



Going for the Gold

February 8, 2010

Dear Friend of the Hunterdon County YMCA

My fellow volunteers at the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign have asked me to share my thoughts as a member of the Hunterdon County YMCA Board of Trustees and lifelong competitive athlete. The YMCA has played a pivotal role in my athletic and personal development, and I ask you to join me in supporting an essential initiative that will enable many children to benefit from the organization's positive influence.

As a young child in the summer of 1984 I, like many Americans, was transfixed by the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. I vividly remember watching many of the competitions. Inspired by the summer's events, I soon joined the swim team at the Hunterdon County YMCA. The practices were challenging but made bearable by the wonderfully supportive environment fostered by the coaches.

Having competed for many years below the water and developed a significant fitness base, my subsequent transition into rowing was an easy one. My success as a member of the rowing team at the Hun School of Princeton led to a scholarship to Temple University, where I continued to row. In the summer of 2004, I was blessed with the opportunity to participate in the Athens Olympics with the US National Team. I earned a spot on what would become the fastest eight-man team in the history of rowing and gold medal-winning boat.

The dedication and commitment I learned in my time at the Y were critical to my Olympic success. As members of the YMCA, we can take pride that this tradition of teaching athletic techniques, honesty, emphasizing sportsmanship and instilling confidence continues today.

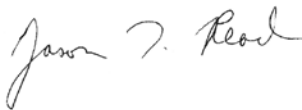
I am fortunate to be able to give back to the organization by leading the community section of the 2010 Strong Kids Campaign. The Strong Kids Campaign raises financial assistance for anyone seeking to participate in YMCA programs, regardless of ability to pay. We named this year's campaign "**Going for the Gold**" in honor of the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. Our goal is to fulfill the expected level of financial assistance requests, which are projected to be up 15% in 2010 from pre-recession levels.

Annual support from members like you and me enables our YMCA to build upon its tradition of excellence. Last year we awarded more than \$325,000 in financial assistance --a record high for the organization. Please know that the financial assistance program is funded exclusively through charitable donations; these funds do not come from operations and do not have any effect on our program fees.

Over the next few weeks you will be contacted by a volunteer and asked to support the 2010 campaign. While giving is a personal matter and will vary based on resources, I ask you to please consider making a gift by **March 31st**. Your donation will make a difference in the life of a young county resident who might otherwise not be able to afford to participate in Y programs.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Your participation at any level is critical and very much appreciated. Enjoy the Winter Olympics, and I hope to see you at the Y as I continue my training for the London 2012 Summer Olympics!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jason L. Read".

Jason L. Read
Chair, Strong Kids Campaign Teams Section
Member, Board of Trustees

P.S. If you or your spouse work for a company with a matching gift program, the amount of your gift could at least double your support to the YMCA. Please visit your benefits office or website for more information.