



Greater Joliet Area YMCA

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We Build Strong Kids, Strong Families, Strong Communities.



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MYGOFER & THE YMCA BRING AN EXCITING ADDITION TO THE JOLIET COMMUNITY

(Joliet, IL) It was an exciting time at the Smith Family YMCA this past Thursday night as children and their families enjoyed a new addition to the Joliet community. Thanks to the hard work and generosity of the staff at MyGofer, a large multipurpose space at the YMCA was turned into an Activity Center in only three weeks. The Activity Center, complete with 2 Nintendo Wii games, Dance Dance Revolution, a ping pong table, net book computer, board games and plenty of furniture to enjoy it all in was really a huge hit. “We’re excited to use this space to serve the many teens, seniors and families from the East Side of Joliet that use our branch daily”, said Mary Wollgast, Operations Director for the Smith Family YMCA. It was about a year ago that the Smith Family YMCA celebrated the grand opening of a new wellness center in the back of their facility. The addition of that space left a room in the front of the building vacant and created an opportunity to serve the community in new ways. One way the Smith Family YMCA currently serves the community is through Project SOAR, which stands for Smith Opportunities for Activity and Recreation. This is an outreach initiative where the YMCA partners with a variety of schools and community groups on the east side of Joliet to provide programs and services to their clients. While in Project SOAR, over 800 children have spent time in the pool learning to swim- a new experience for many of them – as well as time having fun and playing games in the gym. If transportation is needed, the YMCA provides that as well. In most cases, the program is provided at no fee to the participant or agency. When MyGofer announced their contest to provide \$10,000 to a project in Joliet, the YMCA immediately submitted a proposal in hopes that their dream to increase services and add an activity center would become a reality. The staff was thrilled when they received the news that they were chosen as the winners. The addition of the Activity Center means that there is now more active games to play at the Smith Family YMCA and that they can continue to meet their mission of building strong kids, strong families and strong communities in a some new ways. “This is our mission in action,” said Tom Sutter, CEO/President-Elect of the Greater Joliet Area YMCA. “As I watch the kids from our SOAR program hit a home run on the Wii and watch over our staff playing active games with our members, I get a tremendous sense of pride in our community and am so grateful to the team at MyGofer for helping to make this possible. I can’t wait to come in one of the mornings soon and see our seniors playing on the net book together while they enjoy their morning coffee. That’s what the YMCA is all about- smaller communities of people coming together to help strengthen our larger community. It’s great to have a space like this for them to enjoy that time together in.” For more information on the Greater Joliet Area YMCA and all it’s branches visit www.jolietyymca.org.

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YMCA Mission: To put Christian principles into practice by developing relationships among all persons and providing programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body. A United Way Agency of Will County