



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



TEAMWORK & WELLBEING!

2025 YMCA HEARTLAND YPN CHAPTER 43 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

APRIL 15-17, 2025

DoubleTree Downtown Omaha in Omaha, Nebraska

heartlandymcas.org

»»»» REGISTRATION & HOTEL INFORMATION

»»» REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MARCH 28

Conference Registration Fees:

- » Early Bird (through February 28): \$99
- » Late Registration (March 1-28): \$129

Please register for the Heartland Alliance Conference through LCDC:

Click here to register for the conference or visit:
lcdc.yexchange.org/s/e71c93t

Conference Location: DoubleTree Downtown Omaha in Omaha, NE
Address: 1616 Dodge Street; Omaha, NE 68102 • Phone: (402) 218-4568

Who should attend the Heartland Alliance Leadership Conference?

- » Program Staff
- » Management Staff
- » Full Time Staff

Questions?

Please reach out to Jodi Cramer:
jcramer@metroymca.org

Conference Attire:
Business Casual

HOTEL – discount group ends on March 23

DoubleTree Downtown Omaha: Group Rates: \$139/night

Parking: Overnight parking (with in-out privileges) in the hotel garage is \$10/night.

Click here to book the DoubleTree at the group rate or visit: bit.ly/YPN-Hotel-25

»»»» GREAT PLAINS LEARNING CENTER CLASSES » Pre-Conference

(all trainings will be held at the conference hotel from 9:00 am-5:00 pm)

Monday, April 14 & Tuesday, April 15: (lunch provided)

- » Introduction to Fiscal Management (2 day class)

Monday, April 14: (lunch provided)

- » Introduction to Listen First

Tuesday, April 15: (lunch provided)

- » Facilitation Skills
- » Volunteerism

Please register for the classes in LCDC. See page 8 for descriptions & registration info/links.

Great Plains Learning Center staff will be on hand to meet one-on-one for YMCA Career Counseling. More info will be available at check in.

»YPN CHAPTER 43 BOARD MEMBERS

Lindy Pflugsten (President), Senior Executive Director: Butler-Gast YMCA & Maple Street YMCA

Jodi Cramer (Vice President), Director of Marketing: YMCA of Greater Omaha

Jen Damge (Secretary), Executive Director, Walnut Creek: YMCA of Greater Des Moines

Sha Bemba (Treasurer), Vice President of Employee Experience & Leadership Development: YMCA of Greater Omaha

Elyce Kastigar, Senior Director of Programming: Aberdeen Family YMCA

Amy Adams, Associate Executive Director: Orthman Community YMCA

Cole Buffington, Senior Membership Director: Twin Rivers YMCA

Shely Bauman, Director, Health & Wellness: Beatrice Mary YMCA

Kyla Wilkening, Director of Health & Wellness: YMCA of Washington County

Matt Miles, Chief Property Officer: YMCA of Rapid City

Ty LeBar, Associate Executive Director: YMCA of Hastings Nebraska

Britt Selbo, Vice President of Administration: YMCA of the Northern Sky

Katelyn Whittenburg, Group Fitness Director: YMCA of the Northern Sky

»HEARTLAND YMCA ALLIANCE STAFF

Mike Gulick, Co-Executive Director
Wade Riedinger, Co-Executive Director

»HEARTLAND YMCA ALLIANCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS & OFFICERS

STATE APPOINTED: (terms expire 12/31/2025)

Steve Smith – North Dakota

Andy Corley – South Dakota

Troy Stickels – Nebraska

Andrew Fisher (Vice Chair) – Iowa

AT LARGE: (terms expire 12/31/2026)

Rebecca Deterding (Chair) – Nebraska

Rhonda Robson – Nebraska

Kim Jass-Ramirez – Iowa

FISCAL AGENT:

Bob Carlson – Iowa

»» TUESDAY, APRIL 15 » Conference Schedule

8:00 am	Registration for Training Center classes	Hotel Lobby
	Trainings begin (9:00 am)	Hotel
12:00 pm	Partner & Sponsor table set-up	Hotel Ballroom
4:00 pm	Conference Check-in opens	Ballroom Lobby
5:30 pm	Social (Peer Community Leads, YPN Board & Volunteers)	19 th Floor Lobby

**CONFERENCE
WIFI**

**NAME:
Hilton Honors
Meeting**

**PASSWORD:
Hilton2025**

»» WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16 » Conference Schedule

6:30 am	YOGA (all levels welcome!)	Grant/Ford - 19th Floor
7:30 am	Conference Check-in	Ballroom Lobby
8:15 am	Opening General Session (Light pastries & coffee)	Ballroom
9:00 am	BREAK/VISIT VENDORS	
9:30 am	Peer Community Breakout sessions	
	Aquatics: Lewis	Membership & Marketing: Missouri
	Childcare: Dakota	Overnight & Nature-Based Camp: Winnebago
	Facilities/Property: Belair	Youth Development: Dodge
	Financial Development/Fundraising: Capitol	Youth Sports: Nebraska
	Health & Wellness: Iowa	Operations: Clark
	HR & Finance: Flanagan	CEO: Kansas
11:15 am	BREAK/VISIT VENDORS	
11:30 am	Buffet Lunch	Ballroom
	Lunch: Little Italy Buffet	
12:30 pm	BREAK/VISIT VENDORS	
1:00 pm	Break Out Workshops 1	
	Choice 1: Undivided! Strengthening Organizational Culture	Iowa & Community
	Choice 2: Practical Application of Trust in Team Leadership	Missouri
	Choice 3: Future-Ready Leadership: Integrating Generative AI	Nebraska into Management
	Choice 4: Engaging Community with Nine Dimensions of Wellness	Dodge
	Choice 5: Storytelling for Impact	Capitol
2:15 pm	BREAK/VISIT VENDORS	
2:30 pm	Break Out Workshops 2	
	Choice 1: (Repeat) Undivided! Strengthening Organizational	Iowa Culture & Community
	Choice 2: Your Leadership Superpower: It May Surprise You!	Missouri
	Choice 3: Functional Health and Longevity	Nebraska
	Choice 4: Building Bridges: Using Wellness as a Tool	Dodge for Community Connection
	Choice 5: Marketing Trends Nonprofits Need to Know & Embrace	Capitol
3:45 pm	BREAK/VISIT VENDORS	

»» WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16 » Conference Schedule (cont...)

4:00 pm	General Session Ballroom Keynote: Cory Scheer: The Trust-Centric Leader: Closing the Trust Gap
5:30 pm	Close for the day
5:45 pm	Networking Social at the DoubleTree Hotel Ballroom Raffles, Awards Presentation & Silent Auction closes (Proceeds benefit the YMCA of Seven Council Fires)
6:45 pm	Dinner on your own

»» THURSDAY, APRIL 17 » Conference Schedule

7:30 am	Breakfast Buffet Ballroom Scrambled eggs with cheese, bacon, sausage, assorted pastries, roasted potatoes. fruit, juices, coffee and tea.
8:30 am	Break Out Workshops 3 Choice 1: Leadership Strategies for Professional and Personal Alignment Iowa Choice 2: YMCAs Blazing the New Frontier for Colossal Community Impact Nebraska Choice 3: (Repeat) Your Leadership Superpower: It May Surprise You! Missouri Choice 4: Mental Health is How We Think, Feel, and Act Dodge
9:45 am	BREAK
10:00 am	Peer Community Breakout Sessions - wrap up! See Page 1 for rooms
11:00 am	BREAK
11:15 am	Break Out Workshops 4 Choice 1: (Repeat): Future-Ready Leadership: Integrating Generative Iowa AI into Management Choice 2: Y Grants: Their Tough Questions; Our Best Answers Nebraska Choice 3: We All Have Mental Health: Self-Care Strategies Missouri
12:45 pm	Closing General Session (protein bars & soft pretzels with cheese) Ballroom Keynote: Rachel D. Fox: The Power of Purpose: Leading and Leading with Intention

»» SILENT AUCTION...We need your help!

We are looking for silent auction items for the YMCA Heartland YPN Chapter 43 Leadership Conference Auction, proceeds to benefit the YMCA of the Seven Council Fires. The auction will be live during the conference with item winners & payments at the Wednesday evening social & Thursday morning closing session.

All delegations/YMCAs are requested to provide at least one basket or notable item for the silent auction.

Ideas include: themed baskets with local items, upscale Y gear, gift cards for experiences, unique items.

Please let us know what items or baskets you will be providing for the auction by April 6:

Jodi Cramer: jcramer@metroymca.org.

»»»» BREAKOUT WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

» Storytelling for Impact

Presented by: Kiersten Hill

From the beginning of civilization, storytelling has maintained a uniquely impactful position in defining culture, motivating action and bringing people together. Today's nonprofits need to be better storytellers than ever before as more and more stories are told all around us.

Join Firespring's Kiersten Hill as she goes through tips, techniques and tools to help your organization tell better and more impactful stories that will activate your audiences around ideas and actions.

Key Takeaways:

- »An analysis of the Hero's Journey and other storytelling frameworks.
- »Tools to aid in the process of compiling and refining the most compelling stories.
- »Using social media story tools to build community and motivate action.
- »Exercises your team can use in order to enhance and refine your storytelling process.

1

»Engaging Community with Nine Dimensions of Wellness

Presented by: Dr. Emmy Smith

This session explores how organizations can utilize the 9 dimensions of wellness—physical, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual, environmental, financial, occupational, and cultural—to develop comprehensive programs tailored to the diverse needs of their communities. Attendees will gain actionable strategies to enhance engagement and drive meaningful outcomes through holistic wellness initiatives.

1

»Undivided! Strengthening Organizational Culture & Community

Presented by: Angela Cooper, MindPowerStrategic

Are you shaping your workplace culture with intention? In this energizing, research-backed session, we'll explore how intentional culture-shaping creates the conditions for people to thrive—deepening connection, fostering belonging, and driving stronger outcomes for the communities you serve.

Together, we'll uncover how demographic trends, generational shifts, and workplace research are reshaping leadership expectations and revealing the importance of psychological safety.

1

2

»Future Ready Leadership: Integrating Generative AI into Management

Presented by: Todd Conkright; President Todd Conkright Consulting

In this workshop, leaders will explore how generative AI can be leveraged to enhance their management and leadership efforts. Participants will gain a foundational understanding of generative AI, learn about its applications in leadership, and engage in interactive activities to experience its potential firsthand. By the end of the session, leaders will be equipped with practical insights and strategies to integrate generative AI into their leadership practices responsibly and effectively.

1

4

»Practical Applications of Trust in Team Leadership

Presented by: Dr. Cory Scheer, Founder and CEO of TrustCentric™ Consulting

Learn actionable tools to apply trust-building practices in daily operations and team dynamics.

1

»Marketing Trends Nonprofits Need to Know & Embrace

Presented by: Kiersten Hill

Marketing trends come and go, but the top marketing trends are the ones worth adopting. Digital marketing, content marketing, social media marketing—each plays a role in a nonprofits strategy. Join us to discuss the marketing trends that will shape your nonprofits future and grow your impact.

2

»Functional Health and Longevity

Presented by: Dr. Brent Ruiz

This program focuses on how to optimize health and extend lifespan by addressing the root causes of disease through an individualized approach. This emerging science incorporates elements like nutrition, lifestyle modifications, stress management, and advanced testing to identify underlying imbalances that contribute to aging and chronic conditions. The program aims to teach participants how to identify health hazards and to proactively manage their health for longevity rather than just treating symptoms as they arise. YMCAs are uniquely positioned to lead their members and respective communities to longer and disease free lives.

2

»Building Bridges: Using Wellness as a Tool for Community Connection

Presented by: Dr. Emmy Smith

Dr. Smith will guide attendees in leveraging wellness programs as a means to strengthen community bonds. This workshop will focus on practical techniques for designing and implementing initiatives that foster inclusivity, address community-specific challenges, and promote a culture of health. Participants will leave with a toolkit of ideas for creating impactful programs that bring people together.

2

»Leadership Strategies for Professional and Personal Alignment

Presented by: Rachel D. Fox: Founder, You Go Girl

Gain practical insights and tools for aligning career goals with personal well-being.

3

»Mental Health is How We Think, Feel, and Act.

Presented by: Karen Friedman, Manager of Access and Ability at Y-USA

Mental health is a community-wide priority, and the YMCA Community Care Model provides a proactive, prevention-focused approach to supporting well-being. This workshop will introduce participants to the model, emphasizing the power of informal community-based support alongside formal clinical care. Attendees will learn how the YMCA equips staff and volunteers to recognize signs of mental distress, provide compassionate support, and connect individuals to appropriate resources.

3

»Your Leadership Superpower – It May Surprise You!

Presented by: Suzanne Combs-Brown: Kairos Culture Coaching & Consulting

As leaders, we possess an array of superpowers—mentoring, empowering, and lifting others while leading with vulnerability, experience, and opportunity. True leadership isn't about standing in the spotlight but serving others and showcasing their strengths. But to lead effectively, we must first know ourselves deeply. Our most powerful leadership superpower? Self-awareness. The key unlocks our most authentic, impactful, and transformational leadership skills. By understanding ourselves—our strengths, blind spots, and values—we elevate our leadership and those around us. Let's put it to the test and discover how self-awareness fuels our leadership journey!

2

3

»YMCAs Blazing the New Frontier for Colossal Community Impact

Presented by: Nick Zimmer (Retired Montgomery County Family YMCA CEO, Red Oak, Iowa/ American City Bureau Sr. Campaign Consultant), John Biggins, American City Bureau, CEO, Mario Trescone, Owner & Founder Greater Than Analytics, Dan Haynes, CEO Nishna Valley Family YMCA, Atlantic, Iowa, and Christina Bateman, Capital Campaign Chair Vision Atlantic & YMCA Board Member Nishna Valley Family YMCA, Atlantic, Iowa.

Learn from the success of the Nishna Valley Family YMCA to drive mission alignment and sustainable growth in your community. Atlantic, Iowa is a place where you can create your future. A place where you can invest in our future by building a state-of-the-art childcare center, a modern YMCA addition, and new housing units that will cater to the needs and preferences of our diverse and growing population. A place where you can contribute to the economic growth and vitality of the Atlantic by investing in its development, donating to its causes, or moving to its neighborhoods. A place where you can be proud to call Atlantic your home and where you can build an even better future for yourself and your children.

3

4

»We All Have Mental Health: Self-Care Strategies

Presented by: Karen Friedman, Manager of Access and Ability at Y-USA

Self-care is something we do to care for our physical, mental, and spiritual health, which helps us stay emotionally regulated and effectively manage stress. Learning strategies to manage our stress is one way we can practice self-care.

4

»Y Grants: Their Tough Questions; Our Best Answers

Presented by: Shane Pekny, VGA Grants & Fundraising

This session will review some of the most challenging questions posed by local foundations and other grant makers, and offer insights on how YMCAs can answer them compellingly. Attendees will also learn a framework for deciding which grant opportunities to pursue, seeking maximum ROI in their grants strategy.

»CEO: Peer Community Breakout

Wednesday: 9:30 – 11:15 am

»Britt Darwin-Looney – VP of Child Protection and Organization Risk will present on Child Safety and Praesidium Accreditation

»Anita Lancello-Bydlon – Business Development Director for the Heartland and Upper Mid-West Alliances will present on 3rd Party Payers/ Medicare Reimbursements.

Thursday: 10:00 – 11:00 am

»Open discussion on “Hot Topics” identified by the CEOs.

»»»» RESTAURANTS IN OMAHA

Signatures (inside the Doubletree):

Open for breakfast

City Center Pub (inside the Doubletree)

Open for dinner

Plank Provisions (.4 miles away)

1205 Howard Street

Open for dinner

Wilson & Washburn (.3 miles away)

1407 Harney Street

Open for dinner

Omaha Tap House (.2 miles away)

1401 Farnam Street

Open for dinner

M’s Pub (.4 miles away)

422 S. 11th Street

Open for dinner

Old Mattress Factory (.4 miles away)

501 N. 13th Street (has a large parking lot)

Open for dinner

Pickleman’s (.2 miles away)

1503 Farnam Street

Open for dinner

There are a lot more restaurants in the area, including many in the Old Market: oldmarket.com. This is a great area for an evening walk!

»»»» KEYNOTE SPEAKER » Dr. Cory Scheer

Introducing Dr. Cory Scheer

Cory Scheer is the Founder and CEO of TrustCentric® Consulting, an organizational and leadership development firm. TrustCentric® helps leaders, teams, and organizations become more trustworthy, focused, and productive by: using empirical evidence to define reality, implementing a proven trust building framework, and walking alongside clients to develop clear, obtainable, and long lasting data informed strategies for success. Core solutions that TrustCentric® provides include: Comprehensive Organizational Trust Assessments®, Executive and Team Coaching, Strengthening Organizational Trust Workshops, Strategic Planning Retreats, Keynote / Seminar Speaking, Leadership Development Cohorts, and ongoing organizational and leadership development consultative support.



In addition to over 25 years in leadership roles in multiple sectors, Cory has obtained an Executive MBA (Rockhurst University) and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (University of Missouri). Cory has worked with small businesses, school districts, corporations, nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, state governments, ministries, the military, and municipalities to provide vital support and clear direction on how to ensure people, practices, and policies become more trustworthy so that key performance indicators improve. Cory is the co-author of The National Survey on Brand and Trust with BrandCertain as well as the developer of the online course, The Complete Guide to Building Organizational Trust (www.StructureOfTrust.com). Cory is also the author of Closing the Trust Gap: Taking Action on What Matters Most for Leaders, Teams, and Organizations (www.TrustGapBook.com).

»»»» KEYNOTE SPEAKER » Rachel D. Fox

Introducing Rachel D. Fox...

Rachel D. Fox is a dynamic keynote speaker, entrepreneur, author, and soon-to-be board-certified life, team, and couples coach. She will launch her coaching practice, Flourish Coaching and Consulting, in 2025, specializing in transformational growth for individuals and teams. As the founder of Catapult Consulting Solutions, Rachel helps businesses develop strategies for success in branding, marketing, and leadership.

She is also the co-owner of Fox Flooring and the founder of You Go Girl, a nonprofit focused on empowering young women through self-love, wellness, education, and leadership. Rachel's inspirational speaking and writing, including her memoir Back to Me, are rooted in her personal journey of resilience, particularly through her daughter's life-threatening illness.



A mother of 11, Rachel is completing her doctorate in strategic leadership and has been widely recognized for her community impact, including awards from Omaha Magazine and the Midland Business Journal. Known for her passionate, relatable approach, Rachel empowers others to live purposefully and flourish in all areas of life.

»»»» NETWORKING SOCIAL » April 16: 5:30 – 6:30 pm

RAFFLE PRIZES! AWARD PRESENTATIONS! NETWORKING! SNACKS & DRINKS!

Join colleagues and friends for an evening at the YMCA Heartland YPN Chapter 43 Leadership Conference's exclusive networking social located in the Ballroom. Enjoy some light appetizers, beer, wine, water, and soda (drink ticket provided in your nametag packet), plus there will be a cash bar available for additional beverages. The silent auction will also close during the social.

Make sure to attend the social for the FREE Raffle (raffle ticket will be in your packet when you check in for the conference) for a chance to win!

*Must be present at the social to win.

»INTRO TO FISCAL MANAGEMENT (2 Day class)

Designed for Team Leaders, this course provides an overview of fiscal management and financial principles within the YMCA context. Participants will explore the connection between the YMCA mission and responsible fiscal stewardship. The training covers steps in the budget development process, including reviewing sample program budgets and engaging in activities to create a budget. Additionally, it offers an overview of financial terminology and introduces a four-step pricing process model.

Monday, April 14 & Tuesday, April 15: 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Registration: lcdc.yexchange.org/s/c31u95p

»VOLUNTEERISM

Focusing on the critical role of volunteers within the YMCA, this course delves into strategies for effective volunteer recruitment, engagement, and retention. Participants will explore best practices for managing volunteers, understanding their motivations, and aligning their contributions with the organization's mission. The session also covers methods to recognize and appreciate volunteers' efforts, ensuring a fulfilling experience for both volunteers and the YMCA community.

Tuesday, April 15: 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Registration: lcdc.yexchange.org/s/c81j52v

»INTRODUCTION TO LISTEN FIRST

This course introduces the foundational principles of Listen First, a communication strategy developed by the YMCA to foster a relationship-based culture. Participants will learn key concepts such as ambivalence, collaboration, and the "righting reflex." The training includes practicing core skills to enhance effective communication, which is vital for engaging with members, program participants, and colleagues.

Monday, April 14: 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Registration: lcdc.yexchange.org/s/c88s70s

»FACILITATION SKILLS

This course aims to equip participants with effective facilitation techniques essential for leading groups and training sessions. Attendees will learn how to manage group dynamics, encourage participation, and deliver content engagingly. The training emphasizes creating an inclusive environment that promotes learning and development among YMCA staff and volunteers.

Tuesday, April 15: 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Registration: lcdc.yexchange.org/s/c68f10t OR

lcdc.yexchange.org/s/c20g19j

(2 classes will run at the same time, in the same room)

**All classes will be held at the DoubleTree.
Lunch will be provided.**

**»»»» PEER COMMUNITY SESSIONS » Wednesday, April 15: 9:30–11:15 am AND
Thursday, April 16: 10:00–11:00 am**

Enjoy extended time with your Peer Community in a Breakout Session from 9:30 – 11:15 am in assigned rooms (room assignments to come), plus you'll have a chance to wrap up with your group on Thursday from 10:00–11:00 am. Have a topic you'd like to chat with your group about? Reach out to your peer community leaders!

Questions about Peer Community Content Leaders? Reach out to Elyce for more information:
Elyce: ekastigar@aberdeenymca.org

PEER COMMUNITY GROUPS:

**Aquatics » Childcare » Facilities/Property » Financial Development/Fundraising
Health & Wellness » HR & Finance » Membership & Marketing » Youth Development
Overnight & Nature-Based Camp » Youth Sports » Operations » CEO**