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FOR HEALTHY LIVING
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**NORTH SUBURBAN
YMCA**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**North Suburban YMCA's Karen Brownlee Props Up
Programming for Local Seniors**

For Isolated Seniors, New Ideas and Social Initiatives Continue

Northbrook, IL; May, 2020 - When the North Suburban YMCA's Adult Programming Coordinator Karen Brownlee isn't checking in on local seniors, designing virtual education programs, and delivering medical masks, she's creating exercise videos.

Local heroes like Brownlee have made a huge difference to the senior and high-risk community during this unprecedented pandemic. "Some people are born heroes; I believe Karen is one of those people," said Kathy Fielding, CEO of the North Suburban YMCA.

Seniors who participated in Karen's fitness classes and Adult Education programs prior to the "Shelter-at-Home" order have been able to stay in touch with her and other community members through a variety of new virtual programs and initiatives. Brownlee's most recent efforts have involved coordinating medical mask donations from the Glenbrook Chinese American Community where Brownlee, with the help of her daughter Katie, distributed over 300 masks to older Y members.

The Adult Education Series spearheaded by Brownlee has grown to be the Y's most popular adult offering and features programming like Brain Games, Social Networking, the Y Social Club, a caregivers support group, a virtual walking club, adult fitness classes, and an assortment of virtual talks and presentations about health, the community, law, and more.

"Karen always stays one step ahead of what our adult community needs. As soon as she realized that the Y wouldn't be able to host adult programs on site she started finding avenues to make sure that seniors could connect virtually and now hosts several meetings each day and has test driven several different platforms to ensure that as many people as possible would be able to 'see' each other. She even stops by the homes of some of our local seniors just to wave hello," added Fielding.

"My objective is to let everyone know they're not alone. It's amazing what a little conversation can do to overcome the loneliness of isolation. We just want to be there for them in any way that we can," commented Brownlee.

For more information about Adult Education Programming and Services, visit www.nsymca.org, or email Karen Brownlee at Kbrownlee@nsymca.org.

About the North Suburban YMCA

The North Suburban YMCA services Northbrook and 14 surrounding communities with programs and tools that help its residents become healthier, more connected, and confident, ensuring that everyone, regardless of age, income, or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. The NSYMCA focuses on Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility and is a charitable organization, inclusive and welcoming to all in our community. Learn more at NSYMCA.org.



Caption: The NSYMCA's Karen Brownlee coordinated recent efforts with the Glenbrook Chinese American Community to deliver masks to many of the Senior community members.



Caption: Karen Brownlee, Adult Programming Coordinator at the NSYMCA, leads virtual adult exercise classes on the [Y's Youtube channel](#).