

Y Bridging Futures

NEWSLETTER OF **THE BAYVIEW HUNTERS POINT YMCA**, A BRANCH OF THE YMCA OF SAN FRANCISCO
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Renovation of the Bayview Hunters Point YMCA Building

By JULIANA CHOY SOMMER

The Bayview Hunters Point YMCA is embarking on Phase II, of its building renovation project, ensuring that the branch holds its place as a cornerstone community center for the neighborhood. The second phase of the building renovation includes adding a new elevator tower, general ADA upgrades and moving the main entrance of the building to the corner of Revere and Lane Streets.

The renovation of the former All Hallows Catholic Elementary School, into a community YMCA began with the acquisition of the building roughly 10 years ago. Shortly following the acquisition, a renovated gymnasium and dance studio were unveiled. The use of these two facilities has been overwhelming and has boosted community support for the current phase of upgrades. The final portion of the project, Phase III is projected to include a new community teen center, kitchen, and a Reggio inspired child development center.

There are many objectives for renovating the BVHP YMCA building that include improved circulation, improving overall aesthetics, addressing code and life safety issues. However, the clear focus of improving the building is to



enhance the programs that serve the community. With a modernized building, the program directors are able to access the use of light and space to better shape their curriculum.

The funding for this important project comes mainly from donors that see the YMCA's benefit to the Bayview Hunters Point Community. The 49er Foundation has had a strong presence at the branch for many years and proven to be critical in making this renovation a reality. Chuck Collins, President of the YMCA San Francisco notes, "We are so lucky to have the San Francisco 49ers as partners in creating community in the Bayview. Not only their financial support, but the countless volunteer hours that the York Family, 49er staff and players have contributed, have made a tremendous difference to the Bayview Hunters Point YMCA". ■

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Gina Fromer

Executive Director, Bayview Hunters Point YMCA



The Bayview Hunters Point (BVHP) YMCA is always working to make a difference for you, for your family, for our partners, and for the community.

For the last ten years, the BVHP YMCA has been creating its unique story. We have been providing a safe haven where people gather and celebrate family. Our programs have a direct impact on the families they touch.

We are committed to providing the best for children and families in our community. And so, we are expanding our youth services to include a community teen center and increasing our Health and Fitness Studio programs for active adults, while continuing to provide quality child and family programming. We see firsthand the difference that our YMCA makes every day in the lives of ordinary people.

The BVHP YMCA is an anchor organization working in collaboration with key partners to bring quality services and programs to the diverse community of Bayview Hunters Point. We are a focal point of youth development, youth leadership, and youth sports — a conduit for the forward movement of our future generation. It is our mission to build strong kids, strong families, strong communities by enriching the lives of all people in spirit, mind, and body. We will continue to grow and move our vision forward in the Bayview! ■

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Center for Academic Re-entry and Empowerment {CARE}

By EASON RAMSON

How many of you remember back in the day when a child (this may have been you!) was seen walking the streets or hanging out during school hours? By the time that child arrived home his/her parents had received a phone call to alert them that little Johnny/Susie didn't go to school today...

Truancy is a community problem, not just a school district or probation issue. At the Bayview YMCA, where we build Strong Kids, Strong Families, and Strong Communities, we believe it will take an entire community's effort, working together to make a difference. As a community, we must remain cognizant that if our kids do not show up in our classrooms, they will surely show up in our juvenile halls, prisons, or funeral homes.

To that end, we determined that it was imperative to further develop and/or redefine our approach by designing and implementing the CARE Program here at the Bayview Hunters Point YMCA, in collaboration with the Department of Children, Youth & Families and the San Francisco Unified School District. The mission of the CARE Program is to provide youth a safe and supportive place to re-engage with the San Francisco School system. This is accomplished by a collaborative team approach involving parents and caretakers, schools, community-based organizations, and other public entities.



The CARE Program uses a comprehensive truancy-intervention agenda designed to support our school system and parents by providing mechanisms to help re-engage, re-motivate, and re-empower students and promote academic achievement.

GOALS:

1. Engage youth between the ages of 13-17 who have been truant.
2. Reduce the number of truant youth on the street corners and other potential "hot spots unsafe areas".
3. Increase the chance of successful completion of high school among youth at the center.
4. Be a centralized Truancy Drop-in Center for our community.

With the ongoing support of our local merchants, businessmen, SFUSD, DCYF, MOCD, CRN, JPD, faith-based organizations, parents, volunteers, SFPD, and the community at large, we will achieve the YMCA's Mission to build Strong Kids, Strong Families, and Strong Communities. ■

49ers Foundation Support of the Bayview YMCA

By JED YORK



Since its inception, the 49er Foundation has been an integral supporter of the Bayview Hunters Point YMCA. “They have been involved since the beginning. They were the first supporters of the Fellas Program, an after school teenage boys program, and contributed \$250K to the Capital Campaign to support the construction of the gym, new dance studio, and parking lot,” stated Gina Fromer, Executive Director of the Bayview Hunters Point YMCA. “Their commitment is truly inspirational.”

The 49er Foundation is the non-profit community extension of the San Francisco 49ers football organization. Over the past 4 years, the 49er Foundation has given over \$4,000,000.00 to various non-profit organizations throughout the Bay Area.

The 49er Foundation not only supports the BVHP YMCA financially, but has demonstrated its commitment with an active physical presence within the organization. Jed York, Vice President of the 49ers, is an active member of

the Board of Managers of the BVHP YMCA. The 49ers have invited the youth of our Branch programs to visit 49er headquarters, training camp, and many games. “The kids are blown away by meeting the players that they idolize. It is really incredible to see,” said Fromer.

Reginald Duhe’, Director of the 49er Foundation, had great things to say about working with our Branch. “They do a fantastic job” he said. When asked why, of all the many organizations in the Bay Area, the 49ers have been so committed to the BVHP YMCA, Reginald explained, “The 49er Foundation’s goal is to keep kids safe, on track, and in school. That is exactly the focus of the BVHP YMCA, with activities like the after school program and the computer lab, giving kids the opportunity to do well. The BVHP YMCA is here to stay and has the best interests of the community it serves in mind.”

We, at the Bayview Y, are so fortunate to count as one of our many supporters such a dedicated and positive organization as the San Francisco 49ers - from management to players, to staff. We appreciate their commitment to kids, as well as the community at large, and look forward to continuing to work together to encourage young people to fulfill their potential. ■

Lyn-Tise Bradley

JUST 4 GIRLS

Words cannot express how grateful I am for the “Just 4 Girls” program started at the Bayview YMCA. I was an original member of J4G when it was started by my sister, Geoffrea Morris. Initially, it was a program that she made me be a part of, but shortly after, it became my escape from the perils that were taunting me in my community.

The program showed me that there was so much more to life than my immediate surroundings. I was able to connect with Valerie Crane-Dorfman and Janay Richardson. Although they were donors to the program, they became our mentors and friends. What may have seemed little to them was monumental to the J4Gs. I believe that sometimes in life we may forget someone’s name, or forget someone’s face, but we will never forget how someone made us feel. Every time I reflect on individuals such as my sister, Valerie, Janay, and Germaine Evans, I am reminded that someone cares about me, even when it was too difficult to care for myself. Sometimes it seemed hard for us, the J4G participants, to have a lot of ambition when the odds always seemed to be against us. Thankfully we had surrogate parents to assure us that everyone is capable of being more than what their circumstance offers. The YMCA continues to serve as a beacon of hope for those who want to press forward and make their mark on America. I thank God for these people and the YMCA as all parties were very instrumental in my success during my high school years. I have been provided with hope, inspiration, and life long friendships.

In summary, I am eternally humbled and grateful to every essential entity and person at the Bayview YMCA. ■



Jesus Maritnez

CARE

My Name is Jesus Maritnez and I am one of the first to be enrolled in the CARE Program. The CARE Program is truancy school made for truant kids to re-enter school. I am now attending City College of San Francisco. I also received my GED with the help of the CARE Program and its resources. I am one of its succeeding students.

I was once a truant, not attending school, and spent most of my time away from school. I hung out with friends and honestly can say, I wasn’t progressing in anything in life. I had habits that kept me away from school. I also didn’t go home at all, and if I did, it was only to shower, get some clothes, eat a little something, and then just leave. I spent weeks that later turned into months doing the same thing everyday. Everyday was the same which included weekends, holidays, and even my birthday, just being away from my family and school.

I now attend city college and currently looking for a job. Even though I am no longer a part of the CARE Program, they still leave the doors open for me to feel free to come by anytime for help. I usually don’t reach out to anybody for help, but here, I am not ashamed or embarrassed to ask for help. I am here today because they helped me find job opportunities, and I am scheduled for a job interview tomorrow. I am writing this letter as a sign of my appreciation.

I would like to say thanks to those who work for the CARE Program, all who are currently supporting the maintenance of this program, all the people who have made donations to this program, the Bayview community, other organizations who helped the CARE Program, The Early Morning Studies Academy who helped me get my GED, and worked with the CARE Program to transfer me there, my family and friends, and a very special thanks to Eason Ramson & Faauga Moliga for their support. ■

WE BUILD STRONG KIDS ■ STRONG FAMILIES ■ STRONG COMMUNITIES



Bayview Hunters Point YMCA

1601 LANE STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94124

415-822-7728 **PHONE**

415-822-7769 **FAX**

www.ymcasf.org/bayview

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