Dear Hockomock Area YMCA Members,

Our Y continues to work with school nutrition departments and community partners to ensure that children and families have meals – no questions asked - while schools remain closed. The demand is growing by the day and the need has been with an immediacy that none of us could have expected or predicted.

As I promised in my email on Tuesday, March 17th, I want to share with you some of the great stories of the impact our Y is having on our communities during our temporary closure.

For example, a single Dad with 4 kids shared that he has lost his jobs and is relying on our Y’s feeding program. The people being helped every day are from all walks of life and all ages, including grandparents raising their grandkids.

As of last evening, we have already distributed more than 2,200 grab and go meals in Milford and North Attleboro, and the distribution today for the weekend will be significant and impactful.

I’d like to share another story from a grateful recipient this week who was picking up food for her neighbors. She noted “I was happy to be greeted by friendly, smiling faces who were non-judgmental and full of compassion. Thanks for all you do!”

Here is a link to a few photos showing our mission in action.

All of us at our YMCA are so grateful for the outpouring of support from our members and the community at large. I want to acknowledge and express the deep gratitude to community partners including CVS Health, Stop & Shop, The United Way of Massachusetts Bay, and the Captain Kyle Van De Giesen Award Fund for their generous financial contributions.

As we respond to this incredible demand for food, our supplies and resources are being strained. We are in need of non-perishable food which can be dropped off at the bins at any of our branch locations.

We have been told by other communities that their food supplies are dwindling and they will be looking to us for increased support in the coming weeks. And hope to respond to those needs. If you would like to contribute please click on this link.

Starting next week food pick up opportunities will be expanded to at all of our Y branches. For detailed information and a schedule, please go to our website which will be updated daily.

We have also been providing emergency childcare services for enrolled participants who have no other options and at the same time offering childcare to those in the medical profession, first responders, and anyone needed to help curb this unprecedented public health crisis.
However, as of close of business today, all childcare centers in Massachusetts have been ordered closed. As of Monday, the state will be coordinating emergency childcare for essential personnel in childcare sites throughout the Commonwealth. Our YMCA has applied to offer drop off care at all of our branches and we are awaiting this approval from the State.

I want to let our members know how incredibly committed our staff has been during this public health crisis. We made the decision to continue to pay all of our full time and part time staff through April 7th. I am very proud of – and grateful for – the dedication and compassion our staff continues to display every single day.

In my email to you on Tuesday we outlined methods for membership holds and requests, and I also asked our members to consider staying with us in order to help us with the important work we are continuing to do in our communities. I have been humbled and grateful for the outpouring of support that has been shared in the emails so many of you have sent.

It reflects the great human spirit that is inherent in all of us to be a force for good, particularly in difficult and challenging times. I think we can all agree that no one could have predicted how quickly our lives have been turned upside down. Thank you for your support and for continuing to be part of our Y family.

As an important part of our Y family, we are working hard to keep you engaged with our staff by providing important social connection along with opportunities to stay physically active. Please visit our website to find digital opportunities to keep you engaged and connected.

Plans are being developed for more virtual content in the areas of enrichment and recommended activities and projects for children at home. Keep checking our website for updates. I also encourage you to subscribe to our Y’s YouTube channel.

None of us can predict what the next days and weeks will bring. But please know that every day all of us are strengthened by the power of our mission and the expressions of support from our members, our volunteer leaders, our staff, our mission partners and our communities.

This inspires me and my colleagues and gives us great confidence and hope for the future of our Hockomock Area YMCA and our continued ability to serve the greater good and enhance the quality of life in the 15 communities we are so proud to serve.

Thank you and please be safe.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Ed Hurley
President
HOCKOMOCK AREA YMCA
hockymca.org