



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**CELEBRATING
5 YEARS OF
30 UNDER 30!**

**30
UNDER
30**

**EMERGING LEADERS
RESOURCE NETWORK
2022**

WHY 30 UNDER 30?

Five years ago, in the summer of 2017, the National Emerging Leaders Resource Network (ELRN) Steering Committee began a strategic planning process through which we found a substantial imbalance between the number of younger staff in the total workforce in the United States and the number of millennials who make up the YMCA workforce. While the rest of the country's workforce was getting younger, the YMCA's workforce was aging. The recent pandemic and the disruptions to how YMCAs conduct their work have exacerbated this situation, with nearly 14,000 staff under the age of 35 leaving the YMCA since 2020.

As in many areas, the pandemic magnified and accelerated trends that were already in play. Growing dissatisfaction with the workplace environment, inequity in employment and quality of work throughout the organizational chart, and a lack of empowerment to perform work are just a few of the issues ELRN has learned impact the quality of life for young professionals. We celebrate the thriving work environment the YMCA can be and call on the YMCA movement to learn from the disruptions brought about by COVID and transform the work environment to support our community of YMCA staff.

#NextGenNeeds, a framework of preferred workplace conditions that younger generations seek from their employer is the result of this research. This framework highlights three areas of opportunity to strengthen the YMCA work environment; these are work-life harmony, professional development and organizational culture. Currently, 362 staff under the age of 35 are in C-Suite or Senior Leader roles across the movement. Our goal is that our work will result in more emerging leaders with seats at the table.

While #NextGenNeeds is new, our first efforts to highlight the accomplishments of young staff was the debut of 30 Under 30 in 2018. This award recognizes staff who embody the YMCA mission, and formally acknowledges 30 fulltime YMCA leaders under the age of 30 for their accomplishments and potential to lead our many YMCA Associations in the coming years. We are so excited to celebrate our fifth year of honoring 30 YMCA leaders under the age of 30!



LAUREN MANIA (she/her)

LIFEGUARD & SWIM LESSON INSTRUCTOR

PAWTUCKET YMCA
Woonsocket YMCA | Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Lauren is an outstanding individual. She is a member of our Y swim team, has been the points leader for the team, has won the coaches award multiple times, and is on track to graduate high school at the top of her class. In addition to taking over many responsibilities at home, Lauren works 25+ hours a week at the YMCA to support her family and offset the cost of college. She's an inspiration to her coworkers and peers.

She has greatly expanded the reach of our swim lesson enrollment and offerings. Among all of her accomplishments in the pool, at school, or on the field, Lauren is still very present in the community. She's a role model for her peers, classmates and teammates.

Many adults in the Woonsocket area do not know how to swim and are terrified of the water. It's the 4th poorest city in Rhode Island, and many people do not have the financial means to support a family. This means that swim lessons are likely not a top priority for adults. With Lauren's leadership in adult swim lessons, we have seen huge growth in participation leading to three full adult beginner lessons this summer!

ABOUT LAUREN

In her spare time, Lauren enjoys working out, playing with her dog, hanging out with friends, playing sports and participating in school clubs. She is a member of the National Honor Society and is involved in a number of service projects. Lauren is on a number of varsity and club sports teams year-round, but a highlight is her swim team at the YMCA.

Lauren's YMCA story started when she was six, taking swim lessons at the Y. She was scared of the water, but enjoyed making new friends. She learned to love the water, and competed in various YMCA championships. Because she was involved with the Y from such a young age, she grew to love the sense of community and decided it was the place for her first job. When she started at the Y, she was shy and nervous, but since then she has grown in every way. She loves working with hundreds of people each week, and values the strong relationships she's formed with members. Lauren has grown a strong sense of independence and finds pride in taking a leadership role with the Y. For Lauren, the Y is a place where anyone can come together to have a good time and better themselves and she feels a sense of pride working there.