

why the Y

Dear friend of the Athens YMCA,

Did you know that the YMCA is international?

Our local Athens YMCA welcomed a family from a distant campus in Venezuela. Learning Edwin's story has been such an encouragement to the mission of our Y. I want you to hear it for yourself:

"My name is Edwin Alberto Rodriguez. I was born in Caracas, Venezuela. I lived with my mother, uncle, and cousins throughout my childhood in a very poor area of Caracas. My mother worked hard to provide me with a good education and to shield me from poverty.

*To prevent my mind from being affected by poverty and to keep me from the streets, she enrolled me in the YMCA of Los Castaños. **This changed my life.** I learned to swim and play basketball.*

*Due to the political situation in Venezuela, my family and I immigrated to the US. **When we arrived in Athens, the YMCA helped us once again, this time with my kids.** The after-school offering allowed us to work knowing our children were well taken care of. They also learned to swim at the YMCA, just like I did.*

Throughout my life, thanks to the YMCA, I have been able to become a better person and inspire my children to engage in sports activities to stay healthy."

Even across countries, the YMCA was a constant source of hope for Edwin and his family!

So why the Y?

Because being a part of this Y's family is more than health or wellness; it's hope!

Gratefully,

Shae Wilson

CEO