

THE ACCORD

April 2009

A Stimulated State: 2009-2010 Budget

After 65 years of a Republican controlled Senate Majority Conference, the Democrats were in total control this year to negotiate the State Budget with the Democratic controlled Assembly and Governor. Consequently, budget negotiations differed from the past. Gone was the conference committee process in which the leaders of the committees on both sides of table would negotiate and discuss the issues until suitable spending was reached.

This year the Legislature spent a lot of time in conference being briefed by their Leaders on tentative budget deals. (These conferences were closed to the public).



Senate Majority Leader Smith, Governor Paterson and Speaker of the Assembly Silver announce their three-way state budget agreement

While most of the budget bills were printed in time to be voted on for an on-time State Budget, the April 1st deadline did not come without complication. While the State Assembly worked to pass the spending bills on March 31st, State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson was unable to debate due to a diagnosis of an pneumonia and subsequent hospitalization. Due to the Democrats' thin majority in the Senate, Senator Hassell-Thompson's absence left them with only a one vote margin to pass the \$132 billion budget in a party-line vote. Debate was suspended and a deal was worked out the next day to let the Senator vote ahead on each bill so she could return to the hospital.

When all was said and done, State Leaders agreed to a \$132 Billion State spending plan. This is over \$10 billion more than last year's budget, despite prior discussion of a \$16 billion deficit. Federal stimulus funds, an increased personal income tax on those making more \$300,000/year,

increased utility taxes and new or increased other taxes and fees; help to make up the difference in increased spending. According to YMCAs of New York State, Inc. Executive Director Kyle Stewart, "Many of our State Budget priority line items received sustained or increased funding, which is a great success!". Funding in the State budget includes:

- Advantage After School: \$30.5 Million (increase of \$11 million from Executive Budget)
- Extended Day After School: \$27.8 Million (sustained funding)
- The Youth Services Block Grant was dismantled thereby securing funds to the Youth

Bureaus (YDDP and SDPP)

- Child Care Subsidies: \$356 Million (sustained funding and additional funds are available in a separate stimulus fund)
- SRO Housing Program: \$20.5 Million (sustained funding)
- Homeless Housing Assistance: \$30 Million (sustained funding)
- Universal Pre-Kindergarten: \$376M. This allocation is based on school district spending that was actually spent last year.

Even in such a tough fiscal year, many YMCAs around the state received member item grants to assist with projects and programming. Various YMCAs received over \$300,000 with many grants from the Senate still not yet counted. The YMCAs of New York State will continue to work to effectively implement all pertinent programs, ensure that funding is quickly allocated to YMCAs and identify new sources of funding that will benefit our mission.

A Note from the Director
Kyle Stewart



Another April 1st has come and gone and we have a State Budget. Thanks to the federal stimulus funds, State leaders actually increased spending by more than 8%! Who knew that something like that would happen after starting the year with continuous woes of a \$16 billion deficit? While our priorities received sustained

funding and some actually increased, we're faced with the very good possibility that the Governor and two Legislative leaders will eventually go back behind closed doors to their '3 men in a room' negotiations and cut this budget. Therefore, our work is never done and we must continue our strategy to protect our Ys..

Advocacy

Helping The YMCA Help Others

New York State Youth and Government: 73 years and Bigger and Better than Ever



Attorneys at Discovery



Nick Collins and Michaela Jebb, Assembly Speaker and Deputy Speaker



Campaigning and making connections

The 73rd annual New York State YMCA Youth and Government Program was held on March 13-15, 2009 at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center in Albany, NY.

The teens met to debate and argue many pieces of legislation and court cases. The legislation was written and proposed by the conference delegates. This legislation is not to be taken lightly, often State Senators and Assembly Members use the ideas posed by the youth when drafting and debating our state laws. The program also features a lobbying program in which students learn about the lobbying process through debate and the preparation of pro and con statements on legislation. Teens participating in the student press are also given valuable experience through producing a conference newspaper, *The Dialectic*.

At the 2009 Conference there were **613 teens**, 116 more than 2008.

There were **4 courtrooms**, with **108 attorneys participating**. In previous years there were only three courtrooms. This additional courtroom allowed the students to present their case twice on Saturday as opposed to once affording the opportunity to further hone their skills.

There were **2 Legislative Assemblies** for the first time, serving close to **150 teens in each**. All passed bills advanced to the Governor's Cabinet.

In total there were:

48 Bills were in Assembly B

39 Bills in Assembly A

20 Bills in the Senate



'09 Associate Justice Team

For more information on the program, contact Mark Rutkowski at the YMCA of Greater Rochester at 585-341-3235 or visit the Youth and Government web site: www.nystateymcayag.org

The YMCA goes GREEN

The YMCA of Greater New York's newly completed Evergreen Lodge



camp building in Huguenot, NY is seeking to be certified as a Gold level LEED building. LEED certification, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is issued by the U.S. Green Building Council to buildings meeting high environmental standards in design, materials and construction practices.

Evergreen Lodge is Truly Green

The building is made from 11% recycled products that include denim, money, newspapers and glass. It has a floor radiant heating and cooling system that uses geothermal energy from a nearby lake.

The project, from design to construction, cost about \$2.2 million. The building is 37% more energy efficient than a regularly constructed building. The bathrooms contain many of the building's green features, including a tank less on-demand hot water system and low-flow, dual-flush toilets. The faucets are run by a battery that is recharged by the running water.

The new lodge is about 5,700 square feet and sleeps up to 44 people. The main meeting room can accommodate up to 100 people.



Exposed areas and wall-mounted cards explain the system that make the lodge a sustainable building. "This goes right into our mission of environmental education," stated Wheaton Griffin, from the YMCA of Greater New York's camps.

Photo and information courtesy of the Times Herald-Record

Solar Power Produces Many Savings

The Broome County YMCA has installed solar tubes at its Binghamton Branch for domestic hot water. The YMCA worked jointly with SunMaxx Solar, Eastern Energy Solutions, Sure Temp and the New York State Energy Resource Development Authority to make this project happen.

On the roof of their Binghamton building, the YMCA has installed 300 evacuated tubes. These tubes will use the energy from the sun to heat the YMCA's domestic hot water. Based on sun time data for the Binghamton area, gathered over the past 35 years, the system will generate 140 million btu's. That's enough energy to heat 218,000 gallons of water annually.

Translated into everyday terms, the energy harnessed through this technology will heat enough hot water for over 29,000 showers a year or 80 showers a day. This will have a significant impact on the YMCA natural gas usage.

"It is a great way not only to save money, but also help the environment by reducing our carbon footprint" said Executive Director Rick Peterson.

The YMCA is committed to reducing its energy use and has invested over \$1,000,000 into new energy efficient lighting, heating and cooling equipment over the past year. It is predicted that the YMCA's utility usage will drop by over forty five percent.



Wind Turbines in Plattsburgh

Five turbines can now be found on the YMCA property at Camp Jericho in Plattsburgh. These turbine are part of a total of 68 within the Nobel Wind Energy wind farm.

As part of the project some wetlands were displaced and needed to be replaced. The camp property was selected as an area that new wetlands could be created which will be incorporated into an ecology educational component for the children attending the YMCA summer camp. Next to the lake, as you enter into the

camp property, many thousands of yards of dirt were removed and topsoil put back in preparation for planting. New plants and trees will be planted and a wetlands area created. A pavilion and walking trail will be set up explaining the various living things in this ecosystem. And finally, as part of this project, a new gravel road leading into the camp property was added. Hopefully improvements like these will ensure many more years of successful summer day camp experiences for the youth of Plattsburgh community and the YMCA!