

FOREVER GRATEFUL

My name is Christine Sutton and have been a member of the New Britain YMCA for over three years now. I've attended the Water Aerobics, Aqua Zumba and Aqua Fit on regular basis 3-4 times a week. I am a disabled Veteran with certain disabilities which have been eased by the pool programs at the NBYMCA. I can't do gravity exercises so the water anti gravity programs run by the instructors have been so helpful for me when I attend. Also, before the Pandemic my mother at 86 years old attended with me. She enjoyed the programs so much but now is waiting for showers to open up so she can shower right after she gets out the chlorine pool. (Editor's note: showers are now open after using the pool). I can't express how much I myself have benefited from all the Aquatic programs. Thank you to all the wonderful staff, especially the direction and stellar service from Ashley.

April 15, 2020

Dear YMCA:

I am a 52 year old lifelong Connecticut resident who has suffered some major medical and socioeconomic setbacks over the past 10 years, including but not limited to homelessness for 2 years, diabetes for 21 years, and most recently the loss of my left leg as complications from diabetes one year ago.

After being denied three times and having to go through a hearing with a Federal Magistrate, I was finally awarded Social Security disability benefits in April of 2016.

In May of that year as I was searching the internet for affordable housing, I came across the Hart House Residence for Men at the New Britain Berlin YMCA. After interviewing with Marci and Curtis I moved in May of 2016 and never looked back.

Over the years this place has become my home to the point where my car registration and driver's license reflect this address and Marci and Curtis have become family.

One doesn't have to look very hard to see the positive effect the Y has on this community. Programs for everyone from toddlers to the elderly. It's no wonder they've been around since 1865.

Four years ago I showed up with nothing but an old Chevy and a plastic tub full of clothes, and while there have been personal challenges with respect to my health and loss of a limb, the Y with its affordable housing and newly added wheelchair access ramp reaffirms in my mind the quality of this organization.

To the entire staff, thank you for what you do.

Sincerely,
Eric D'Amato

April 14, 2020

*A Hart-felt
thank you!*

Dear New Britain YMCA Staff:

"There but for the grace of God, go I."

I must admit that, on occasion, I've recited that phrase when in the company of someone less fortunate than myself. How, I recall thinking, could they ever have allowed themselves to reach such a state of desperation? Never in my wildest imagination did I anticipate that one day that phrase would be directed towards me. It was!

During the weeks just prior to Christmas 2018, I found myself without a job, without resources and soon thereafter, without a home. Everyone shops at Wal-Mart, some sleep in their parking lot. I've done both! At that time, common everyday thoughts like what to have for dinner, what television shows to watch and what clothes to wear were replaced by those much more serious in nature: How will I eat? How will I stay safe? What clothes should I keep?

Perhaps it was by the grace of God that during that extremely difficult period, I received a phone call from Curtis Slaughter, the Hart House Residence Director. Mr. Slaughter was responding to an email I had submitted in desperation the previous week inquiring about the Y's residency program. After discussing my circumstances, we agreed that I might be a good candidate for the New Britain YMCA's residence program. I applied shortly thereafter and became a Hart House resident that very month - and have been here ever since!

Since my arrival, life at the YMCA has been extremely beneficial and uplifting. A short adjustment period was necessary, but I soon had little concern for my critical needs i.e., personal safety, reliable access to basic amenities, and most certainly, proximity to a gym! Equally important, I began to feel a sense of belonging again and had hope for the future!

As I write this, it seems the entire planet is at war with the dreaded coronavirus (COVID-19). Each day brings news of a growing casualty count. As part of the effort to eradicate the virus, no citizen, business or organization is exempt from the restrictive government-imposed measures necessary to win the war. Yet, you, the New Britain YMCA staff, have not wavered from your core mission: social responsibility. If anything, your response and course of action only demonstrate your resolve in fulfilling it! Free emergency child care is essential for those parents considered essential in fighting COVID-19. Moreover, your guidance and commitment to Hart House residents cannot be overstated; each day I take comfort in knowing that the required planning and preparation has been done to prevent COVID-19 from penetrating the walls of Hart House. For me, you have made this war a mere inconvenience rather than one requiring tremendous sacrifice.

With the above in mind, I extend my heartfelt - and Hart House felt - gratitude and appreciation to you, the New Britain YMCA staff. The culture and value system you reinforce provide great comfort, confidence and positive energy for me. But if it's not clear by now that I consider you very special people, I assure you, I do!

Most sincerely,

LARRY T.

Hart House Resident, Room 304
New Britain YMCA

Camren has really been enjoying his Camp Thundermoon experience and it has done wonders for him - socializing with children his age is so important to his well-being and happiness! Everything that you and your staff have done to make camp a safe and fun event for him is greatly appreciated. I'm sure it hasn't been easy given these unique and difficult times. Our entire family thanks you. - Sheila

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If paying by check please make the check to the New Britain YMCA, add Annual Support Campaign to memo section, and mail to New Britain YMCA, Attn.: Marci Moskal, 50 High Street, New Britain, CT 06051