern Maine.

We have continued to evolve and adapt, meeting the changing needs of our community with determination and purpose. A highlight was the triumphant return of our beloved Peaks to Portland a Swim for Kids, held in person for the first time since 2019. This signature event raised \$125,000, enabling us to strengthen our commitment to youth development through significantly expanded swim lessons and summer camp programs. These expanded programs are touching more young lives and creating enduring opportunities for growth. Our commitment to serving all extends to our vital work at the Y's Family Shelter, where we continue to provide support and hope to our unhoused neighbors.

This year of celebration is made even more special as we experience our own leadership transition. After serving on our Board of Directors since 2012 and as Chief Volunteer Officer since 2019, David Landry will complete his Board Chair term this year. During David's tenure as CVO and Board Chair, he provided steady board leadership through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, championing growth and our fundraising initiatives while providing thoughtful guidance to support our organization's mission across all branches. We are deeply grateful for David's dedication and leadership during this critical period in our history and appreciative that he will remain a member of the Board of Directors

As we look to the future, we are excited to welcome Steve Amendo as our incoming Chief Volunteer Officer. Steve, who has been an integral member of our board since 2016 and has served as Vice Chair since 2019, brings a wealth of experience and a passionate commitment to our mission.

As an experienced leader in the not-for-profit healthcare field, Steve understands the critical role that community-based organizations play in addressing local needs and improving the overall well-being of the communities they serve. As Chief Volunteer Officer, he is dedicated to ensuring that the YMCA of Southern Maine continues building an inclusive, healthy community for all. With Steve as CVO, our organization will focus on growth and expansion of services to meet the diverse and evolving needs of the communities we serve. Through innovation, collaboration, and strong partnerships, the YMCA will promote healthy living and empower youth development, all while prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion. Together, these efforts will create a sustainable future for the YMCA of Southern Maine, where everyone can thrive.

The stories within this annual report showcase the vital role our Y plays in Southern Maine. From expanding our housing initiatives to supporting families, we continue to strengthen the foundations of our community by creating a sense of belonging where everyone feels valued. These achievements belong to all who make up our Y family – our members, staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners.

As we look ahead to 2025, we remain energized by the opportunities before us. Together, we will continue to grow, serve, and celebrate the transformative power of the YMCA of Southern Maine.

1,785 New Americans found a welcoming community

2,425 families found support and connection at the Y

2,593 children discovered their leadership potential

3,403 older adults stayed active and connected

4,316 hours of community building through group fitness

8,796 weeks of housing for neighbors in need

8,944 swim lessons built confidence and safety in water

15,000+ neighbors welcomed into our Y family

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BY THE NUMBERS

Together in 2024, we nurtured the promise of tomorrow. Each day, we witnessed growth and transformation.



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE & PROGRAM INITIATIVES

\$720,000 Invested in Community

One in two Y members joined our community through financial assistance.

In 2024, we nurtured our youngest community members through our comprehensive youth programs, including preschool education, summer day camps, and life-saving swim lessons.

We also strengthened our community through dedicated work with housing, New Americans, veterans, families, seniors, all-abilities programming, the recovery community, and critical partnerships with other organizations working to make our community healthier and more welcoming.





MORE THAN A COMMUNITY



When Susan Lacerte retired and moved to Maine with her husband Archie in early 2022, finding a place to swim was a top priority. Having been a dedicated swimmer at the Flushing Y in Queens for 25 years, Susan knew the Y would be their new community anchor.

What she didn't expect was how the Y would adapt to meet both their needs. When Wellness Director Jeremy Norton noticed Archie struggling in the Strength Training for Seniors class, he didn't just suggest an alternative – he created one.

"Jeremy's thoughtfulness really touched me," Susan shares. "Instead of saying the class wasn't right for Archie, who has some health challenges, he said 'I'm going to figure out something that works.'" That something became the Adaptive Movement class, where Susan and Archie now exercise together every Thursday morning.

The class, led by instructor Michael Schwarz, provides more than just physical benefits. "Michael's sense of whimsy matches perfectly with Archie's zany humor," Susan says. "I see Archie making jokes and smiling. It's 45 minutes where someone truly cares about his wellbeing, and we get to share the experience together."

While Susan still swims three times a week – her "moving meditation" – she's found something even more valuable: a community that adapts and grows with them.

Susan's gratitude runs deep. So deep that she's sponsored five people to learn how to swim, passing forward the gift of belonging that the Y has given her and Archie.

"The Y doesn't just provide programs," she reflects. "They create solutions that keep people moving, connected, and engaged in life."



BUILDING HIS CONFIDENCE

When Grayson first came to the YMCA's Northern York County Branch for swim lessons, he wouldn't let water touch his hair. Today, his mother Emma watches him navigate the pool "like a dolphin."

"Now, he's purposefully putting his whole body in the water, going under and holding his breath," she said. "Everyone who knows Grayson has seen his confidence skyrocket. It has spilled over into his life outside of the water. The structure of the swim lessons has improved his home routine and built his confidence. He is a different kid."

Grayson has formed a special friendship with his classmate Charlie, leading to family movie outings and shared adventures outside the Y.

Since joining in summer 2024, Emma and Grayson have found more than just swim lessons – they've discovered a community. "We felt welcomed since the day we walked in the door," Emma shared. "It felt safe and like we belong here."

While Grayson flourishes in swim lessons and Prime Time (our "while you're here" childcare program for Household memberships) activities, Emma has rekindled her own wellness journey through evening exercise classes. "Evening Prime Time hours were on my Christmas list. It literally means the world to me."

The Y has surrounded Grayson with caring adult mentors – from swim instructors to lifeguards to the Branch Executive. His growing independence showed when he approached a lifeguard on his own to request his Green Band swim test, a moment that amazed Emma. "Grayson has gained something from every staff person he's interacted with at the Y."

"The Y has become our place," Emma said. "It is where we spend our time and where we feel most connected and supported as a family."



GROWING STRONGER AS A FAMILY

For the Woody family, the YMCA is more than just a fitness center – it’s a place where their entire family has found community, confidence, and opportunities to grow together. Stephen and Melissa Woody, along with their children, have made the Y an integral part of their daily lives.

Their youngest daughter Emmie thrives in the Y’s Prime Time childcare program, where staff members create a nurturing environment tailored to her interests. “Everyone knew her. It gave her a place of security. She really thrived,” Melissa shares. For their teen son Levi, the Y provides a space to build healthy habits and strong friendships after school. “It’s been really good for our oldest son to come here after school and work out with his friends,” Stephen notes.

Melissa’s own journey at the Y exemplifies personal growth through community support. “When I first started, I was really intimidated to go into the weight room,” she recalls. With Stephen’s encouragement and the supportive community at the Y, she gradually built both strength and confidence. “Everyone was supportive and encouraging. We ended up making friends at the gym and kept progressing,” Melissa explains.

What started as individual goals has deepened their family bonds. Stephen and Melissa work out together every Friday, cheering each other on. The impact extends beyond exercise – the Y has expanded their social circle in meaningful ways. “We’ve had people over to our house that we’ve met at the gym,” Melissa shares. “Building friendships together – that’s super important to us.”

For the Woodys, their YMCA journey isn’t just about staying fit – it’s about growing stronger as individuals while building a healthier, more connected family life together.





LOOKING FORWARD

Nurturing Family Strength: Our Commitment to Community

The YMCA of Southern Maine has always been a cornerstone of family support in our community. Every day, we see families build health, confidence, and belonging through our comprehensive programs. From the joyful splashes of family swim sessions to the crucial developmental foundations built in our preschool programs, we create spaces where families thrive together.

Our year-round offerings - including swim lessons, day camps, Prime Time "while-you're-here" childcare, family play spaces, and community celebrations like our Halloween parties - strengthen family bonds and support busy parents.

As we look to 2025, we're expanding our commitment to meet evolving family needs and are excited to launch several transformative initiatives:

The Family Stability Program in Portland represents a groundbreaking partnership with the Siemer Institute. As one of eight YMCAs nationwide selected for this innovative pilot, we'll help prevent homelessness and maintain educational continuity for 100 local families. While the reality in Portland is stark - many families are just one crisis away from losing their housing - we see hope and possibility. Each family in our program works with dedicated YMCA staff who help navigate resources, build financial literacy, and connect with crucial community services. This comprehensive program goes beyond immediate housing needs to build long-term stability and self-sufficiency.

What makes this initiative transformative is its focus on prevention. By intervening before families lose their housing, we help children stay in their schools, maintaining educational continuity that is vital for their future success. This preventive approach creates ripple effects throughout our community, strengthening the fabric of Portland one family at a time.

In Biddeford, we're partnering with United Way of Southern Maine to nurture tomorrow's childcare solutions through our innovative Childcare Business Incubator program. The Y will provide up to four childcare entrepreneurs a supportive place to launch their businesses and learn the skills necessary to build quality, sustainable childcare businesses - programs desperately needed in Southern Maine.

In Freeport, we've piloted Swim Club, a confidence-building team experience for children. And across our branches, we've increased the number of swim lessons, teaching critical water safety skills to children and adults.

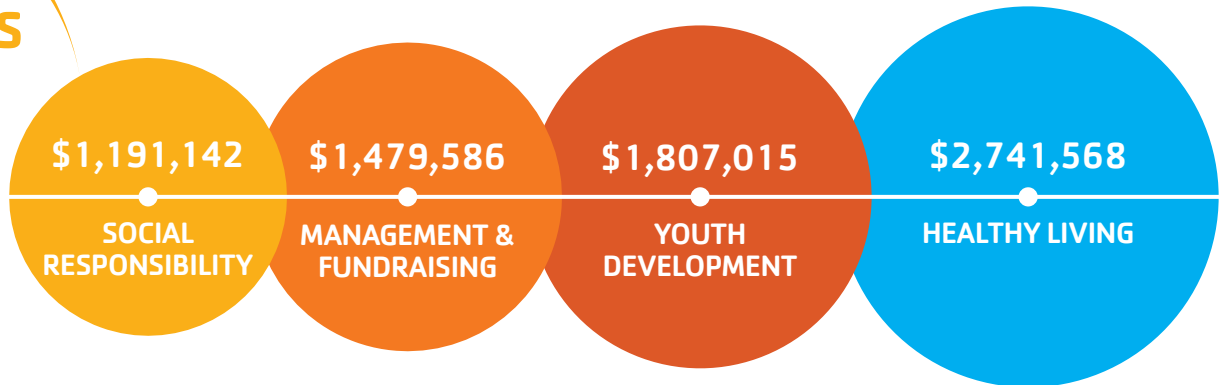
Meanwhile, our enhanced day camp programs continue to evolve, providing the caring, enriching environment families need to thrive. This summer, we're thrilled to include theater, archery, high and low ropes courses, and a new Counselor in Training leadership program at our camps.

These new initiatives build upon our proven foundation of family support while responding to current community needs. By combining established programs with innovative solutions, we're strengthening the fabric of our community - one family at a time.

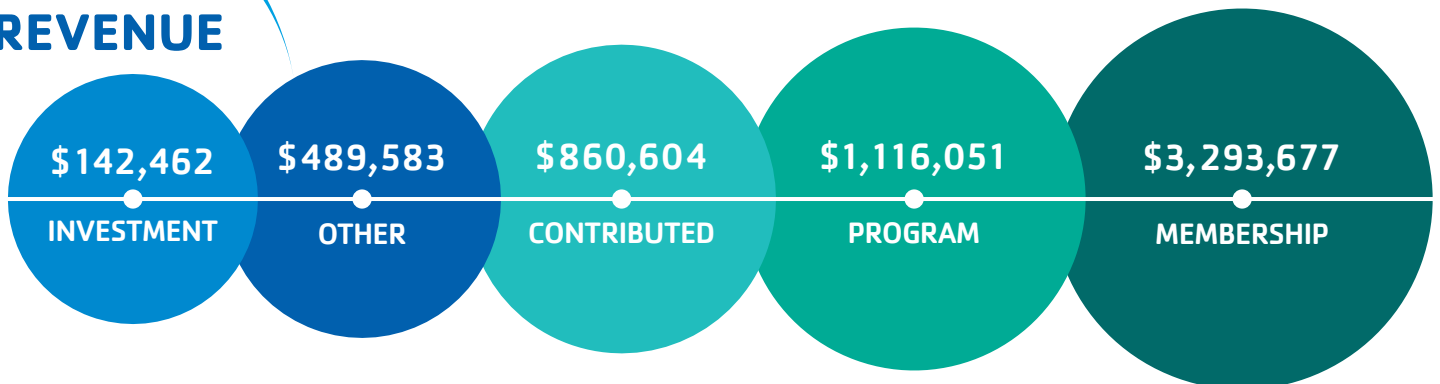
FINANCIALS



EXPENSES



REVENUE



LEADERSHIP

20
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YMCA OF SOUTHERN MAINE
www.ymcaofsouthernmaine.org

**CASCO BAY
BRANCH**

14 Old South Freeport Road
Freeport, ME 04032

**GREATER
PORTLAND BRANCH**

70 Forest Avenue
Portland, ME 04101

**NORTHERN
YORK COUNTY BRANCH**

3 Pomerleau Street
Biddeford, ME 04005