



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## GYMNASTICS PROGRAM UPDATE JULY 2020

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones in good health. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate these uncharted waters. After much deliberation and with the support of the YMCA Board of Directors, The YMCA of Greater Westfield has made the difficult decision to end the Gymnastics Team/Program. Know that this decision was not taken lightly and we fully understand the impact that this may have on your athlete.

On July 3<sup>rd</sup> the Commonwealth released the Mandatory Health and Safety Standards for Fitness Centers and Health Clubs. The standards stated that fitness equipment and class participants need to maintain 14 feet of physical distance. In order to accomplish this we have converted the gym into our only group exercise space. Consequently, it is no longer feasible to conduct competitive gymnastics in the gym. During these challenging times we had to make decisions that were best for the majority of our members.

We want to thank you for your dedication and support of the gymnastics team through the years. The team was always an incredible representation of the Y at community events. The friendships and the team spirit were indeed second to none. We do hope that the athletes will find a new team so they can continue to participate in a sport that they so obviously love.

I also want to take the time to thank Megan, Linda and all the coaches. Megan and Linda have been the backbone of the team for over 30 years. Their incredible dedication to the team is a testament to their love of the sport and coaching. They were indeed an asset to the team, the organization and our entire community.

We greatly appreciate your understanding of this situation and we wish your athletes the best of luck as they continue their gymnastics journey. Feel free to contact me at 413.568.8631 ext. 301 or [aallard@westfieldymca.org](mailto:aallard@westfieldymca.org) if you have any further questions.

Please e-mail our Membership Director, Alex Khatchadourian: [akhatchadourian@westfieldymca.org](mailto:akhatchadourian@westfieldymca.org) or call 413.568.8631 ext. 315 to communicate your membership billing or fees questions/concerns.

Sincerely,

Andrea Allard, CEO

**\*\*See Letters from the Head Coaches Below**

**YMCA of Greater Westfield  
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It's with a heavy heart that we deliver this message to you. As our program is ending, we are still working with the other area Ys to help find a way for the kids continue their YMCA gymnastics experience together. We will send more information as we work it out.

This program has meant the world to me. I've been a part of the Westfield YMCA Gymnastics Program since I was 6 years old, basically my entire life. As a child, it gave me a place to belong, an identity, a whole new group of friends that I still treasure to this day. As a young adult, it became a place where I could help mold the next generation of gymnasts, but more than that, I was able to help the next generations of kids and give them a place to belong, a new group of friends and a place where they could find their identities. When I became the program director, it gave me the chance to grow even further as an adult. Being a leader, being a boss, is a responsibility that I treasure, I was then given the opportunity to direct others towards a shared goal. We wanted to give kids a place to go where they could forget everything else going on in their lives, where they could forget the stress of school and friends and family obligations and just be a gymnast, to be whoever they wanted, to set goals, to fall, to succeed, to try and fail, to win.

Over the many, many years here, I've met so many different kids and families, so many generations, who have come and gone, our alumni. And to them, I say Thank You! It was your time and effort and sweat and blood that helped us make and grow the program to what it was. It was all of our alumni who helped create and carry the legacy, and now that it's coming to a close, it is our shared memories that will live on. We always tell families, when it's time for them to leave our program, that they are part of our family now and they will always be welcome at our gym home. That sentiment will never change. You are all a part of our family. They say home is where your heart is, and for us, you'll always be home.

**We hope to see all of our current Team members at our End of Season Event on July 25<sup>th</sup>.**

- Coach Megan Wright

\*\*See Linda's Letter Below

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I will be forever grateful to the YMCA for giving me the opportunity and resources to be able to share gymnastics with many families and friends since 1988.

The YMCA values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility help to remind us of the best within us.

The sport of gymnastics builds on these with a focus on reaching for your goals with grace, determination, hard work and patience. A forever present goal for me in the program was to provide a space that fostered self-discovery and expanding of personal boundaries to explore what is within each of us. We strived to provide the opportunity to learn, working as a team, to help each other grow with strength and confidence that carries us forward.

You all have given me this and more. Westfield YMCA Gymnastics is all of you. You all are our Team Family. We share so many fond memories. So many moments of shared struggle and success, hard work and reward, tears and laughter. So much friendship and love.

It's unfortunate that this is the way the program is ending. Though my heart is breaking, I have hope for the future. A hope that the love of the sport, the experience at the Y, and all learned from it, is held strongly within you all.

Thank you for the privilege and honor to coach and work with all of you. Thank you for all you've shared, and for being part of this journey of Westfield YMCA Gymnastics. I know I will forever hold my time here, and all of you, our team family, in a very special place in my heart, Always a part of my soul.

- Coach Linda Wright

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