



MetroWest YMCA

metrowestymca.org

News Release 12.27.06

MetroWest YMCA a Recipient of DOE ASOST Funds to Enhance Out-of-School Time Programs

Framingham—Beginning January 2007, approximately 330 students enrolled in the MetroWest YMCA's Out-of-School Time programs will learn about the game of chess, bird watching, building wooden toys, storytelling, circus and the dramatics arts. All of these enrichment activities will soon be available thanks to the Massachusetts Department of Education's new After-School and Out-of-School Time Quality Grant program. A \$26,000 grant will allow the MetroWest YMCA and its partnering schools the opportunity to enhance the enrichment experiences for all students including those of low-income, students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Collaborative partners of the MetroWest YMCA for this grant are Barbieri, Dunning, Hemenway, McCarthy and Potter Road Elementary Schools in which the YMCA runs onsite out-of-school time programming.

The MetroWest YMCA programs promote an inclusive style of out-of-school time programming in direct response to the community need. Within the Framingham Public School District, for example, over thirty percent of students are considered second language learners. The town of Framingham also has one of the highest percentages of integrated support for Special Education students in the commonwealth.

“Through the exposure of hands-on activities and the practice of fun and engaging concepts and skills, our children will be afforded the opportunity to improve their learning in a much more significant way,” said Heidi Kaufman, YMCA Director of Educational Programs. “Given the diversity of the students in our program sites, we will help expand the social skills and problem-solving abilities of all students collectively.”

Each week, students of various abilities and language levels will gain in problem-solving and critical thinking skills. One activity for instance, helps student learn about or improve their skill level in chess with expert instructors from Chess Corps organization. Wooden Toys and Crafts will help students exercise their creativity to build the wooden archetypes of yesteryear in an age of battery-operated plastic toys and games. The Performing Arts Center of MetroWest (PAC) will support the children as they present a storytelling performance for their families and friends. Mass Audubon's Broad Meadow Brook Conservation Center will work with students to help enhance their knowledge of ecology and introduce many to a new world of plants and animals in the area.

YMCA staff teachers and aides will also receive financial assistance to pursue educational classes and certifications relevant to their positions. The grant will also provide bilingual tutoring at Barbieri, a drama production at McCarthy, and special needs inclusion support at McCarthy and Potter Road.

continued on page 2

“Overall,” added Kaufman, “this grant opportunity will certainly improve the quality of the YMCA’s out-of-school time activities in a continued effort to provide the best YMCA programming possible.”

About the MetroWest YMCA: The MetroWest YMCA is committed to providing accessible, affordable and premium quality programming for all people regardless of age, gender, race, religion, income or ability. The YMCA serves more than 15,000 members and program participants living and working in towns throughout MetroWest. In 2006, the YMCA allocated \$760,000 in financial assistance for youth outreach programs, childhood education and care, summer camp and other membership and program services.

###

For more information, please contact
WILLIAM LAVIN, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & PR:

280 Old Connecticut Path
Framingham, MA 01701

(508) 879-4420 ext. 53
wlavin@metrowestymca.org