



MOUNT DESERT ISLAND YMCA DONOR NEWSLETTER MARCH 2026

A DONOR REPORT FROM ANN TIKKANEN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As Spring unfolds, we are reminded that your support makes new beginnings possible!

The generosity of donors, members, and volunteers helps build a brighter future for everyone in our community. We have had a delightfully busy first quarter of the year! We celebrate a new record- over 23,000 visits to the Y were recorded, from members, visitors, guests, and students in these first three months!

We are extraordinarily grateful for the support from so many, setting the tone for a year rooted in compassion and possibility. As a community hub, the Y continues to serve more people of all ages, with equal care and access. We enjoy a nice balance among Y users of our varied programs- children make up 27 percent, young adults are 22 percent, adults are 23 percent, and senior adults comprise 28 percent. The Y team is proud of this representation and its impact for all.

We continue to fundraise for an increasing number of programs and needs for the community. Donations provide scholarship funding for children, families and seniors who need financial assistance, sliding-scale fees for those who need it most, free swim lessons for all children age 4 and 5, and much more - all made possible because of donors like you.

The Y's mission is broad by design, so we also use donations in support of our Annual Appeal, our Aquathon, the upcoming July 16 Gala Fundraising Event (save the date!), and many other sponsorships garnered for youth sports programs, Healthy Kids Day, and Camp Cadillac.

Memberships and program fees cover only a portion of our costs, so your and others' donations make up the difference. Donations collected to date total \$270,202 to our budgeted year end need of \$496,200 – we are halfway there with your help!

As our longed-for Spring settles in, a number of free community events will pop up, such as our now-traditional Easter egg hunt (in the pool, of course!), Healthy Kids Day, and an end of school pool party. Summer camp registrations are filling up, and another new program session kicks off starting April 20 through August 29. Our adult group exercise programs continue to change and grow, as does our schedule for youth programs, both inside the Y and outside on our beautiful island.

We hope you'll take a moment to read our donor and impact stories, which show how your generosity makes a real difference in peoples' lives.

Sincerest thanks!
Ann Tikkanen
Chief Executive Officer



DONOR STORIES



Scott Hammond

Scott Hammond has been a constant at our Y for decades. Before moving to Mount Desert Island, he was already reaching out to learn about programs for his daughter. Not long after, he became a regular, playing noontime basketball, building friendships, and making the Y part of his daily routine.

His involvement grew into leadership, with years of service on the board and multiple terms as chair. Through it all, his appreciation for the Y and what it brings to the community has only deepened.

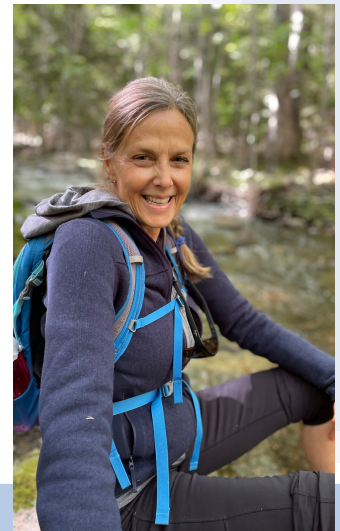
“Every time I come in during the winter, I’m grateful the Y is here, what would we do without it?” he says. “It’s a place where you come in and become part of a group.” For Scott, it’s also about consistency and showing up- “I use it all the time... It’s good for people.”

For Julie Banzhaf-Stone, the YMCA has been a consistent presence throughout her life. As a young adult in Washington, D.C., one of the first things she did was join her local Y, swimming, exercising, and building connections in a new community.

Years later, after building a home near Bar Harbor, Julie once again found her way to the Y, this time with her family. Her son, Sam, participated in Y programs and later made use of the facility as a teenager, while her daughter, Emily, also became a regular user. For Julie, the Y became a shared, multi-generational experience.

Today, she returns each year, spending time in the pool and connecting with others. “I love my interactions with all the people there,” she says. “The place hums with energy and engagement.” For Julie, the MDI YMCA is a vital community hub. “I truly can’t imagine Mount Desert Island without it,” she says.

That belief is what inspires Julie and her husband, Steve, to give. They support the Y’s annual appeal and programs because they want to ensure it continues to serve and strengthen the community for generations to come. “Community is everything,” Julie says. “And the Y is at the heart of that.”



Julie Banzhaf-Stone



SAVE THE DATES- JULY 16 & AUGUST 16

The Mount Desert Island YMCA’s 3rd Annual Fundraising Gala is on Thursday, July 16, 2026, from 5:00–8:00 p.m. at the Bar Harbor Club. The evening will feature a cocktail hour, dinner, keynote speaker, silent auction, and the presentation of the YMCA’s Triangle Award and Community Advocate Award. Tickets are available online at mdiymca.org.

The Heritage Society luncheon celebrates the legacy of planned giving and community support that sustains the Mount Desert Island YMCA. Taking place on August 16, from 11:30-1 pm at the Bar Harbor Historical Society, it honors dedicated donors and highlights the lasting impact of their contributions on local families and wellness programs.