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SUBMIT YOUR Y STORY

ANTHONY HALL'S Y STORY

"Where could the Y take me?" Anthony Hall found himself asking this five years into his career at the Ridgedale YMCA. He and his wife were looking to move out of the Minneapolis area but Anthony wanted to continue to work for the YMCA. So, they looked on a map for any jobs at a YMCA in the Pacific Northwest. "Where can we move to that has a YMCA, I can work at?"

"PROGRAMS COME AND GO, BUT THE CULTURE OF THE Y CORE IS STILL HERE FOR WHATEVER ISSUES. I SEE NO END IN THE CORE OF THE Y CULTURE."

Anthony's Y journey began at an early age, as he often visited the Red Wing YMCA—his hometown Y in Minneapolis. "As little kids, we would get dropped off in the morning and picked up at the end of the day ... we would run around and swim and play sports." After his family moved when he was a little older, Anthony forgot about the Y until he saw a job advertisement in the paper for the Ridgedale YMCA Teen Center. He had been working with youth, so this job was an easy switch. Anthony joined the Y community because he believed in the Teen Center project and its goals.

When Anthony first started, he was surprised by how much the Y does. "Not only do we provide basketball, but we teach kids the skills on how to be good winners and losers, deal with frustration well. They get some time with their friends and learn from strong role models." The core of the Y is seen in what we are doing, regardless of the tool we use—basketball, soccer, etc.—the core purpose is all the same. "That is really, what it is all about—that is why you send your children out to play sports."

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The depth and breadth of the Y is more than just a health and wellness facility, we are a community. Working with the Y gave Anthony that deeper connection and an identity. His Y journey gave him the opportunity to be himself and have pride in the work he does. Anthony is not only passionate about his work, but he believes in the purpose of the Y.



Fast-forward a few years after he got the Ridgedale YMCA job, Anthony and his wife were looking to move. They wanted to be in either Washington or Oregon, so they began searching for YMCAs in the northwest that Anthony could transfer to. In 2003, the Hall family moved to Clackamas, OR, as Anthony began his new positions as the first employee for the Clackamas YMCA. "I had initially interviewed for a Child Care position, but then met with the then CEO whose first order of business with the Clackamas YMCA was to build a brick and mortar facility—specifically focused on high school youth sports and high school and middle school before and after school programming." Anthony came on board to help fulfill their vision. As the first employee and Sr. Program Director, Anthony built up all the Clackamas youth programming and marched the pavement trying to build a YMCA facility in Clackamas. He added the Mt. Hood YMCA youth sports and then transferred to Clark County Family YMCA

youth sports. Before Anthony moved to the IT Department—where you can find him now—he oversaw all the youth sport programs for Clackamas YMCA, Clark County Family YMCA and Mt.Hood YMCA.

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After several years of youth sports, Anthony began looking for a job change. "But, I didn't have the heart to leave the Y. I tried. I looked for other jobs and when it came time to accept another job, I could not say yes ... I didn't want to go." Anthony stayed with the Y because he saw that the outcome of all our work is for the members and children to have the best experience. He saw the Y's purpose, and it resonated with him and motivated him to stay within the Y. For the Y, creating a better experience for others is our "product" and for Anthony what the Y offers "is a product I can get behind."

Anthony learned a lot about the core product that the Y promotes from his first boss Brian, in Minneapolis. Anthony remembers that one time they were out together for lunch and saw some high school aged students at this restaurant hanging out at 1 PM—when they

offices. He moved from youth sports to the IT Department. "I've always been a computer hobbyist, and I have schooling in software development ... I used to joke with Even Quach—IT Director—after I dealt with an unhappy parent that I would happily come work for him. And here I am." Anthony was able to do a completely different job, but stay with all the same people and keep all his previous knowledge of the organization.

Anthony gets hope when he thinks of the future of the YMCA. He knows that the culture is so strong so even if facilities close, the Y will still be here. "It is encouraging to see that the children I taught in youth sports grow up and volunteer or work for the Y."

The Y affects these people, and they join us because they are committed to the core of the YMCA. "It gives me hope that the

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should have been in school. Brian stopped to talk with them and ask why they were not in school, instead of ignoring them—"Brian did his job even while we were out of the building." Brian taught him that the Y is not a job where you come to work, only to work and then go home to get away from it. "But the work that I do, should reflect who I am and what I like to do. The way I behave at home with my children is the way I interact with the youth I taught."

Not only does the Y give our members and participants great experiences, Anthony says as a staff person, "the Y gives us the freedom to create in our job—we have the ability to say yes to new things, to take on more and learn more." Anthony experienced a lot of growth in his Y journey as he transferred from Clark County Family YMCA to the YMCA of Columbia-Willamette association

culture will still be here and is so strong. Programs come and go, but the culture of the Y core is still here for whatever issues. I see no end in the core of the Y culture."

Anthony has helped the future of the YMCA of Columbia-Willamette through his dedication and commitment to our core mission. He has brought his family to experience the Y as he does and grow with it through various stages. Both his children, Parker (18) and Riley (16), have participated in youth programs, and volunteer as summer camp leaders. Anthony's Y journey followed the purpose of the Y to a new State, only to grow and experience more of what the Y is.

Thank you Anthony for your willingness to relocate based off the familiarity and desire to serve out the Y's mission.

We want to hear from you! How has the Y impacted you or your family's life?

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