



## **Gaston County Family YMCA to Transition Indoor Programming from the William J. Pharr Family Branch to Nearby Branches**

*The decision was made as part of a comprehensive plan to combine indoor programming into the soon-to-be renovated and expanded Stowe Family YMCA and state-of-the art Warlick Family YMCA, while continuing outdoor programming opportunities in McAdenville*

**McADENVILLE, NC (February 1, 2024)** – Committed to continuously serving Gaston County and the town of McAdenville efficiently and with an eye on the future, the Gaston County Family YMCA will transition indoor programming from its YMCA facility in McAdenville to other nearby facilities by year end 2024.

The decision is part of a comprehensive effort to best utilize resources across all of Gaston County, particularly as a result of the substantial recent investments made in the construction of a new YMCA facility and the substantial renovation and expansion of another.

The building in which the Pharr Family YMCA operates was constructed in 1949 by local business leader William J. Pharr as the McAdenville Community Center, a social and recreational gathering place for the community. The Pharr-Carstarphen family, through the Catherine Pharr Carstarphen McAdenville Foundation Inc., continue to own and operate the building and have been providing it rent-free to the YMCA since the inception of the McAdenville branch in 2008.

The Gaston County Family YMCA has successfully operated the William J Pharr Family YMCA at the Center, providing health and fitness programs, social activities, afterschool care, camps and special event opportunities for community members of all ages. But after 70 years of operation, the building requires significant enhancements for optimal use, and YMCA leaders determined its resources are better served investing in member programming and activities at new and enhanced nearby branches.

Sharon Padgett, CEO of the Gaston County Family YMCA, commented, “While we phase out the use of our facility in McAdenville by the end of the year, we’re working hand in hand with the Pharr organization to ensure a seamless transition for our McAdenville programs and operations, including gymnastics and afterschool programs transitioned by next fall. We plan to continue offering certain outdoor recreational programming opportunities in McAdenville, with the hope of expanding those in the future to take advantage of the incredible outdoor recreational assets being developed by Pharr along the riverfront.”

The two branches absorbing operations, programming and activities – Stowe and Warlick – are each within about 10 miles of the William J Pharr Family YMCA branch. In 2017, Gaston County’s Warlick Family YMCA opened, featuring a 118-acre lakefront campus and a more than 60,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility. Recently, the Gaston County Family YMCA launched the public phase of its \$13.5 million capital campaign to expand and renovate the Stowe Family YMCA in Belmont, adding outdoor amenities including an aquatic park, basketball and pickleball courts, athletic fields and exercise areas, in addition to increased indoor exercise and fitness space. Having raised over \$10 million of its goal, construction is currently expected to begin in 2024.

Bill Carstarphen, CEO of Pharr, commented, “We are extremely grateful for the partnership we’ve had with the Gaston County Family YMCA over the years. We believe there will be plenty of opportunities to partner with the YMCA in the future, like activities along the newly expanded Carolina Thread Trail through town, serving as what will be an important segment of the 23-mile Matthews-Belk South Fork Corridor trail running from Spencer Mountain to the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden. Additionally, we have the trails and facilities at McAdenville Greenway Park plus our plans to preserve about 20 acres of riverfront greenspace for future events and offerings.”

Pharr has no plans as yet for the future of the McAdenville facility.

Members of the William J. Pharr Family YMCA are already able to utilize any branch operated by the Gaston County Family YMCA and will be able to easily transfer their membership at any nearby branch. YMCA staff onsite in McAdenville will also be able to assist with membership changes or cancellations for those affected. Questions and comments can be directed to YMCA representatives at any YMCA location in Gaston County, and updates will be routinely and proactively provided to members.