



Y STORY OF THE MONTH

Did you know that the YMCA is a volunteer based organization? The YMCA relies on volunteers to be role models in our youth programs, make people feel welcomed and cared for in our Healthy Living programs, and to bring smiles and hope through our community outreach programs and services. This month's Y Story is all about Evan Foster who was a volunteer youth soccer coach last year!



"Growing up, my family and I were always pretty involved at our local YMCA. I started playing recreational soccer there when I was about four years old and played in other leagues such as basketball until I was a teenager.

My volunteer experience at the YMCA was so much fun! In 2022, I co-coached a U-6 soccer team with one of my good friends, Faith. A very funny part about our season was that we let the kids decide what our team name would be. It changed from time to time, but notable names like "Team Water Cycle" or "Team Blue Tigers" kept our competitions light-hearted. It was a joy to see the kids start to develop as soccer players while having a blast throughout the season. During practices, we played games like "Sharks and Minnows" to help them learn how to dribble the soccer ball more effectively and make it fun!

While I do enjoy teaching kids about soccer, as I have served more and more I have learned that focusing on the kids as individuals and not just players is an important part of coaching. Seeing the joy they get from "after-game snacks" or when one of them talks about their day at school showed me the YMCA is about more than just merely athletics, but a supportive community. The most rewarding part of it for me was seeing the friendships that were made throughout the season. Our kids would start to celebrate together after goals and our team started to really bond as the season progressed.

I cannot credit my motivation to serve these kids to anything in myself. 2 years ago, God graciously saved me and completely changed my life. As I have gotten to know Christ more and more, He has truly helped me become more servant-minded. Being able to impact the next generation and my relationship with Jesus is what motivates me to volunteer. Having the opportunity to pour back into the community that has poured so much into me throughout my youth is something I am very grateful for. My time volunteering with the YMCA is one experience that I will always cherish."

Become A YMCA Volunteer
Today

Learn More About Youth
Spring Soccer

Improving Member Communications



Staying in touch is about to get easier! With our new text alerts, you'll be the first to know when there are changes to facility hours or temporary closures. You can also choose to receive programming information and get access to exclusive promotions.

We are excited to launch this new communication feature this month! To opt-in, text **WilliamsY** to 545-39, stop by the front desk or visit your online account and manage your preferences.

[Visit My Oline Account](#)

UPCOMING AVERY PROGRAMS...



Healthy Opportunities Pilot Continues

In 2022 the Williams YMCA of Avery County joined a host of other organizations for the Healthy Opportunities Pilot (HOP) Program. HOP connects Medicaid community members to organizations that assist with food, transportation, and housing needs, at **no cost** to the community member! We are excited to be able to continue participating in this program through March 2024! If you or someone you know needs help buying food, with transportation, or housing difficulties let us know and we will help you determine if you are eligible!



Adult Basketball Registration is Open!

Our Adult Basketball League is a competitive league which provides an opportunity for individuals of the community to be active and display their basketball skills on the court. Open to anyone 16 years or older, with two ways to register. Register as an individual and be placed on a team or build your own team of 5 or more!

[Learn More & Register](#)



Women On Weights is Back!

An introduction to weight lifting for women! W.O.W. is a small group training program to help women feel comfortable lifting weights. Learn proper exercise form and the fundamentals of weight lifting while getting a great workout. Open to women 18 years or older. This year register for our February program and mark your calendars for our May and August programs!

[Save Me a Spot!](#)



Welcome To All Our New Members!

During the month of January the YMCA ran a Pay the Day membership promotion to encourage our community members to join the YMCA! We are excited to welcome 215 new members to the Avery YMCA.

From all the staff and volunteers at the YMCA, WELCOME!!

[Tell Me More!](#)



Snow Camp is Up & Running!

Snow camp is designed to assist working parents when Avery County Schools closes for inclement weather. Our program provides help with homework/remote learning and offers various activities such as team-building opportunities, swimming, recreational time, arts and crafts, and more!

Snow Camp will operate on Avery County School Snow Days now through March!

Purchase your 10-Day Punch Pass now or pay by the day, as space allows.

[10 Day Punch Pass](#)

[Single Day Pass](#)

Join the First YMCA Swim Team

Beginning February 2023, youth ages 11-18 are welcome to join the Williams YMCA Swim Team! Practices will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:00-6:00 pm. This program is for youth who want a more competitive aquatic experience. While Swim Team will be recreational, we plan to travel to local Aquatic Centers for scrimmages. Travel is not mandatory but is encouraged to participate in competitive scrimmages.

For more information contact Faith Boyette!

[How Do We Join?](#)

Heart Health Month

February is Heart Health Month and we want everyone to benefit! For the month of February when you meet with a Healthy Heart Ambassador to have your blood pressure checked you can receive a 15% discount on the Y's Weight Loss Program. All you have to do is show your blood pressure reading to Program Manager, Erin Spear! The YMCA's Weight Loss Program begins February 21st. For more heart health tips join our Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring program offered year round at no cost!

[What is the Weight Loss Program?](#)

[Learn More about Blood Pressures](#)

Fresh Look for 2023

Thank you to all of our Members and guest for your patience as we continue to paint the lower part of the YMCA. We have loved hearing all of your feedback about the colors and excitement around the updates. In February the updates will continue as we replace the carpet and update the flooring in the group fitness rooms, hallways, and family locker rooms. We will continue to communicate any class or program schedule changes as a result of this work.

UPCOMING MITCHELL PROGRAMS...



Meet Olivia Baranowski

We want to extend a warm welcome to Olivia Baranowski as she joins us as the new Mitchell County Afterschool



"On The Day You Were Born" Joins Story Trail

Riverside Story Trail, with its supporting partners, is excited to collaborate with local



Enhance Fitness in Mitchell

EnhanceFitness is coming to Mitchell! A proven arthritis management program focused on fitness helps older adults become



For More Mitchell County Updates Follow Us on Facebook



Youth Director! Olivia spent her high school and college years in Burnsville and has earned a degree in Psychology. She has spent the last few years working in different school systems and with the Autism Society of North Carolina. She is excited to help the Mitchell After School staff grow and serve as many students as we can.

author Debra Frasier and her book '*On the Day You Were Born*', completing its trail installation at the end of January. This beautiful book explores the natural miracles of planet Earth and life, awaiting each child. A wonderful celebration of new life and creation, enjoy a journey through this book as Winter begins to emerge as the new life of Spring!

[See Past Story
Trail Books](#)

more active, energized, and empowered for independent living. The program focuses on cardiovascular endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance, which could help reduce the severity of arthritis symptoms in a group that is supportive and understanding – a vital part of anyone's health and well-being. Interested in joining us for our first Mitchell County program? Let us know so we can send you more information!

[Tell Me More!](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...



February Group Exercise

The Group Exercise Room will be **closed** after the noon BodyPump class on **Friday, February 3rd through Sunday February 5th**. We look forward to restarting classes on Monday the 6th!

[Download Group Exercise Schedule](#)



February Athletics

Spring Soccer Registration is now open! We can't wait to coach your children through another wonderful Soccer Season. For more information visit our [athletics webpage](#) or contact [Erica Shingleton](#).

[Download Blackburn Athletic Schedule](#)



February Aquatics

Join us for the 100+ Mile Swim Challenge! From now - December see how far you can go by swimming, water walking, or joining a water aerobics class. For more information or to join contact [Faith Boyette](#)!

[Download Aquatics Schedule](#)

[Download Fieldhouse Schedule](#)

Connect with us on:



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