

# **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **GLEASON FAMILY YMCA ANNOUNCES EXPANSION Young YMCA Experiences Rapid Growth**

Wareham, Massachusetts  
May 29, 2009

YMCA Southcoast President and CEO Gary R. Schuyler announced plans to expand the Gleason Family YMCA's gymnasium after receiving a generous charitable commitment. The key donation to jump start this project came from a \$1 million gift from a long time YMCA supporter. Additional donations from other YMCA supporters are enabling the YMCA to move forward with this project.

The YMCA's project will expand the current half-sized gymnasium into a full-sized gym, and build a new suspended exercise track to help ease the burden on its four-year old branch located on Charge Pond Road in Wareham. Originally built to accommodate 5,000 members, YMCA board of directors believes that expansion is necessary to maintain high quality member services for its 7,100 members, and continue to meet emerging community needs.

Given the economic recession, the YMCA is committed to only the gymnasium expansion. When additional funds are received the YMCA will move forward with adding an indoor suspended exercise track to complete the project. Gleason YMCA Executive Director Laura Prisco said, "The expansion plan is relatively simple compared to the existing architecture of our branch, and will yield much needed program area, and double the space for teens to play basketball, socialize with their peers, and expend all that energy!" She added, "This was planned from the beginning knowing that eventually the need would arise. The current gym walls are easy to bump out and all the necessary space is ready for new construction."

The YMCA will be hosting a groundbreaking ceremony on Wednesday, June 3 and will start construction shortly thereafter. Construction is anticipated to be complete by mid-October. Ford Construction was the low bidder and has been selected as the General Contractor. They were the contractor for the original construction.

This gymnasium/track project is part of a larger phased plan that includes a new outdoor pool and family center; additional locker room space including the construction of a steam and sauna area; and the creation of a new multi-purpose/group exercise space. Because of the severe economic situation, YMCA leadership has not determined a timetable for the remainder of the expansion.

Co-chairs Dr. Sherm Gleason, retired Wareham pediatrician and long time YMCA benefactor, and Hannah TC Moore, volunteer leader and educator residing in Marion, are heading up the expansion project steering committee. Members of its steering committee include: Charles Decas, Anthi Frangiadis, Dr. Greg Johnson,

Margo Kalkanis, Christopher Makepeace, Nancy McFadden, Laura Prisco, Dr. Steven Mendes, Cathy Roberts, Elaine Robertson, Dr. Paul Vivino, Jo-Ann Watson, Nancy Bonell, Gary Schuyler, and Richard Wheeler. Individuals interested in supporting this project should contact one of the steering committee members or Jo-Ann Watson at the Gleason Family YMCA.

Headquartered in historic downtown New Bedford, YMCA Southcoast has been working to meet the health and social service needs of youth and families throughout the Southcoast region for nearly 150 years. There are five branch sites: the Dartmouth YMCA, Fall River YMCA, New Bedford YMCA, Mattapoisett YMCA and the Gleason Family YMCA in Wareham, serving 16,000 members. The YMCA operates five summer day camp programs with an enrollment of 1,100 youth per day, and more than 350 children per day attend one of YMCA Southcoast's ten preschool and afterschool child care programs. In addition, more than 35,000 youth, families and adults participate in YMCA Southcoast programs and activities each year. Facilities include youth and adult wellness centers, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and climbing walls, ropes courses, gyms, group exercise rooms, indoor track, stadium stairs, community rooms, computer rooms and much more.