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## **YMCA Officially Begins Capital Campaign Project with a Ground Breaking Ceremony**

MIDDLETOWN, RI (July 19, 2021) – On Wednesday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, the Newport County YMCA held their Ground Breaking Ceremony to officially begin their Capital Campaign renovation and expansion project. To date, the Y has secured \$8.6 million toward their \$10,000,000 campaign goal.

There were well-over 100 attendees at Wednesday's event, including representatives from the project's lead donors: van Beuren Charitable Foundation, de Ramel Foundation, Alletta Morris McBean Charitable Foundation, The Hamilton Family Charitable Trust, BankNewport, NewportFed Charitable Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, Blakely & Lindsey Page and Family, and the Bazarsky Family Foundation.

Among the crowd of attendees was YMCA Capital Cabinet member, Don Kaull, who was also a part of the last YMCA Ground Breaking Ceremony in 1974. Mr. Kaull was presented with an original shovel from the 1974 ceremony, which he used to "break ground" once again almost 50 years later.

The ceremony started with an introduction from the incoming NCYMCA Board President, Sheila Paglierani. Capital Campaign Co-Chairs, Lee Merrill and Guillaume de Ramel, and former NBA General Manager, Peter Babcock, also spoke at the event, touching on the impact that this project will have on the community and the many opportunities this new facility will provide.

Mike Miller, YMCA CEO, concluded the ceremony by sharing the vision behind this Capital Campaign project: "The Y knows it has the potential to impact more community members in Newport County. Now with an expanded and renovated building, the Y will help our community members see their potential. We have served our community since 1878 and this project will allow us to continue to do so for generations to come."

East Coast Construction has been awarded the sitework contract by Farrar & Associates, Inc., and

has already begun on-site preparations for construction. The Y is committed to remaining open throughout the duration of this construction project to ensure accessibility to the current fitness center, pool, youth programs, etc. As CEO Miller pointed out, "Now is the time to join the Y! As a special incentive to new and existing Y members, we've decided to freeze membership rates for one year after the official ribbon cutting as our way of saying 'Thank you for staying with us during construction!'" Anyone who joins the Y since last week's ground breaking through to the official ribbon cutting of the new facility, is guaranteed to not have their membership rate increase for one full year from their join date. "We know this will be a bit 'messy' at times, but we really do hope the community takes advantage of this special promotion and jumps in with us as we ride out the next phase of this Y's long history. It's a very exciting time for our Y and our whole community – so come, join the fun!" urged Miller with an enthusiastic smile.

Plans for the new construction and renovation of the existing building include relocation and expansion of the wellness center plus more group exercise studios, a new welcoming lobby and central meeting space, new family/universal locker rooms, a state-of-the-art Squash Complex, a new Youth Development Center with enhanced Child Watch and licensed afterschool care for more than 80 children, and reconfigured parking to provide an additional 100 spaces to improve drop off/pick up. Overall, the new Y, designed by Vision 3 Architects, will reflect a redesigned facility that focuses on safety, accessibility, efficiency, and flexible program spaces – allowing the Y to adapt to ever-changing health needs and guidelines.

For more information about the Y's capital campaign and how you can help, please contact Susan Piacenti, Director of Development, at 401.847.9200 x 109 or [susanp@newportymca.org](mailto:susanp@newportymca.org) or visit [www.newportymca.org/capital](http://www.newportymca.org/capital)

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The Newport County YMCA is an association of more than 10,000 people of all ages, ethnic origins, religious affiliations and socioeconomic levels. The basis of the association is founded in Judeo-Christian values, and its purpose is to significantly improve and positively influence the quality of life and social well-being for our members, our families and our community. Emphasis is placed on the whole person through the programs and activities that help develop spiritual, mental and physical well-being. For more information: [newportymca.org](http://newportymca.org)