



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## **Dr. Jerome Wolff Society**

Asked about Dr. Jerome M. Wolff, Ray Day, retired President/CEO of the Plainfield YMCA, noted that while Jerry could seem old-fashioned and rigid, he cared so deeply about the institution that he was flexible about how the Y needed to change to meet community needs.

As Ray and several others recall the story, Dr. Wolff had polio as a youngster. Although his family lived in Perth Amboy, his father worked in the Plainfield area. Because the Plainfield Y had a pool, he took Jerry there in an effort to rebuild his limbs.

Dr. Wolff credited the YMCA with restoring his health and strength, and was forever devoted to YMCA causes, locally, regionally and nationally.

After graduating from medical school at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Wolff set up his practice as a eye surgeon on Park Avenue in Plainfield. He was a practicing surgeon into his 60s, then continued to conduct eye examinations for another 10 years.

Bob Bechtel, former chairman of the board, recalled seeing “Dr. Wolff in the (YMCA) health unit into his late 80s. He’d do a light work-out and have a massage.”

That health unit, now transformed into the Youth Center, was dedicated to Dr. Wolff.

Dr. Wolff was a founding trustee of Frost Valley, now an independent YMCA on 6,000 acres in the Catskills which serves over 100,000 participants a year. Frost Valley was initially Wawayanda, a residential camp established by the Y’s in Plainfield, Westfield and Summit in the 1950s in northern New Jersey. The camp quickly outgrew its space, and proceeds from the sale bought the first 1,000 acres for Frost Valley in upstate New York. Dr Wolff was a trustee there from the mid-1950s until his death.

After many years of service to the Plainfield Y, Dr. Wolff chose to retire. He moved to a retirement community in Doylestown, Penn., and was made an emeritus director. Dr. Jerome M. Wolff is the largest single benefactor in Plainfield YMCA history.

To honor the memory of Dr. Wolff the YMCA started the Dr. Jerome Wolff Society June 2, 2010. All donors of \$1,000 or more to the YMCA will be members of the society. The group will meet on an annual basis to show our appreciation; receive program up dates and solicit your thoughts on our strategic plans.

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