



Help Save the YWCA of Alton

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The YWCA of Alton began the "Save The YWCA of Alton" fundraising campaign with a goal of \$80,000 in pledges by May 7th. This campaign is a social media based campaign through Crowdfunder at <https://www.crowdfunder.com/campaigns/save-the-ywca-of-alton>, designed to utilize Facebook, Twitter, and various other social media outlets to share the message of the organization.



For the past 95 years, the YWCA of Alton, IL has served thousands of families, but this legacy, which generations of families have enjoyed and relied upon, is in jeopardy. The last few years have been difficult for the organization with high leadership turn-over and changing community needs, but since 2012, the YWCA has been engaged in a re-alignment process that has increased membership and improved and redirected programs to better meet community needs and the mission of eliminating racism and empowering women. Unfortunately the changes have not come quickly enough to offset a drop in income from grants and donations. With a loss of almost 25% of funding in 2013, the YWCA must raise \$80,000 in funds to maintain the continuity of programs through the year.

Raising \$80,000 may seem like an ambitious goal to reach, however, Andrea Lamer, Executive Director at the YWCA of Alton believes in the organization's impact on Alton and the surrounding communities including Godfrey, Jerseyville, Hardin, Brighton, Wood River, East Alton, Roxana and many others. "The YWCA of Alton has been a part of the downtown Alton landscape for almost 100 years. Over the years, the YWCA has consistently provided a social support system for this community and, it has been a great resource for fun. So many women, children and families have learned to swim here, attended camps, or taken dance lessons at the YWCA. It's hard to find someone who doesn't have an endearing memory, a story, or a personal connection to the YWCA. We are reaching out to everyone with a positive YW story to help keep us in service for the community. We are hopeful that the community will help us ensure future generations have the opportunity to be a part of a new YWCA legacy."

The history of the YWCA has been intertwined with the history of Alton...

- 1900's, the YWCA helped to attract industries to Alton through a readily available female work force—rural women who stayed at the YWCA to work at the factories.
- 1930's, the YWCA became one of the first Alton organizations to offer social services to women of color. At first, these services were segregated. The YWCA later took on a key role in the desegregation of public spaces of Alton. With powerful women of color in leadership positions, the YWCA became truly integrated, opening doors for all races and ethnicities.
- The YWCA was also the birthplace of many community services and traditions that continue to benefit communities today, including:
 - Opened 1st adult day care in Illinois, 1st organization to provide Meals on Wheels and programs for recently arrived immigrants.
 - Established Vintage Voices in coalition with Alton Little Theater.
 - Created and hosted the original Spring House and Garden Tour
 - Offered the first women's empowerment services in the area: financial management, parenting classes and others.
 - Has honored the community's women of distinction for 22 years.

Are you part of the YWCA history?

Did you or your children learn to swim or take dance lessons at the YWCA? Did you use our childcare or wellness services? Were you a Junior Leader or a Miss Suzie? Did the YWCA Who's New Committee welcome you to the community? Were you on the committee to desegregate Alton schools or did you participate in the institutional racism study? Perhaps you came to the YWCA just for some play time with your family, to meet friends for lunch, or to play bridge.

No matter the role the YWCA played in your history, you can help ensure the future of our work. Make a pledge today at <https://www.crowdtilt.com/campaigns/save-the-ywca-of-alton>, be a part of a new chapter in YWCA history.

For more information regarding the fundraising campaign, please visit www.facebook.com/altonywca, www.altonywca.com, or [https://www.crowdtilt.com/campaigns/save-](https://www.crowdtilt.com/campaigns/save-the-ywca-of-alton)

the-ywca-of-alton. Inquiries by phone may also be made at 618-465-7774. All donations are tax deductible. Online pledges will only be charged if the YWCA reaches its goal of \$80,000.