



# COO Fryer brings positive energy to Edwardsville YMCA

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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In the spring the Edwardsville YMCA made a hire who has brought boundless positive energy to both the Meyer Center, Esic Center and Allison Cassens Childhood Development Center.

Mark Fryer is the new chief operating officer supervising the different locations. Gary Niebur, the long-time CEO, remains in his position and continues his work leading the operations and his work in the community.

Fryer came from a YMCA in St. Louis and prior to that had 14 years as a COO of a YMCA in Kentucky.

“I have been with four different YMCAs,” he said. “The YMCA here is doing a lot of great things and I hope to work on things we can improve and do better.”

One of the areas Fryer will look at is evaluating the capital needs. There are areas where the YMCA already has some expansion needs.

“The Meyer Center facility has almost anything I can think of for kids with its child care summer camps, swimming, hockey, gymnastics and so many things,” he said. “We were so excited for this move. One of my kids is interested in the gymnastics part and another the arts and humanities.”

One thing that is heard frequently at the Y in Edwardsville is there is a need to expand its aquatic facilities for more program space.

“We are just so full in almost all the different areas,” he said. “We now have 21,000 members. The YMCA in Edwardsville has kept its price where it is affordable and gave out a lot of scholarships last year.”

At the Meyer Center, there are places where significant soccer field expansion could occur, he said.

“We would love to build our own outdoor soccer area,” he said. “Parking is also such an issue.”

Fryer said he is very interested in being part of the community.

“My kids are 7 and 10 and we hope to be here for a long time,” he said. “This is a place I want my kids to grow up.”

Fryer used to do gymnastics, so he has a passion for that. He obtained a business administration degree with emphasis on management and a degree in religion, so all that work well with his fit at the YMCA COO.

Fryer has deep respect for Gary Niebur, the long-time CEO of the YMCA.

“He has been here over 20 years and he has been very successful and is very involved in the community,” Fryer said. “Most CEOs don’t get as involved as deeply in decisions as he does. He has built this YMCA from small to what it is today and I look forward to working with him.”

The Edwardsville YMCA is one to listen to customer requests and one was to open the fitness facility and the swimming pool early and they did that. It has been successful in alleviating some of the strain on equipment and the pool at crunch times in the morning.

Fryer wants to hear from members and do everything he can to service their needs at the Y facilities.

“We continually want to know about our programs through comment boxes throughout the Y facilities or actual surveys on what people like, what we can improve on and as the operations person, I want to make sure we follow through with those and address those problems as quickly as we can,” he said. “We need to prioritize what needs to be done first. We have a really good staff. The people work hard and get things fixed when needed.”

Fryer said he sees so much potential for the future of the Edwardsville YMCA locations.

“I am excited to be here,” he said. “The opportunity for this YMCA is another reason I wanted to be here. As the community continues to grow, the YMCA will be more needed.”