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For a Better Us

Association Newsletter

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From the Desk of Bob Hall



Dear Staff,

At our Y, we have a commitment to the brand promise of YMCAs all across the country. "The Y is a powerful association of men, women and children of all ages and from all walks of life joined together by a shared passion: to strengthen the foundations of community." (YExchange) Our core values are our Christian principles of love, respect, honesty, responsibility and service. In each of our New Employee Orientation and Christian Principles Training sessions we look more closely at these values.

I've taken a few lines from the Christian Principles training manual to remind us what these core values mean to us.

Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth.

Respect is showing value for all living things, affirming people's differences, holding high each person's dignity, understanding each person's work style and environment, listening actively, trying to understand and seeking clarity, not gossiping, spreading rumors or telling stories about others.

Honesty is speaking directly and appropriately to each other, without hidden agendas, confronting issues with the appropriate person or group, exhibiting personal integrity, telling the truth, safeguarding confidential information and making sure our actions match our values. Honesty is speaking the truth, being reliable and forthright.

Responsibility is taking ownership for our own actions and being accountable for our behavior. Responsibility is fulfilling obligations, doing what ought to be done and supporting the team's decisions without criticizing or undermining them.

Service is supporting other members of the team: lending a helping hand when possible, offering encouragement, praying for one another.

While most of us can recite our mission statement and recognize the importance of these core values, I think it's important to review the variety of ways we can demonstrate them. I hope a review of our values energizes you the way it does me.

If you'd like to talk with me, or one of our chaplains about our Christian principles, please reach out to us. We'd love to hear from you.

Bob

From HR

What's new in the HR Department!

Annette Johnson is no longer with the YMCA. Her last day was October 17. Annette worked in the Human Resources department for a little over 9 years and has been an asset to the team. We will miss her greatly and wish her the best in her retirement.

Dee Long has joined the HR/Payroll team and brings over 20 years of experience in payroll. We welcome Dee to the YMCA!

Many of you know Craig Frerichs will retire November 4, 2016. He has worked for the YMCA for over 30 years and we appreciate all he has done for the organization. Good Luck Craig in your retirement!

HR Response to ASO Feedback Survey

The HR/Payroll department evaluated your response to the Staff Satisfaction Survey, and with your feedback have made the following changes to serve you better.

- Congratulations to Sue Gilbert who has been promoted to HR Generalist. This full-time position will assist in a wide variety of areas and provide you additional support in HR. Sue was previously our part-time benefit administrator.
- Congratulations to Jennifer Butts who has been promoted to a part-time plus position which focuses on our recruitment efforts, including partnerships with local colleges and community groups to strengthen our foundation of getting highly qualified staff. She will continue to work on the rollout of our on-line recruitment module.
- We have recently posted a position for a Compliance Specialist, this position will monitor our compliance efforts in paperwork, maintain compliance in I-9's and other state and federal requirements and provide additional support in Payroll.

Thank you for your patience as we respond to the Staff Satisfaction Survey and make changes to better support our YMCA.

Time and Attendance Update

The HR department is working to implement a new time and attendance platform. Currently, we are testing the new system with the Monroe Street CDC and the HR department. The goal is to have Association Services Office, Child Development Centers and exempt staff on the system by the end of the year. We will roll out the new platform to all employees in 2017.

All employees must [Register on the ADP Portal](#) prior to launch.

We appreciate your patience as we move through this process. Prior to launch we will hold trainings for supervisors, making sure everyone understands how to utilize the system.

Open Enrollment is Fast Approaching

We are still working out the details of meeting dates, and the schedule of our online Open Enrollment, so watch for those details in the coming weeks.

Remember, Open Enrollment is the one time each year that benefit eligible employees can review current benefit elections and make any necessary changes and/or re-elections for the following plan year. In this case, for 2017.

What we can tell you as of today:

- Our medical, dental and vision benefit plans will have no plan changes for 2017.
- All staff that waives coverage will be required to complete a waiver form and submit it during open enrollment, even if you have completed one before. We must have a 2017 waiver form on file.
- And the most exciting news...we have contracted with a new vendor for our healthcare and dependent care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA's). Our new TPA, BenefitHelp Solutions (BHS), was founded in 1994 and houses its sales and service team at the Moda Tower in Portland. BHS offers local customer service, with a fully staffed and trained call center located in Milwaukie, with hours of Monday through Friday 7:30am – 5:00pm. We believe this move is going to offer staff that participate in FSA's less frustration with this benefit and much better (local) customer service.

New Employee Passports

In early August we started a Passport activity for New Employees with the YMCA of Columbia-Willamette in order to have some fun with our onboarding process. The idea is simple, new employees visit destinations on the passport, get their passport stamped by HR or a supervisor to confirm the destination has been visited, and once they visit 7 destinations they can submit the passport to HR for a Sweatshirt or Long Sleeve T-shirt. Once they visit all 9 destinations on the passport they receive a second prize. Samples of destinations include, Disneyland, CA – aka, New Employee Orientation and CP Training, Death Valley, CA – aka Compli Training, Dollywood, TN – aka meet your new supervisor, etc. I know several of our employees have started the passport tour. This is simply a reminder to keep visiting those destinations, submit those Passports to HR and receive your gift(s).

Enjoy your travels!

Upcoming Trainings

To view our upcoming trainings, please visit our [Training Calendar](#).



Your Safety Cabinet at work!

Safe Staff + Safe Kids: Growing Together

Safety Corner

The purpose of this month's Safety Corner is to provide staff with ways of dealing with day to day stressors that sap our energy and attention and could lead to unsafe conditions. Please think how you can use these strategies to lighten your stress levels and enjoy life more especially around the holidays.

Taking Steps to Manage Stress from the American Psychological Association

- *Track your stressors.* Keep a journal for a week or two to identify which situations create the most stress and how you respond to them. Record your thoughts, feelings and information about the environment, including the people and circumstances involved, the physical setting and how you reacted. Did you raise your voice? Get a snack from the vending machine? Go for a walk? Taking notes can help you find patterns among your stressors and your reactions to them.
- *Develop healthy responses.* Instead of attempting to fight stress with fast food or alcohol, do your best to make healthy choices when you feel the tension rise. Exercise is a great stress-buster. Yoga can be an excellent choice, but any form of physical activity is beneficial. Also make time for hobbies and favorite activities. Whether it's reading a novel, going to concerts or playing games with your family, make sure to set aside time for the things that bring you pleasure. Getting enough good-quality sleep is also important for

effective stress management. Build healthy sleep habits by limiting your caffeine intake late in the day and minimizing stimulating activities, such as computer and television use, at night.

- *Establish boundaries.* In today's digital world, it's easy to feel pressure to be available 24 hours a day. Establish some work-life boundaries for yourself. That might mean making a rule not to check email from home in the evening, or not answering the phone during dinner. Although people have different preferences when it comes to how much they blend their work and home life, creating some clear boundaries between these realms can reduce the potential for work-life conflict and the stress that goes with it.

- *Take time to recharge.* To avoid the negative effects of chronic stress and burnout, we need time to replenish and return to our pre-stress level of functioning. This recovery process requires "switching off" from work by having periods of time when you are neither engaging in work-related activities, nor thinking about work. That's why it's critical that you disconnect from time to time, in a way that fits your needs and preferences. Don't let your vacation days go to waste. When possible, take time off to relax and unwind, so you come back to work feeling reinvigorated and ready to perform at your best. When you're not able to take time off, get a quick boost by turning off your smartphone and focusing your attention on non-work activities for a while.

- *Learn how to relax.* Techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises and mindfulness (a state in which you actively observe present experiences and thoughts without judging them) can help melt away stress. Start by taking a few minutes each day to focus on a simple activity like breathing, walking or enjoying a meal. The skill of being able to focus purposefully on a single activity without distraction will get stronger with practice and you'll find that you can apply it to many different aspects of your life.

- *Talk to your supervisor.* Healthy employees are typically more productive, so your boss has an incentive to create a work environment that promotes employee well-being. Start by having an open conversation with your supervisor. The purpose of this isn't to lay out a list of complaints, but rather to come up with an effective plan for managing the stressors you've identified, so you can perform at your best on the job. While some parts of the plan may be designed to help you improve your skills in areas such as time management, other elements might include identifying employer-sponsored wellness resources you can tap into, clarifying what's expected of you, getting necessary resources or support from colleagues, enriching your job to include more challenging or meaningful tasks, or making changes to your physical workspace to make it more comfortable and reduce strain.

- *Get some support.* Accepting help from trusted friends and family members can improve your ability to manage stress. Your employer may also have stress management resources available through an employee assistance program (EAP), including online information, available counseling and referral to mental health professionals, if needed. If you continue to feel overwhelmed by work stress, you may want to talk to a psychologist, who can help you better manage stress and change unhealthy behavior.

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