



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE BLUE RIDGE VOICE

WINTER 2022

Rise up and shine, for your light has come. The shining greatness of the Lord has risen upon you. – Isaiah 60:1

GREETINGS FROM THE MOUNTAIN!



I fully subscribe to the saying – **the days are long, but the years (weeks) are short.**

That is especially true as we are moving quickly towards the end of 2022. And whether the days feel long OR short, **we are filled with GRATITUDE.**

We've experienced a tremendous fall season. **The campus was busy with school groups, church retreats, educational learning opportunities, families and fellowship.** This time

of year is also a wonderful time of reflection. In late September, I had the opportunity to update the YMCA Blue Ridge Board of Directors on how Blue Ridge was fulfilling its operational rebound plan, **RISE.** The plan was created to be an 18–24-month plan and provided the strategy screens (**R**eturn on Investment, **I**mpact, **S**ustainable, **E**xcellence) and priorities (Stewardship, Engaged & Empowered Staff, Efficient Operations) for filtering and making decisions.

Here are a few highlights: **Most importantly, the staff are dedicated, servant leaders!** The rate of change we are experiencing is astounding – 120% group and 234% guest growth since 2020. We are forecasting an overall financial return of about 78% in 2022. It is working, and **we are hopeful to realize a 100% return by year-end 2023.**

GRATITUDE –
an emotion that reflects
our deep appreciation
for what we value, what
brings meaning to our
lives, and what makes
us feel connected to
ourselves and others.

– Brené Brown

On the horizon is continued growth and greater impact! First, we will pause the week of Christmas to celebrate with our loved ones, and then we will quickly gear back up to serve families and retreats over New Years and into 2023. For all of this, we are filled with thankfulness and appreciation!

There is significant power in an immersion experience, and because of this we often talk about the moments shared and impact created by time spent on the Mountain. This commitment to leadership development, family and youth development (especially focused on teens) stems from two primary beliefs – **if we are going to make any significant societal changes, we must start in the hearts and minds of young people AND if we strengthen the family, we strengthen the child.** No matter the age – our intent is to create space for connection, learning and growth; to grow confidence and self-worth; to facilitate healing and to inspire hope, wonder and awe.

In these next few pages, you will see a collection of moments big and small from throughout the year. **To say your giving changes lives is an understatement: it not only changes them but shapes them, grows them, establishes them.**



This Christmas season we are overflowing with gratitude and praise. YMCA Blue Ridge continues to be a platform where lives are being positively impacted, leaders are being nurtured, teens have a sense of belonging and families are being strengthened. **THANK YOU for being a vital partner in delivering our mission, purpose and vision.** Please know how much we appreciate your support and how much we need your continued support moving forward.

Wishing you a Christmas season full of peace, hope and joy!

In awe and with a heartfelt gratitude,

Melissa Bailey Logan
Chief Executive Officer
YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly



**The true meaning of life
is to plant trees under
whose shade you do not
expect to sit.**

– Nelson Henderson

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2022

On September 21, Blue Ridge had the honor of hosting the **YMCAs of the Southeast Hall of Fame's fifth annual celebration and induction ceremony** in Eureka Hall. This event provides a forum for recognizing YMCA professionals and volunteers who have devoted their lives to strengthening their local communities through their devotion and dedication to serving others. **Seven individuals were inducted into the Class of 2022**—as a group, their work has touched many thousands of lives over their careers that collectively span over 250 years.

REID ASHE

Served as the Chief Volunteer Officer of four separate YMCAs over a four decade span and oversaw the launch of several YMCAs in Richmond along with the expansion of others.

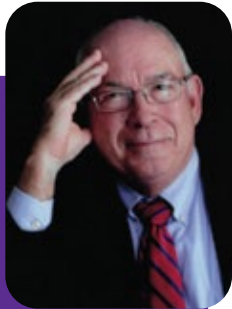
**YMCA of Greater Richmond
Richmond, Virginia**



CHUCK HARRIS

Dedicated his 43 years of service to the YMCA by amplifying the "C" in YMCA. Known for his ability to galvanize community leaders and help them realize the YMCA's potential as a force for good.

**YMCA of South Hampton Roads
Chesapeake, Virginia**



SUZANNE MABIE

Known for her immeasurable impact on youth leadership, serving over 35 years as a dedicated Y professional and devoting 14 years to Texas YMCA Youth and Government.

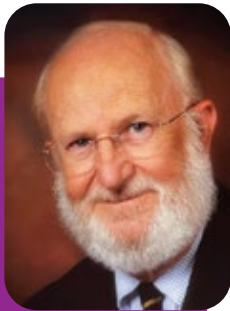
**YMCA of Austin
Austin, Texas**



GEORGE REHNQUIST

Provided quality leadership at all levels of the YMCA, unselfishly lending time and talent as a volunteer for over four decades while representing the movement's highest ideals.

**YMCA of Southwestern Indiana
Princeton, Indiana**



CLAUDE WHITEHEAD

Remembered for his instrumental role in opening the Five Points YMCA and for contributing greatly to the national YMCA movement towards social responsibility.

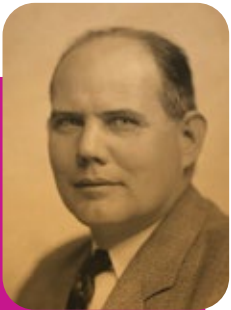
**YMCA of Greater Birmingham
Birmingham, Alabama**



EARLE WHITTINGTON

Dedicated his life to the YMCA's purpose and mission at all levels from the time he graduated college until his death, a career of 52 years.

**YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South
Memphis, Tennessee**



PHIL WORTMAN

Known for his incredible impact in the realm of fitness and physical education, playing a key role in establishing multiple YMCA health initiatives and contributing to fitness curricula.

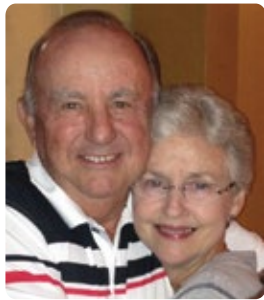
**YMCA of Greater New Orleans
New Orleans, Louisiana**



Applications for the YMCAs of the Southeast Hall of Fame Class of 2023 are now open! To learn more or download an application, visit our website: blueridgeassembly.org.



LEGENDS OF NEW ORLEANS



This September we were honored to dedicate Room 3 in Heaton Hall to the "Legends of New Orleans": **George & Marlea Frentzos, Boots & Erna Hoffman and Phil & Gail Wortman**. Through their work, thousands of lives were changed for the better in the city of New Orleans and far beyond. We are grateful to everyone who donated to create this lasting tribute to these incredible people, and to all who attended.



OUR CAMPUS WISH LIST

The gifts we receive enable us to accomplish our mission, funding scholarships and programs that ensure everyone has the opportunity for a life-changing Mountaintop experience. The impact of those gifts cannot be overstated.

For those who would also like the opportunity to make a specific contribution to our campus, we do have a wish list of improvements – items that provide activities and enhance the experience of visiting Blue Ridge Assembly for everyone who comes here:



Firepit for Weatherford Hall Deck – \$5,000

(8) Outside Dining Tables with Umbrellas – \$2,500 each

(4) Picnic Tables for the Lake – \$1,500 each

(8) Water Bottle Refill Stations – \$1,200 each

(6) New Podiums – \$1,000 each

**(3 Seasons) Front Deck Flowers for the
Blue Ridge Center – \$500 per Season**

(2) Cornhole Boards & Bags Sets – \$150 each

(8) Tennis Racquets & Balls – \$50 each

(4) Pickleball Paddles & Balls Sets – \$40 each

Basketballs/Volleyballs – \$40 each

Dodgeballs – \$85/Set of 6



**Scan this QR code to
be taken to our wish
list online where you
can make your gift.**

YOUR GIFTS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK

All different types
of people on all
different walks of life
coming together as one
to worship the
Creator of this
beautiful mountain



I feel that
it is time
for me to
give back



I love to be here
reconnecting
in this wonderful place!
**it never
leaves you**



**This is the
best place
to come and
clear your mind**



On the Mountain I can
tune out the noise
the world usually
drowns me with
**and hear
God's voice**



There is no denying
that love
friendship and kindness
forever exist on that
**beautiful
Mountain**



**Blue Ridge
taught me
that I am
a leader**



**I can feel
God's greatness
and beauty
surrounding me
in the trees
and the mountains**



Blue Ridge Assembly
is the best place
for youth conferences,
but also for adults
who need to get away
from the day-to-day hustle
and bustle of life



**Blue Ridge
played a
major role
in me becoming
a young man**



**I feel like
I grew up
as a person
this week**



**There are
no words
to express
my love
for this place**



**This week
opened my eyes
to what it really
means to be a
Christian**



**This week is
so important
for our family.
Our souls are
rejuvenated**



**I believe I am
a teacher today
partly because of
my experience here
I will always
love this place**



GREEN ROCKER SOCIETY

The **Green Rocker Society** is a giving society of generous donors who ensure that our programs are open to all, and that the next generation of leaders is nurtured. There are three levels to this Society, and all members are honored with a customized plaque on the back of a rocking chair on the Blue Ridge campus:

- Rhododendron: a three-year commitment of \$1,000/year
- Lookout: a four-year commitment of \$1,500/year
- Mountain View: a five-year commitment of \$2000/year

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Gifts to our **Capital Campaign** are investments in the future of YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly. The Capital Campaign allows us to maintain the core campus and expand and revitalize other facilities to grow our reach.

EUREKA CLUB

The **Eureka Club** is composed of supporters who have committed to an annual gift of \$500 or more. A gift at this level is versatile: you can give a teen the opportunity to attend a national YMCA youth conference, which provides them with the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being that many will remember as the best week of their lives. Eureka Club members make the deep growth and character development that happens at these conferences possible for hundreds of teens every year.

WHITE COLUMNS SOCIETY

The **White Columns Society** is a special group of people who have made or planned future gifts of at least \$5,000 to our endowment fund, and/or those who have purchased a Columbarium niche.

OPEN DOORS CLUB

The **Open Doors Club** does just that—opens doors for all to have a Mountaintop experience. Requiring an annual gift of \$250, this giving club is for those who are passionate about supporting the Blue Ridge mission through programs like Go Outside, Grow Outside and Collegiate Leadership that offer young people learning experiences, enrichment, outdoor adventure and career development. As an Open Doors Club member, you can designate your gift to any of these programs or to another about which you are passionate.



END-OF-YEAR GIVING

\$327,000

CURRENT GIFTS

\$346,000

CURRENT NEED

YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly is supported by people like you. Each year, we receive gifts from a variety of generous donors, many of whom have a unique connection to Blue Ridge—some attended camps here as children, some found us through our family programs and others became involved through their work with youth conferences—but all of them have this in common: **they are dedicated in their support of our mission to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.**

Your gifts to our Annual Campaign facilitate our work and enable us to impact more lives each year. We believe that regardless of financial standing, every child, teen, adult and family deserves a life-changing experience — **and your gift makes that possible.** As we approach the year's end we're asking you to help us complete this journey. To make a meaningful impact on someone's life, all it takes is filling out the Annual Giving card included with this issue and sending it back to us OR scanning the code to be taken to our donation page. **Every gift matters!**

**YOU
MAKE
THE
DIFFERENCE**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Campfire Conference

January 22–25, 2023

YMCA Professionals Network Spring Conference

March 15–17, 2023

YMCA World Urban Network

CEO & Senior Leadership Conference

May 14–19, 2023

Summer Family Camp Session 1

June 3–8, 2023

Blue Ridge Leaders' School Session 1

June 17–24, 2023

Fellowship of Christian Athletes Camps

June and July, 2023

YMCA Conference on National Affairs

July 1–7, 2023

Summer Family Camp Session 2

July 10–15, 2023

Christian Values Conference

July 16–21, 2023

Blue Ridge Leaders' School Session 2

July 22–29, 2023

YMCA Achievers Conference

July 30–August 3, 2023

Global Leadership Summit

August 3–4, 2023

Thanksgiving Family Camp

November 22–25, 2023

Did you know you can give to the Blue Ridge Annual Giving Program just by shopping on Amazon? Using the same login information as your regular Amazon account, sign into smile.amazon.com and choose **Young Men's Christian Association Blue Ridge Assembly** as your charity of choice. Every time you shop through Amazon Smile, 0.5% of your total purchase will be donated to our Annual Giving Program. Just make sure to do all your Amazon shopping using the smile.amazon.com URL – it's that easy to give!



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blueridgeassembly.org