

Merrimack Valley YMCA Names Patrick Ryan As New Chief Operations Officer

By Veronica Reed

The Merrimack Valley YMCA has been strengthening the foundations of community for 139 years. Staff, volunteers and friends of the YMCA gathered at their Annual Meeting on January 30, 2020 to honor volunteers of the year, celebrate the accomplishments of the last 12 months and feature some of the programs that ensure the Y is here for all. Methuen Mayor Neil Perry opened the meeting, which was held at the Merrimack Valley Golf Course in Methuen, by reminding those in attendance that community is about participation.

“Community is more than buildings, homes, and people. It’s involvement and participation,” Mayor Perry told the audience. “It’s giving your heart and soul. The City of Methuen is ready to participate fully with the Merrimack Valley YMCA to do the best we can for everybody that lives in the Merrimack Valley.”

Among the programs highlighted during the evening were the Wheelchair Basketball

program at the Andover/North Andover YMCA, the Lawrence YMCA Enrichment Program, which provides swim lessons, art, music, gym class and more to Lawrence Public School students during the school day and the Lawrence YMCA Food Pantry. In total, \$4 million was reinvested into the community last year through the Y’s charitable sources. With more than 30,000 people engaged in membership, programs and services, there is no one making a bigger impact on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility than the Y.

New board members were sworn in during the meeting and volunteers of the year were celebrated. This year’s volunteers included: Felix Garcia for the Lawrence Y; Julie Brady for the Methuen Y, Henry Calderon for the Andover/North Andover Y, Sue Doyle for Camping Services and Marilyn Fitzgerald for the Board of Directors. In recognizing Board of Directors volunteer of the year Marilyn Fitzgerald, President and Chief Executive Officer Frank Kenneally noted that Marilyn has been volunteering for Y for 50 years. This award, however, was to recognize her contributions this year, which included volunteering on several boards and committees including the strategic planning task force.

“If you think Marilyn is just a cheerleader, you have severely underestimated her,” Kenneally said. “No one promotes the Y or works harder for the Y than Marilyn. She is an incredible volunteer.”

The next big event for the Merrimack Valley YMCA will be the annual Auction Gala, which is the biggest fundraiser of the year for the organization. To learn more about how you can support the Y by attending the auction, visit mvymca.org/auction.



Methuen Mayor Neil Perry gave the opening remarks, reminding the audience the community is about participation.



Merrimack Valley YMCA Volunteers of the Year, honored at the MVYMCA Annual Meeting - For the Lawrence Y, Felix Garcia; Board of Directors, Marilyn Fitzgerald; Methuen Y, Julie Brady; Andover/North Andover Y, Henry Calderon & Camps, Sue Doyle (not pictured). Thank you for your dedication to our cause!



Videos highlighting our Wheelchair Basketball program at the Andover/North Andover YMCA, our Lawrence Public Schools Enrichment program and Lawrence YMCA Food Pantry were introduced by Gabby Rickards, Enrique Rivera and Kelven Lopez.



Merrimack Valley Chief Operating Officer Patrick Ryan with Director of Business Recruitment for Norte Dame Cristo Rey High School Dennis McCleary and the new Executive Director of the Lawrence YMCA, Joe Agosto.



Merrimack Valley YMCA Board of Directors Member John Fouhy with State Representative Tom Nguyen and President and Chief Executive Officer Frank Kenneally.



Merrimack Valley YMCA Chief Financial Officer Cathy Landry with Lesly Melendez, Deputy Director at Groundwork Lawrence, Elecia Miller, Community Coordinator for the City of Lawrence and MVYMCA Executive Director of Child Care Cathy Redard.



Lawrence YMCA Board Member Ruby Balborda with Chairwoman Kathleen Costello and Andover/North Andover Board Member Steve Seide.