



Y STORY OF THE MONTH

2023 is guaranteed to bring about some exciting changes to our community and YMCA. That's why we wanted to start the new year off by sharing the story of the YMCA's CEO, Trey Oakley, who has helped the Avery YMCA make into what it is today.

Trey's Y Story, like many, didn't start when he applied to be the CEO. Instead, it started after his parents divorced when he and his sister were young. "The Y became an outlet for me as a child. A place to hang out with my friends outside of school, learn to play baseball, basketball, football, and soccer, and be surrounded by positive influences." Some of those positive influences were the staff and volunteers that he interacted with every day. "We didn't have a lot of money, so Ms. Beaufort would always allow me to come in, even if our membership was behind or inactive. Gene Simmons and Brian Shealy were the Directors of our Y, and my buddy Justin and I always said we would have their jobs when we grew up. Gene and Brian made it look like so much fun because we assumed they played sports all day. Little did I know how far from the truth that was, but the Y of 1990 is much different in 2022. Thirty years later, Gene and Brian were still there though both have retired since then. The Y was a place to escape reality at times and just be a kid. The anticipation on "fall out" night when sports teams would be announced and hearing your friends' names called to be on your team is one of many fond memories from Trey's time growing up in the YMCA.

Over the years, Trey found that the Y gave him more than a place to play. "I think most; importantly, though, the Y gave my Dad and I a chance to spend time together. My dad coached me from 4 years old until college, never missed a ball game, threw a million batting practice balls, drove to tournaments, etc. The relationship that we have today is without a doubt because of the YMCA."

As he and his friends grew older, they couldn't think of a more fun place to work. "My first job was as a Lifeguard with the Clinton Family YMCA in Clinton, SC where I grew up. I knew as a kid that I wanted to work at the Y." Trey has worked his way up to the role of CEO and has been able to see the Avery YMCA evolve to fit the community and its needs. "The Y I grew up in was filled with kids, active with members, and a pillar in the community. Our Y, when I became CEO, was none of those things. The Y was new to the staff and the community, and new things can be scary. The perception at that time was that the Y was just a health club for the gated community,



and the goal became to change that. Since then, just a few of the things we have changed are:

- Growing the SPLASH Program -teaching Kindergartners and 2nd Graders how to swim,
- Added a 21st-century learning program in Avery County serving over 200 kids, Mitchell County serving 88 kids in after school daily, and over 125 in Avery County summer camp. This is all at **no cost** to families.
- Serve over 25,000 meals annually to children,
- Added community outreach program for aging in place seniors,
- Added 8 EBHI programs to serve those in our community that need us most, and
- Built an Athletic Facility to serve children, adults, and families.

All these steps and many others led to our operating budget growing from \$600,000 in 2012 to \$3.4m in 2022. Membership doubled during that time, and programming increased by 10 times. We are in a much better place with the community as we have continued to prove that we are a community asset, no matter if you can afford memberships or program fees. Just walking in the door, the atmosphere, the people, and the community truly show that there is something for everyone from 6 weeks of age to 100 years. Pre-Covid, we provided over \$500,000 in subsidized memberships and program fees to the Avery County Community." Trey, the YMCA staff, the board of directors, and volunteers aren't stopping there though. Be sure to read our 2023 Overview to see all that is to come in 2023!

"I am honored to lead this work as we continue to ensure that those in our mountain communities have access to the programs and services that they deserve." None of this could be done without the help and support of our community. Trey wanted to thank the members, our staff, our board, and donors that enable our Y to be the organization it is. We are truly fortunate, and while we are small, we drive BIG change.

Trey had this to say when asked for any final words: "As an adult, I have come to appreciate what the Y provided to my family and me. My goal now is that our programs impact an Avery County child in a way that they will strive to one day fill my seat! The YMCA will change your life; it certainly has mine.

What's Coming in 2023

We have a few exciting things coming in 2023! Licensed Childcare will be coming to the Y in 2023 through a donor-funded project that will renovate the Chapman Center to serve up to 48 children ages 2-5 year olds in a daycare setting. Two playgrounds will be added to the Chapman site for the Childcare area, and work should begin before Spring! A new playground will be installed on the site of the current Rotary playground. With additional thanks to the generosity of others, we will be able to remove the older playground and install a brand new one again in early Spring. Members will begin to see changes to our downstairs in the next couple of months. Updated paint, carpet, refinished group exercise floors, and updated family locker room showers will be beginning soon. Our largest project is a new YMCA in Mitchell County that I and a few others have been working on for the last 12-18 months. Through a partnership with Mayland Community College, this project will slowly start moving through demolishing the current building space at the old Pinebridge Center in Spruce Pine. A more detailed announcement will be coming to the community in the coming months. Thanks to so many of our supporters, the next few years for our Y will be the most defining!





Thank You for 2022!

Thank you to all of the volunteers and supporters of the Community Outreach programs this year! Together, we have served and delivered over 3,000 meals and food boxes, visited the homes of many local seniors aging in place, raised more than \$1,500 to assist those with electric and heating costs during the winter weather and so much more! We look forward to another year of serving and supporting our community!

Happy New Year!



Spring Youth Soccer Registration Opens Today!

Make this season great!

The YMCA Spring Youth Soccer season registration is now open! Games will be every Saturday and game times will run from 9:00am-1:00pm.

Registration will be open until March 5th. Open to ages 4-12 years old

WHEN:

March 13th-May 13th

WHERE:

Games and practices are to be determined

TIMES:

Practice times range from 5-6pm or 6-7pm on either Monday, Tuesday or Thursday

Team practice times will be announced by the coaches.

COST:

\$65-Members
\$95-Non-members

[Register Now!](#)



Starting 2023 with Healthy Habits!

Not sure where to start in the gym? Schedule wellness coaching sessions today and work with any of our trainers to get a start on a healthier you! Wellness coaching involves learning proper exercise technique and form, etiquette, and develops a personalized plan for you! Also check out the yearly schedule of drop-in workshops for specific skill development.

[Tell Me More](#)



Pay The Day

Meet your New Year goals with the YMCA's Pay The Day Membership Program this January. For anyone new to the YMCA, join during the month of January and only pay the amount of the day for the entire month!

Join Monday, January 2nd and pay only \$2. Join Monday the 16th and pay only \$16. For an added bonus we will waive your \$25 joining fee! Let us help you exceed your goals in 2023!

For questions about the program contact Senior Program Director, Erin Spear.

[Learn More](#)



What A Year For Youth

2022 was a great year! Between all of



Swim Lessons Restart!

We are excited to restart all Swim



New Sessions Starting This Month

New sessions of our



Healthy Living Programs Launch in Mitchell

the Summer Fun and After School programming, we served over 300 kids in grades Kindergarten through 8th grade! That's more than 25,000 meals and snacks, and over 1,300 hours of out-of-school tutoring and educational support. We can't wait to continue to grow and learn with all of our youth in both Avery and Mitchell Counties in 2023!

Lessons in January 2023. Here is the 2023 Swim Lesson Schedule!

Group Swim Lessons:
 Beginner - Mondays 3:45-4:30pm & Saturdays 9:45 - 10:30am
 Intermediate - Mondays 3:45-4:30pm & Saturdays 10:30-11:15am

YMCA Swim Team Open to youth, ages 11-18 years old. Practices will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5-6pm starting in February! For more information check out our aquatics page or email Faith Boyette.

[Tell Me More](#)

Evidence Based Healthy Living Programs will be starting in January. **January 2nd:** EnhanceFitness, Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring, and Diabetes Prevention Program. **January 3rd:** Delay The Disease and the Weight Loss Program. To see if you qualify or if you want to join any of these programs, reach out to [Erin Spear](#) or [Chris Kennedy](#) for more program information and details.

[What are EBHI Programs?](#)

With the new year brings new Healthy Living Programming for the Mitchell County Healthy Living Center! Here is a snapshot of what it to come in January and February.

EnhanceFitness
 Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program
 Diabetes Prevent Program: Preventing Type-2 Diabetes
 For more information about the programs or to register please contact [Stephen Bomar](#), [Mitchell County Director of Healthy Living](#).

[More Program Information](#)



January Group Exercise

Make 2023 your year! Join us for all of our group exercise classes this year and discover your favorite!

[Download Group Exercise Schedule](#)



January Athletics

Home School PE is back! Registration opens today and the program will start February 2nd. For more information visit our [Athletics webpage](#) or email Erica Shingleton at Ericas@ymcaavery.org.

[Download Blackburn Athletic Schedule](#)

[Download Fieldhouse Schedule](#)



January Aquatics

Kindergarten SPLASH starts in March and we are seeking volunteers to help the youth of Avery County learn how to swim and safety around water! If you are interested please contact [Faith Boyette](#), [Aquatics Program Coordinator](#) for more information.

[Download Aquatics Schedule](#)

Connect with us on:



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