



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE BLUE RIDGE VOICE 2023

THANK YOU DONORS

GREETINGS FROM THE MOUNTAIN!



“Above all else,
guard your heart,
for everything you
do flows from it.”
– Proverbs 4:23

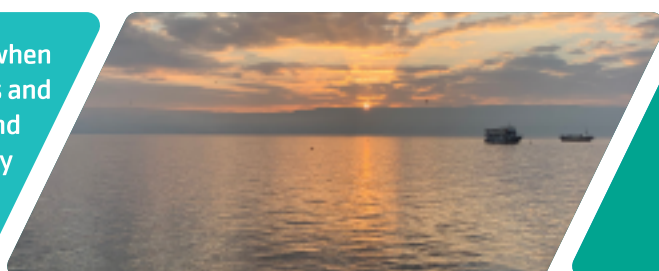
As I write this, we are weeks away from the 3-year anniversary of the pandemic start. It feels like a lifetime has passed – maybe this is what dog years feels like! February 2020 I was involved in an adaptive leadership development cohort, onPrinciple, experiencing an 11-day immersion in the Holy Land. It was so powerful as we leaned into Christian leadership principles exemplified by the life of Jesus. The intensity of this immersion filled me with gratitude, hope and peace. It made my head and heart swell with awe and wonder.

The descriptors above and the following from previous Blue Ridge Voices caught my eye – belonging, connection, healing, heart, joy and resilience. These are all adjectives used to describe the resulting impact of time spent at YMCA Blue Ridge. It’s HEART and HOPE that stand out to me, probably because of these two statements I heard the other day. **Hope is found on an individual basis. Hope holds the power to change your perspective.**

With 2023 moving at a rapid pace, we believe it will be a year of exponential growth, greater impact and continued adaptability. The staff team is busy preparing for all of it. Winter into early spring projects include repairing the retaining wall between Washburn and Blue Ridge Center, resurfacing the dining room back deck, painting Asheville Hall’s 40 guest rooms, purchasing over 200 new mattresses and foundations for Asheville Hall, Weatherford Hall and McCarty Family Lodge, renovating the Washburn Center’s restrooms, razing Rondette Cabin, removing trees on main campus which pose a threat, replacing the flat roof on the backside of Eureka Hall, buying new tables and chairs for the Heaton Hall classrooms, installing new window treatments in Washburn Center Auditorium and Heaton Hall classrooms, and painting parking spot lines.



“Hope is forged when
our goals, pathways and
agency are tested and
when change is actually
possible.”
– Brené Brown



There are many other little projects not mentioned, and many other projects on our list for the future. In addition, we are working earnestly to expand our team, so we can serve more and in turn have greater impact.

From a Board of Directors perspective their meaningful work includes endowment investment, philanthropy assessment, capital development and approving the strategic plan targets/metrics. I continue to be grateful for a strong board-staff partnership!

Just like my immersion in the Holy Land, YMCA Blue Ridge provides an immersion experience for young people, for families and for adults. **An opportunity to find hope awaits each person as they pass through the gate.** This is the work we do. As we continue to enhance and expand our campus, know that the buildings are the platform and vehicle for this life-changing work. It will be a year of HEART and HOPE. A joyful noise will abound as teens, families and adults – young and young-at-heart – experience the Mountain.

THANK YOU for being a vital partner! With your support, lives are being positively impacted, leaders are being nurtured, teens have a sense of belonging and families are being strengthened. For this and for so much more, we are grateful.

With a hopeful heart,

Melissa Bailey Logan
Chief Executive Officer
YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly



GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

For over 25 years, The Global Leadership Summit has been inspiring, developing and connecting people from all over the world! Over the course of two days, GLS provides talks from world-class speakers who display grit, innovate opportunities in their industry, and push boundaries and barriers to influence others. Recognized as a transformative experience, the GLS provides immeasurable potential to all those who attend.

The Global Leadership Summit is broadcasted live in over 130 countries, and YMCA Blue Ridge is a proud premier host site – able to provide not only live HD telecast access, but lodging, meals and meeting spaces to you and your teams so that you may truly maximize your learning experience. So bring your team and invite your friends and family too!

Whether you are a church leader, company CEO, YMCA staff, or organization staff, if you're looking for the highest caliber leadership content at the most affordable price, the Summit is for you.

Save the Date:
August 3–4, 2023



THE GLOBAL
LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

CELEBRATING 2022 IMPACT

YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly seeks to create space for connection, learning and growth; to nurture confidence and self-worth; to facilitate healing; and to inspire hope, wonder and awe. You helped us accomplish that in 2022:



11,006 YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

were able to participate in activities and programs with a focus on interpersonal relationships, leadership development, connectedness, faith and respect, including 155 school and church groups.



21,761 TOTAL GUESTS SPENT A CUMULATIVE 62,772 DAYS

for leadership training and spiritual, emotional and social growth.



GUESTS AND STAFF FROM MORE THAN 40 COUNTRIES

brought a wealth of new perspectives and experiences, creating a vibrant community that promotes intercultural exchange and global citizenship.



WE HELPED FEED 3,600 PEOPLE

by donating 5,444 pounds of food worth approximately \$80,000, reducing food waste and ensuring that our resources reach their full potential for good.



CABIN VILLAGE INITIATIVE UPDATE

View from the site of the future lodge!



The recently completed 10-bedroom lodge and a trio of 3-bedroom, 3 bath cabins have been fabulous, relevant and impactful additions to our campus. **NOW, we are focused on a 16-bedroom lodge and a 4-bedroom cabin.** The 16-bedroom lodge will sit on the site of Rhododendron Cabin which is on the east side of campus behind Eureka Hall, across the creek from Hibbard Hall. The Lodge will be a two-level structure that can be sub-divided by floor. Each level has its own entrance and exit, has eight bedrooms, plus an open floorplan for the kitchen, living and dining area. With retaining walls in place and site work almost complete, we look forward to seeing the footers poured in the next few weeks. We anticipate this new lodge being online by year-end! On the other side of campus, up from Warner Pool and Ware Pavillion, Rondette Cabin was razed last month. This site will be prepared for a two-story, 4-bedroom cabin; its final design and construction timeline are still in progress.

We've had tremendous support thus far and are entering the fundraising homestretch. We are eager to reveal the names of these new facilities in our next issue! **Please know how grateful we are for both the current support and for future support of these projects.** The investment in our platform significantly impacts our work and propels us forward. **If you can support this endeavor, please connect with us.** We would be delighted to discuss giving options.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**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

Y Achievers Summit
July 30–August 3, 2023

Global Leadership Summit
August 3–4, 2023

Youth Development Summit
November 13–16, 2023

Thanksgiving Family Camp
November 22–25, 2023



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YMCA Events page!



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blueridgeassembly.org

LIVE, WORK AND PLAY AT YMCA BLUE RIDGE



Come explore the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Asheville area.

YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly was founded 115 years ago, and from the very beginning it was envisioned as a center for leadership training. The collegiate leadership program continues this legacy of developing leaders by offering valuable internship and work opportunities to college-age students, recent graduates and those still searching for their path.

Staff have the chance to **learn and grow while acquiring valuable job skills and developing lasting friendships**. They live, work and play in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains surrounded by a beautiful natural environment just 20 minutes from Asheville, North Carolina.

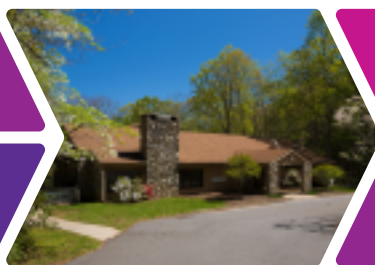


Soak up the cool mountain air amidst a picturesque 1,200-acre forested campus.

The Blue Ridge spirit captures those who seek **a community to call their own**. It lifts up those for whom friendship, fun and outdoor exploration are a way of life – and through our vibrant international cultural exchange program, **the bonds of friendship and community forged here stretch across all corners of the globe**.

What qualities make someone a good fit for YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly? **We're looking for bright, motivated and passionate individuals** who thrive in leadership positions. Staff at Blue Ridge have a service mindset, an interest in hospitality and a love of the outdoors.

While you're here on the Mountain, **you'll have the opportunity to live and work with other young people from around the world**. There are plenty of opportunities to engage in fun social events including dinners, whitewater rafting, hikes and more.



Make lifelong friends and memories. Earn money for college and beyond.

While you are here, you will have **free housing on campus**. During the months of June and July, Weatherford Hall becomes the summer staff residence hall, and Younts Hall is our year-round staff dorm. You will also have free meals every time our main kitchen is operating.

Here are some of the roles we're looking to fill in 2023!

Guest Services Receptionist

Adventure Programs Leader

Kitchen/Culinary

Groundskeeping

Audio-Visual

Lifeguard

Retail

Dining Room Attendant

Conference Services

Housekeeping

To join the team this summer, **send your resume along with three references** to Bruno Vandorsee, Director of Leadership Development, at bvandorsee@yblueridge.org or call 828-232-8972 to learn more about the summer program and open positions. You can also visit our website, blueridgeassembly.org.

Grow as a leader. Find your way. That's the Blue Ridge experience!



STRENGTHENING TEENS & FAMILIES

Preparing For Success at the Y Achievers Summit

Y Achievers, a national YMCA program, serves students from varying academic levels in pursuit of high educational and career goals, developing individual talents and leadership skills and preparing teens for life beyond high school. **Y Achievers helps teens improve academic performance, develop a positive sense of self, build character, explore diverse college and career options plus interact with professionals who serve as role models.**

Last year YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly launched its inaugural Y Achievers Summit, hosting about 165 youth and staff from 23 associations in the United States and Canada. During the Summit, youth chose life skills workshops to attend each morning focused on college preparation, civic engagement and career/life dreams. In the afternoons, they worked on personal growth and engaged in group initiatives, utilizing Blue Ridge's team-building programs and ropes courses.

This year, **July 30–August 3**, Y Achievers Summit returns to the Mountain for another week of learning, growth and development. The Y Achievers Program is vital for teens across the country, and **YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly is excited to bring them together to connect and interact in an environment dedicated to their success.**



Growing Together at Family Camp

We often say that families are the foundation of healthy, values-driven young people. We strive to be a place where families can learn and grow together without the distractions of everyday life – that's why **we're excited to invite your family to the Mountain for some much-needed outdoor recreation, adventure and fun at one of our Family Camps.**

Family Camp is an easy, affordable way for families to get outside in a safe and healthy mountain environment to enjoy nature and participate in guided outdoor recreation and programming. **We offer two sessions of Family Camp in the summer as well as a Thanksgiving Family Camp in the fall**, all of which include fun opportunities to bond with your family through activities such as hikes, crafts, climbing courses, water games and more.

Our goal is to provide a simple and relaxed family stay, so our guests are free to engage in as much of our programming as they'd like as well as venture into Black Mountain or Asheville to experience popular area attractions or grab dinner. At night, join us for s'mores and other family-friendly evening activities!

If you're looking for a great opportunity for a family-focused getaway, we'd love to see you at a Family Camp this year! Our 2023 Family Camps convene **June 3–8, July 10–15 and November 22–25.**

To learn more or register for a Family Camp, head to blueridgeassembly.org/family-camp.

ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM

Annual Giving is the heartbeat of YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly. It’s what keeps the mission of our organization alive and thriving. **Blue Ridge is more than a place; it’s a community.** It’s where children laugh, learn and play, where teens come to grow and make lifelong friendships and where families reconnect with nature and each other. **Your support through Annual Giving is what makes all of this possible.**

Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, countless lives are changed, memories made and friendships forged. **Every dollar you give to the Annual Giving Program provides someone with the opportunity to experience the magic of Blue Ridge Assembly.** Whether it’s a child who attends a summer camp for the first time, a family making memories together or a young adult preparing for the future, **your gift makes a difference.**

Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul alike.
– John Muir

OPEN DOORS CLUB

The Open Doors Club opens doors for all to have a Mountaintop experience.

Joining the Open Doors Club means making an annual gift of \$250. This giving club is for those who are passionate about supporting YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly’s mission through programs like Go Outside, Grow Outside and Collegiate Leadership. **A gift at this level is enough to bring a young person to the Assembly for experiences of learning, enrichment, outdoor adventure and career development.**



EUREKA CLUB

A gift of \$500 annually allows you to join the **Eureka Club**. Named for the enthusiastic declaration of our founder, the Eureka Club enables you to give in the spirit of our founding principle: **making a deep and lasting impact on the lives of the youth and teens who come through our doors.**

A gift at this level can give a teen a week-long trip to the mountain, providing them with the spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing that many of them will remember as one of the best weeks of their lives.



GREEN ROCKER SOCIETY

Green rocking chairs have been a fixture of our campus for many years, and they have come to symbolize many of the core elements of the Mountaintop experience: **peace, fellowship and connection to nature.** When you join the Green Rocker Society, you offer that experience to new generations and keep the spirit of Blue Ridge alive.

In joining the Green Rocker Society, **you ensure the success of the kids, teens, adults and families who come to our campus every year.** You help sustain programs that impact lives, make possible the financial assistance that ensures those programs are open to all and play a vital role in preparing the next generation of leaders.

There are three giving tiers of the Green Rocker Society:



TIER 1: RHODODENDRON

THREE-YEAR COMMITMENT
OF \$1,000/YEAR

TIER 2: LOOKOUT

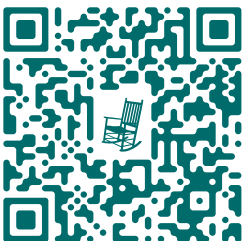
FOUR-YEAR COMMITMENT
OF \$1,500/YEAR

TIER 3: MOUNTAIN VIEW

FIVE-YEAR COMMITMENT
OF \$2,000/YEAR

When we launched the Green Rocker Society in 2017, we were hopeful that this program, a continuous multi-year commitment, would resonate with our donors and thereby enable us to serve and impact more teens and families. **And it has!** The continuous commitment of the Green Rocker Society members (renewing every three, four or five years) is tremendous because **it enables intentional planning for exponential growth.**

To learn more or download a pledge card from our website, just scan this QR code.



THANK YOU 2022 DONORS

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In Honor of Our Nephews – Joshua and
Zachary DeBlieux
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In Honor of DH, KB, DJ ... Thank You

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Staff at Blue Ridge Assembly During the
Summers of 1978 and 1979
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In Honor of My Father Kerry Uffman
Becky Etheridge

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