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## **NEWS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **YMCA COMMUNITY TEAM LAUNCHES IN 2026 AS NEXT PHASE OF YEARLONG EFFORT TO RESHAPE Y**

***VOLUNTEER ADVISORY GROUP KICKS OFF FEBRUARY 7 IN JANESVILLE, INVITES  
PUBLIC TO HELP GUIDE FUTURE PROGRAMS AND FACILITY UPDATES IN  
JANESVILLE & MILTON***

**JANESVILLE, Wis., Jan. 14, 2026** — The YMCA of Northern Rock County is inviting community members, families, local businesses and organizations to join its 135 Community Team, a volunteer advisory group that will help guide the next phase of the Y's [135 & Beyond work](#) — a community-driven effort underway for more than a year to help reshape YMCA programs and facilities in Janesville and Milton.

"People come to the Y for all kinds of reasons, but what they're really looking for is a place to belong," said Angie Bolson, president and CEO of YMCA of Northern Rock County. "That's why we started 135 & Beyond more than a year ago — to listen and learn about their belonging needs and where we can do more and how we can do better. Now we're ready to take the next step and invite the community to help us pressure-test ideas and shape what comes next during our 135th anniversary year."

### **Who can join and what to expect**

The 135 Community Team is open to individuals, families, local businesses and organizations. There is no cost to join, and YMCA membership is not required. Youth under 16 may participate with a responsible adult, and youth groups of all backgrounds are encouraged to participate for volunteer hours. The YMCA can provide reasonable accommodations to support participation upon request.

"It's such important work, but it's also going to be fun and a chance to bring the Y's mission to life," said Johanna Adams, Member and Community Engagement Director. "We'll meet the first Saturday of each month from 9-10 a.m., starting in February, rotating between our Milton and Janesville locations. Each month, we'll share one simple 'ask' — usually just 30-60 minutes — that helps us test ideas and make the Y experience even better. That might look like trying a class, taking a behind-the-scenes tour, walking through a guided wellness experience with a staff member, bringing a friend to a program and sharing what you noticed, or being briefed on a future concept and giving an honest reaction for our decision-makers to review."

The YMCA is also encouraging local employers and organizations to consider a team-based commitment by inviting 4-6 people from their workplace or group to participate together.

### **135 Team kickoff meeting details**

The YMCA will host a kickoff celebration for interested community members:

- **Kickoff meeting:** Saturday, Feb. 7, 2026
- **Time:** 9-10 a.m.
- **Location:** Janesville YMCA, 221 Dodge St., Janesville
- **Cost:** Free to participate for members and non-members

A brief introduction presentation, a light breakfast, team member toolkits and a calendar of “asks” will be provided.

Community members can learn more and are encouraged to sign up by Friday, Jan. 30, at <https://www.ymcanrc.org/135years>.

### **135 & Beyond strategic priorities**

The YMCA launched 135 & Beyond in early 2024 to listen to the community and begin shaping future updates. Now, as the YMCA gets closer to 135 years of impact, the organization is moving from listening to action. Board-directed project teams will help develop and advance recommendations, including building updates, while the 135 Community Team will serve as a consistent bridge to ensure community needs stay front and center as ideas are tested and refined.

In 2024, the YMCA of Northern Rock County launched the 135 & Beyond project to celebrate its long history in the community and advance five strategic priorities:

- **Facility modernization:** Enhance building layouts and green spaces to support expanded programming
- **Financial resilience:** Diversify revenue streams to secure sustainable, affordable access for all
- **Participation and growth:** Broaden program offerings and improve accessibility for families of all ages and abilities
- **Health and well-being:** Renew focus on the physical, mental and spiritual wellness of every community member
- **Belonging:** Cultivate purpose-driven staffing, membership and leadership that reflect our community’s diversity

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### **Everyone Belongs at the YMCA of Northern Rock County**

We’re part of a nonprofit organization of over 2,700 Ys located in 10,000 communities across the United States dedicated to strengthening the communities that they serve. With a focus on developing the potential of youth, improving individual health and well-being, and giving back to and supporting communities, your participation brings about meaningful change not just within yourself, but also in your community. The [YMCA of Northern Rock County](#) has 2 branches: the Janesville YMCA and the Parker YMCA. Stop in for a tour today!