

Dear Eastside Y Community Member,

Every year, as we close out spring and welcome the excitement of summer, we take a step back to reflect and pen a letter to our amazing community of donors here at the [St. Paul Eastside YMCA](#). This allows us to share an update on the accomplishments we have witnessed and all that we have planned for the second half of the year.

As one of our partners, making sure you know the latest and greatest is a high priority because you help bring these shining points to life!

First, I want to emphasize how thankful I am for your kind welcome over the last few months. Stepping into this new leadership role has been a truly inspiring journey, and I am humbled to carry out this work alongside valued members like you.

Now, let's dig into the details! I am thrilled to share that:

- Our three **annual community meals** each had a great turnout, with much fun being had by all who attended. We look forward to hosting them again this year: National Night Out BBQ on August 1st, Thanksgiving Dinner on November 16th, and Winter Holiday Party on December 22nd. Also coming up is our **Youth Opportunity Fair** on Thursday, May 9th from 4-7PM. We hope to see you and your families there!
- We partnered with Saint Paul Public Schools and Head Start to **donate 260 backpacks** to students returning to school this past fall. In September we will again host this giveaway, and we hope to support even more families as they prepare for the transition back to school.
- It is amazing to see our **youth programming** continue to grow and thrive! We have now partnered with Saint Paul Public Schools to incorporate more program opportunities for middle and high school students during the school year like Achievers, Career Pathways, and Black Young Men of Color.
- We plan to sponsor a group of 2024 program participants to attend the **National Y Achiever's Summit** in the Blue Ridge Mountains in July where they will network with leaders from around the country. We will also coordinate college tours in and around North Carolina with an emphasis on Historical Black Colleges and Universities.
- This summer we will be offering our first-ever **FREE six-week summer school program** focused on STEM for elementary-age youth.



- In partnership with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions and local technical schools like Metro State, Dunwoody, and St. Paul College, we will be piloting a new program called **Launchpad** to help junior high and high school students learn more about careers in the trades while exploring post-secondary educational options at home.
- Ensuring all community members have access to our programs and resources remains a high priority, especially as the **need for financial assistance** continues to grow. We hope to reach even more families and youth through this funding that supports memberships, sports programs, swim lessons, and maintaining a safe space for folks to gather and participate in healthy, community-building activities.

I want to express my deepest gratitude for your help in making all of this (plus so much more!) possible. Your ongoing generosity empowers us to continue showing up for our community members, purposefully evolving our programs and resources to meet diverse needs. It is no exaggeration to say that together, we are making a profound impact in the lives of many.

I look forward to sharing more with you in the coming months as we foster new opportunities to explore wellness, connection, and growth.

Thank you for being a vital part of our Eastside Y community!

With gratitude and well wishes for a wonderful summer ahead,



Dru Dalton
Associate Executive Director