



May 30, 2026

Dear Emma B. Howe Y Community Members,

Have you ever stopped to think about the role you play in someone else's story?

It's not always something we see in big or obvious ways. More often, it shows up in small, everyday moments — the ones that matter more than we realize.

We see these moments brought to life every day here at the Emma B. Howe YMCA: A child building confidence in the pool. A family receiving support when they need it most. A teen trying something new and discovering what they're capable of. A senior reaching a fitness goal surrounded by people who've become dear friends.

These moments may seem simple, but together, they tell a much bigger story about what it means to belong and be part of a community. And they don't happen without supporters like you.

At our Y, the doors are always open — to friendship, resilience, health, and a sense of belonging. Every day, people walk through our doors looking for community, support, movement, or simply a place where they feel they belong, and it is inspiring to see how our members, staff, and partners like you continue to create that welcoming spirit together.

Reflecting on the first part of the year, I'm excited to share a few highlights and updates made possible through your ongoing partnership:

- The spirit of community service was on full display during last summer's **4 Acts of Kindness event**, where members and Summer Power youth assembled **100 bags of essential items for homeless youth** at Hope 4 Youth, created **22 tie blankets** for Anoka Head Start, made **hundreds of cards for seniors**, and **donated boxes of toys for shelter animals** — making a tangible impact in the work of multiple community partners.
- This summer, we are excited to launch our **Discovery Garden**, funded by Cummins, where members, RISE program participants, and Summer Power youth will get their hands dirty growing vegetables and flowers together, creating opportunities for **learning, connection, and shared purpose**.
- We also look forward to bringing folks together through family-friendly events like the **Great Emma B. Howe Get Together** in August and the return of **4 Acts of Kindness** in July, where members and youth will again participate in volunteer projects that directly benefit our broader community.

- It is exciting to see growth in our aquatics programming, with **expanded availability of group swim lessons** this year. This has allowed us to serve more children and adults, who learn essential, lifesaving water safety skills. We are seeing openings remaining in most of our classes, so please **help spread the word** to family and friends!
- **Donor generosity** has continued to make a meaningful impact across our Y, particularly during times in which members face heightened hardship. When **updates to SilverSneakers Medicare coverage created uncertainty** for many older adults, other members stepped forward with donations to **ensure scholarship funds were available** — showcasing neighbors helping neighbors and the deep care within our community.
- I continue to be incredibly proud of our dedicated team, who **bring the Y's mission to life each day**. From the personal connections built in ForeverWell activities, to warm welcomes at the front desk, to safety on the pool deck, high-energy group fitness classes, and engaging youth programming — **each staff member's passion and commitment** helps make visits to our Y the highlight of many members' days.

Behind each of these bullet points are real people and real stories, and your support as a donor plays a role in every single one. That's the kind of impact that doesn't always make headlines, but it's felt every day in the lives of those we serve.

And now, as we head into summer, my team and I are excited to keep building on this momentum — creating more opportunities, deepening connections, and continuing to show up for our Emma B. Howe Y community in the ways that matter most.

Thank you for being an important part of our story. We're so grateful to have you alongside us through every chapter, and we can't wait to see what we'll make possible together in the months and years ahead!

Wishing you a bright and memorable summer,



Shannon Kinstler
Executive Director, Emma B. Howe YMCA