

THE



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January 2010

Championing the Cause in Albany

Continuing a successful and growing tradition, the YMCAs of New York State will once again hold a Key Advocates Dinner on the evening prior to our annual Advocacy Day. On February 8th, 2010 our featured speakers Senator David J. Valesky, Vice President Pro Tempore of New York State Senate and Susan Arbetter of the Capitol Pressroom will educate and entertain attendees regarding New York State government and politics. Both speakers are true YMCA supporters and also have experience connecting with New Yorkers through public broadcasting.

Senator Valesky was first elected to the New York State Senate in November 2004. He is currently the Senate's Vice President Pro Tempore, as well as the highest ranking Upstate Legislator in the Chamber. Senator Valesky began his public service career in the New York State Assembly. He is deeply committed to economic development and job production; education and health care; transportation and tourism; energy production and efforts to reduce the tax burden on individuals and businesses alike. For approximately 10 years, Senator Valesky served as Vice President of Communications at WCNY-TV/FM, a PBS station.



Also speaking at the dinner is Susan Arbetter, an award-winning broadcast journalist. Ms. Arbetter is the currently the host of the Capitol Pressroom, a daily one-hour public radio news magazine broadcast from the heart of the New York State's political hub: the State Capitol. Arbetter was a long-time host and former News Director at WAMC Public Radio as well as

the former host & producer of PBS' premiere statewide po-

litical show, New York Now, which she developed.

Additional highlights of the evening will include a Priority Issues briefing in preparation for legislative meetings the following day. YMCA staff and volunteers will find this time to be excellent preparation for their legislative visits the next day, as well as future interactions with their representatives. YMCAs of New York State Chair Kevin Killeen will also report on our successes and goals and will preside over the Annual Meeting.

Tuesday morning will provide us with an informal Continental Breakfast, networking and time to individually discuss important issues and strategies for the days' meetings with lawmakers. We have reserved Concourse Meeting Room 1 in the Empire State Plaza beginning at 8AM. This will be your Home Base and will stay open for your convenience until 2PM. Please Register Today!



Key Advocates' Dinner & Advocacy Day

February 8th and 9th, 2010!

Register Today!

**A Note
from the
Director**



Kyle Stewart

Here we go again! With 2010 here and the State of the State Address behind us, Advocacy Day 2010 is just around the corner! It is hard to believe that we are gearing up for more challenges to protect and enhance our YMCAs during another Legislative session! We are working hard to ensure that you are well

informed and prepared for the work to come with a Priority Issues Conference Call on January 20 leading up to our main event: **Advocacy Days on February 8th & 9th**. This is our chance to stand up for the YMCA mission and tell lawmakers that the YMCA makes a difference everyday! Please Register TODAY!



Helping The YMCA

Help Others

**REMINDER: YMCAs of New York State
Priority Issues Conference Call**

Who: All member YMCA staff and Board members

Why: To update you on Governor Paterson's State of the State Address and Executive Budget Proposal as well as provide you with the latest inside political news. This is a tremendous opportunity to learn about the latest issues, in preparation for our **YMCA State Advocacy Days on February 8th & 9th, 2010.**

When: Wednesday, January 20th @ 1:00PM

Dial: 877-914-0568 Pass code: 3452652

Community Benefits: Tell the YMCA Story

It is our mission to promote the measurable community benefit of YMCAs and to help each YMCA across New York State calculate what they give back to the community as a charitable organization. Currently, the Mission Challenge Task Force is reviewing the new version of the community benefit worksheet put forth by YMCA of the USA. The preliminary results of this internal examination will be announced at the Key Advocates' Dinner on February 8th.

Additionally the YMCAs of New York State is developing a toolkit to assist YMCAs in marketing their community benefit to local officials and their communities. Concurrently, our organization is pursuing a statewide initiative that will communicate this data in order to prevent mission challenges from both government entities and the private sector.

According to YMCAs of New York State Chair Kevin Killeen, "Now that our YMCAs are experienced with the process of calculating their charitable benefits, we are excited to utilize the new and improved tools from YMCA of the USA. Updated data reflecting growth and expansion will leave our YMCAs well positioned to continue to demonstrate the importance of the YMCA to the community."

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Of
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On January 6th, Governor David Paterson delivered his second State of the State Address. In a rather succinct speech, the Governor focused on the problems threatening the Empire State and the details that need to be accomplished in order to move forward. These include: Fiscal Reform, Ethics Reform and an Economic Plan to revitalize the State of New York. Governor Paterson seeks to "build an economy of ingenuity and strength, as well as rebuild the trust the people once had in their state government."

Update: Federal Health Care for America Act

The Senate voted to pass the Affordable Health Care for America Act on December 24, 2009 marking the first time the Senate held a vote on Christmas Eve since 1895.

While the bill received enough votes to pass each house of Congress, it has not been a bi-partisan effort. Only one Republican member voted in favor of the measure in the House and none in the Senate.

It is likely that the final version will have to look much more like the Senate version than the House, in order for the House and Senate conference committees negotiating the bill to gain the 60 votes necessary for final passage.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the Senate health committee's bill creates an \$80 billion investment fund, which would provide stable funding to programs like the YMCA's, explained a spokeswoman for Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee Chairman Sen. Tom Harkin (D., Iowa), who wrote the prevention provision.

This is particularly good news for the YMCA concerns regarding the Employer Mandate, since the Senate version is much more lenient. Senate Leadership claims there is no Employer Mandate in their bill, just a penalty provision if one's employees utilize the exchange and/or receive subsidies.

According to the Senate version, employers with more than 200 employees must automatically enroll *new* full-time employees in coverage. Furthermore, if the employer does not offer coverage to employees, if even one employee receives a subsidy through the new exchanges, firms with more than 50 employees would have to pay a fine equal to \$750 for every person on their payroll. *In other words:* Any employer with more than 50 full-time employees that does not offer coverage and has at least one full-time employee receiving the premium assistance tax credit, will make a payment of \$750 per full-time employee.

YMCA of the USA continues to work very closely with both houses on this critical issue.

Also included in the speech was a list of proposed government reforms, supported by good government groups. These reforms include: a spending cap, campaign finance reform, an independent ethics commission, changing the culture of Albany, job creation, the attraction of new businesses and clean energy manufacturing. Governor Paterson would like to see more fairness and openness by ending "Pay-to-Play" politics that has plagued Albany.

As the next step to his stated broad initiatives, the Governor is due to release his specific programs in the Executive Budget proposal on January 19th, 2010.