



eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

HISTORY OF THE MARSHALLTOWN YMCA-YWCA

The YMCA was started in 1876 and reorganized in 1886. It was known as the Railroad YMCA because part of the work was that of aiding railroad employees in their layover. The YMCA moved around until 1917 when a new building was erected on Church Street, where Wells Fargo Bank is now located.

The YWCA had its early beginnings in 1909, providing a wholesome meeting place for women and girls in the community. Bible study, recreation, homemaker classes, and a cafeteria were the YWCA's main focuses. Board members and volunteers were actively involved in community work and during the war, served coffee and doughnuts to soldiers on troop trains passing through the city. The YWCA was housed in many locations and after the war, considered construction of their own building. The financial conditions of the YMCA influenced their decision. The YMCA discovered they had built more space than necessary. The city fathers encouraged the YWCA to invest their money in remodeling the upper floors of the YMCA. In 1926-27, following a combined fund drive which netted \$70,000, remodeling began to accommodate both Y's in one building--resulting in the first such joint occupancy in the USA.

In the 1960's, the 50-year-old building began to show signs of physical stress. After much consideration, a new building seemed to be the best investment. The initial fund drive raised \$900,000 for a 58,000 square foot building, but as construction neared, the Planning Committee determined that a larger building would soon be required, so an additional \$220,000 was raised to increase the square footage. Dedication ceremonies were held June 9, 1968. Unfortunately, before the \$1,156,000 building pledges were all in, a spring flood in 1974 on nearby Linn Creek caused damage totaling over \$100,000. Again the community responded to save the 'Y'.

Shortly thereafter, the 'New Y' was a fine facility, a structure representative of community backing and spirit that the Y's have always appreciated.

The YMCA physical facilities were soon inadequate for the amount of usage. In 1972, a jogging track was added to the YM/YW building. In 1973, new handball and squash courts were completed.

Through the years, many building improvements were continued: a new roof, a women's fitness center developed from an existing exercise area, and the Nautilus

Center was created. In 1991, the north parking lot was donated. Due to the great demand for aerobic classes, the YMCA added on a 2,800 square foot addition to the outside wall to create a new Aerobics Studio.

The YWCA Youth Program has provided traditional activities and club functions for over 70 years. Cathryn McGregor was the first G-Y club president in 1925. Since that time, the Y-teen program has been nationally recognized as one of the finest in the country.

It became inevitable that if the Y were to do more renovation, it needed to address fire code compliance and meet the new ADA requirements. A capital fund drive was initiated, with Howard Braren Associates of Davenport, Iowa, hired to conduct a feasibility study in November 1993. The Marshalltown community again showed its support for the YM and YW and agreed to support a \$1.75 million package for upgrading the Y facility. Renovation began in September, 1995, and an Open House was held February 9, 1997.

In 1995, the Y's began talking about a joint management agreement that would allow them to become the Community Y of Marshalltown while still maintaining their ties with each national association. That came to fruition in July, 1996, when Mary Carol Fish was hired as the executive director over both organizations. Thus began the Community Y of Marshalltown.

In August, 1997, the news came to the Y that Virginia Horne-Henry, a woman who had grown up in Marshalltown during the Roaring 20's, had left her entire fortune of \$28,000,000 in a Remainder Trust to the YMCA and YWCA. The organizations were to be given the interest and dividends from that trust annually for perpetuity.

Needless to say, the Y's in Marshalltown will never be the same again and the opportunities for service are much greater. In 1998, the monies received retired nearly half million dollars in debt and completed many projects within the building that could not be finished during the earlier renovation.

During 1999, a team made up of Clapsaddle-Garber, TSP Six, and TSP Five, Leon Younger and Pros, and Story Construction began the process of developing a Master Plan. That plan was completed in early 2000, resulting in a three-phase project. The first phase was a new wellness/fitness center, called the Horne-Henry Center (which began construction in late 2001). Phase two will be renovation of the existing building (which will be called the Cultural Center) and will be used to meet the needs of cultural and nonphysical programs. The third phase will be expansions of the Horne-Henry Center.

The year 2000 began schematic and design development of the new facility. This process continued into 2001. The new Horne-Henry Center was constructed beginning in April of 2002 and opened its doors to members on January 4, 2004, after 20 months

of construction. The beautiful new 122,000 square foot facility features a recreational pool, a gymnasium housing two regulation-size basketball courts, 3 racquetball courts, 5 locker room areas, large exercise and aerobic areas, as well as a competition pool with seating for approximately 1,800.

YWCA Executive Directors since 1940

1939-1941 Alice Van law
1941-1965 Lucille McMahon
1965-1967 Elizabeth Jacobson
1967-1972 Alice Van Law
1973-1996 Pauline Hartman

YMCA Executive Directors since 1962

1962-1976 James Sturms
1978-1981 Al Buening
1982-1986 Mark Olson
1987-1995 Robert Brown
1995-1996 Mindy Vana (interim)

Marshalltown YM-YW Executive Directors / CEOs since 1996

1996-2006 Mary Carol Fish (retired)
2007-2022 Carol Hibbs (retired)
2023- Kim Jass-Ramirez