



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## Y STORY OF THE MONTH

---

### Welcoming Mollie Westall Allen: Growing Youth Development Across Avery and Mitchell Counties

In this exciting time of growth for the Williams YMCA of Avery County, we're proud to expand our reach into Mitchell County—and even more excited to introduce a familiar face who will help lead the way.

Please join us in welcoming **Mollie Westall Allen** as our new **Association Director of Youth Development** for both the Avery and Mitchell County YMCA branches. In this role, Mollie will oversee youth programs across both counties, including **After-School care** and **Summer programming**, with a focus on academic support, enrichment activities, and care that families can count on.

A native of Spruce Pine, Mollie has always felt deeply connected to the local community. Though she spent the past six years teaching in New Bern, NC, her heart never left the mountains. With a background in high school education and leadership in the YMCA-sponsored **Youth and Government** program, she brings both experience and passion for nurturing the next generation. As a high school business teacher, she worked with students to prepare and present bills they had written to state government representative, and to lobby for the successful passing of those bills.



Through her connections with youth, Mollie helped students develop a love of learning, leadership skills, and a commitment to serving others. Now, she's bringing that same energy to our YMCA—working to ensure **every child** has access to additional academic support, positive mentors, healthy food offerings, and opportunities to grow and thrive, regardless of background or income.

"My hope is to give back to the community that raised me," Mollie shared. "And to help build a network of care and support for all kids in Mitchell and Avery Counties—one that strengthens families and makes life just a little easier for parents. Without reliable, accessible childcare, opportunities would look very different in Avery and Mitchell Counties"

Mollie invites all families with school-age children to explore the YMCA's **After-School Program**, which provides a daily snack, help with homework, physical activity, and engaging enrichment activities—right at their local elementary schools. She's also looking to **build a strong team** of caring adults—young professionals, retirees, and everyone in between—who want to make a difference in the lives of local youth.

We're thrilled to have Mollie join our YMCA family, and we're grateful for the heart, vision, and dedication she brings to this important work. If you see her in the facility or out in the community, be sure to stop and say hello.

**Welcome, Mollie—we're so glad you're here!**

---

## What's Happening in Avery



### Find a new trail!

Mark your calendar, we've got three more Community Hikes this summer! August 20th will be the next hike, followed by September 17th and October 15th, weather permitting (check Facebook or call the Membership Desk if there is bad weather). Get outside with old and new friends and explore our county in a guided hike for all ages.

If you can't make it to the hikes, join us for BINGO every **2nd and 4th Tuesday** from 11:30am - 1:30pm.

Stop in at the Welcome Desk for more details!

Email Sheila



### Show your SPIRIT at the Y!

The SPIRIT program, in partnership with our friends at Lees McRae College, is for any child aged 5-12, that wants to learn basic foundations of dance. We will be covering Jazz, Hip-Hop, and Pom. At the end of this program, we will have a showcase in our Blackburn Athletic Facility. No dancing experience necessary.

Tuesday evenings, **August 26th - September 30th**

\$60 members  
\$80 non-members

Click the Registration Links below or email Nathan for more information!

Click to register:

[Pre K - 2nd Grade](#)

[3rd - 6th Grade](#)

Email Nathan



### Find Your Place at After-School!

2025/2026 After School Registration is Now Open!! There are still openings for our After School Programs in Mitchell and Avery counties.

Students will receive a snack, time for homework, and physical activity when they attend directly after school until 6pm. Click below or stop by the Y to register!

Banner Elk

Crossnore

Freedom Trail

Newland Elementary

Riverside

Avery County Middle Schools

Gouge

Greenlee

Mitchell Elementary

Mitchell Middle

Private & Homeschool Students



### What is Your WHY?

When life gets busy, our schedules can easily get away from us. Here are a few easy tips to help you stay motivated to exercise:

1. Define your "why" and post it on your mirror or somewhere you can see it every morning.
2. Build a workout schedule with the workouts you are doing including days and times. Have a backup plan that you can always do in the evenings from home when things don't go according to plan.
3. If you are working out first thing in the morning, place your alarm clock out of reach so that you have to get out of bed to turn it off; you'll be less likely to hit the snooze button.
4. Find a workout partner or group with similar goals to help keep each other accountable and motivated.

Let us know how we can help YOU stay motivated!



### Your Impact in Action



### Now Hiring Lifeguards



### EnhanceFitness

Enhance Fitness is a proven arthritis



### Work Out on Your

We're halfway through 2025, and what a year it's been! Thanks to your incredible support, we've been able to expand programs that matter most to our community. Recent grant funding has been thoughtfully directed where it's needed most: 45% to youth development, 27% to outreach, and the rest supporting healthy living, capital projects, and flexible needs across Avery and Mitchell Counties.

We've already raised more than \$280,000 through community giving and events—but we're not done yet. With your help, we're aiming for a \$600,000 Annual Campaign goal to ensure every child has a safe space to grow, every family feels supported, and every neighbor has access to resources that nurture a healthy spirit, mind, and body. There's still time to make a difference! Together, we're building a stronger, more connected community, one act of kindness at a time.

Avery County Annual Campaign

Mitchell YMCA Annual Campaign

We are currently offering Lifeguard Training and hiring Lifeguards for our Avery and Mitchell county Pools!

If you are 15 years old, can work at least two shifts per week, and possess excellent customer service skills, share your talents with friends and neighbors, at the YMCA. Learn how you can help adults and kids to enjoy the water safely! Click below for more info or to apply.

Email Faith

Apply Now!

management program focused on fitness, helping older adults become 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.

The next session will begin **August 25th** and meets on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 - 11am. Please contact Chris Kennedy for more information.

Email Chris

## Schedule!

Did you know that as a member with 24/7 Access, you may use the Fitness Center area of the YMCA at any time? This includes before and after normal business hours, on holidays and weekends when the Y is closed. This even includes closing for inclement weather! For an additional \$5/month, any adult 18+ can add 24-hour Access to a membership.

Visit the Welcome Desk to find out more, and to sign up. And work out at a time that's most convenient for you!

*Currently available in Avery County.*

*Coming soon to Mitchell County.*

## What's Happening in Mitchell



### Join Our After School Team!

We are currently hiring for the Mitchell County After School Programs. These hands-on positions give each staff member the opportunity to work with the students in several Mitchell County schools to make a positive impact in their lives. If you are interested, please contact Burton Blankenship at [828-520-1379](tel:828-520-1379) or click below.



### Mitchell Healthy Living Programs Have Moved and are Growing

July has been an exciting month as we moved our Healthy Living Programs from our Healthy Living Center to our newly opened YMCA of Mitchell County! In August we are excited to attend a training and certification course, Moving for Better Balance, and look forward to launching



### What is a Community Health Worker?

In rural North Carolina, Community Health Workers (CHWs) have become vital connectors between underserved populations and healthcare access. Thanks to culturally competent outreach and home-based educational efforts, many people in not only Avery County, but Mitchell and Yancey



### New Adult Swim Program

The Adult Swim Group is a structured program designed for adults of all skill levels who want to improve their swimming technique, endurance, and overall fitness. Led by experienced coaches, each session includes guided workouts, stroke refinement, and personalized feedback in a supportive environment. Whether you're training for

Email Burt

this Healthy Living Program at the YMCA of Mitchell County in the future! Please email Jessica Thomas, Healthy Living Director, by clicking the tab below, or call [\(828\) 520-9101](tel:8285209101), to learn more about this and other exciting programs coming to Mitchell County!

Email Jessica

Counties, have been able to be reached in even the most rural locations in the counties. Through these efforts, we strive to improve the health and wellness of every single person, through community-based connections.

If you or anyone you know in Avery, Mitchell, or Yancey County needs any assistance, please reach out to our Community Health Worker, Anabel Zayas.

Email Anabel

a triathlon or looking to stay active, this group offers motivation, community, and results.

The program will take place on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8-9am beginning **August 1st, 2025**.

The cost is \$10 per month for YMCA members and \$20 per month for non-members.

Registration

## Mark Your Calendars



### August Group Exercise

#### Class Spotlight: Hatha Yoga

Hatha Yoga emphasizes physical postures (asanas) and breathing techniques (pranayama) to promote balance and well-being.

Hatha classes guide practitioners through postures at a slower pace with more guidance on how to do each pose correctly.

*Currently offered in Avery County.*

Download Avery Group Exercise Schedule

Download Mitchell Group Exercise



### August Athletics

#### Fall = SOCCER!

This recreation soccer league is for any child ages 4-12 years of age. No previous playing experience required.

\$75 Members  
\$95 Non-member

**August 25 -  
October 25**

Click to Register!

[Register for Soccer!](#)

Download Blackburn Athletic Facility Schedule

Download O'Connell Field House



### August Aquatics

#### Swim Club

Our swim club will start in August on Tuesdays  
4:00 - 5:00pm

#### K - 5 Swim Team

Registration opens on August 1st! Click below for more information!

Download Aquatics Schedule

Aquatics Program Information

## Giving Back

Do you want to be part of the change and give back to the Avery and Mitchell County Communities? There are a variety of ways you can get involved with the Williams YMCA of Avery County!

### Donate

Reinvest in the community through the programs and services offered by the YMCA, including drowning prevention programs, outreach services addressing social isolation and food insecurity, after-school and summer camp programs that help youth find new and exciting ways to learn and connect with their peers, and Healthy Living programs that help those living with chronic diseases manage their symptoms.

### Volunteer

Give the gift of your time and skills in programs that change the lives of children, teens, adults, families, and seniors.

#### Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:

- **Summer Camp**
- **Youth Department**
- **Outreach/Hikes**



Connect with us on:



Williams YMCA of Avery County | 436 Hospital Drive, PO Box 707 Linville, NC 28646

You received this because you are subscribed to emails from the Williams YMCA of Avery County.  
[Manage Email Preferences](#)

