

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND THE YMCA

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An abbreviated list of famous people who used the Y

Millions of children have learned to swim at the Y.

One was Janet Evans, who won three gold medals in the '88 Olympics and was amateur athlete of the year for '89.

Mark Spitz learned to swim at the Sacramento YMCA in 1958.

Greg Louganis was another who learned at the Y.

John Naber, multi-gold winner.

Another was Ronald Reagan, who learned lifesaving and played the drum in the band at the Dixon (Ill.) YMCA.

Millions of children have benefited from youth sports at the YMCA.

Wilt Chamberlain was one. When he was 16, he was on the national YMCA champion men's team.

Frank Robinson was another. When bad weather forced him off the baseball diamond, he was in the Y playing basketball.

George Bush played basketball at the Y as a young man (and later helped start the Y in Midland, Texas).

Christian Laettner and Cliff Robinson, former NBA players, were on the same Y basketball team.

Curly Neal of Harlem Globetrotter fame learned to play basketball at the YMCA.

Millions of kids have grown up at the YMCA.

Ezzard Charles, former heavyweight boxing champion, was one.

Aaron Spelling, TV producer, said the Y was his one escape from the streets, the chance to be part of something—the family of the Y.

The Rev. Andrew Young, former UN ambassador and mayor of Atlanta

Bob Newhart said it was a "very important part of my childhood."

Art Linkletter, TV show host

Phyllis Diller, pioneering comedienne

Thurman Thomas, Hall of Fame NFL running back in the 1980s and '90s

Connie Hawkins, Hall of Fame NBA player

Senator Bob Kerrey's Y youth program leader said Kerrey was a "YMCA rat" growing up.

Vic Mitchell, world-class bridge player, was taken to the Brooklyn YMCA by a policeman.

Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer said that the San Francisco YMCA's Youth and Government program was an important influence in his life.

Darryl Stingley, former NFL player, was a self-described "product of the YMCA system."

Millions have benefited from camp, school, working out and working at the YMCA.

Clay Aiken, finalist on "American Idol"

Tony Hawk, skateboarder

Tony Granato, hockey coach

Todd MacCulloch, former NBA player

Harry Connick Jr., musician and actor

Oswald Chambers, YMCA chaplain and "spiritual inspiration" to George W. Bush

Carlos Pena, Major League Baseball player

Richard Greenwood, violinist

David Thompson, NBA player in the 1970s

Cornelius Muller, basketball player/actor

Dirk Been, "Survivor" participant

Wally Hagin, African-American photographer

Bill Clinton

Roy Campanella, Major League Baseball Hall of Fame player in the 1940s and '50s

Jackie Robinson

Tommy Lasorda, Major League Baseball Hall of Fame manager in the 1970s and '80s

Rocky Marciano, boxing heavyweight champion in the 1940s

Peter Ueberroth, CEO of the Los Angeles Olympics and former commissioner of Major League Baseball

Reggie Williams, former NFL player and football executive

Jack Kemp, NFL player in 1950s and '60s, former U.S. representative from New York and former presidential and vice presidential candidate

Tom Foley, ex-Speaker of the House from Washington state

Norman Thomas, Christian socialist
Vachel Lindsay, popular poet
Mike Royko, legendary *Chicago Tribune* columnist and author
Garrison Keillor, author and humorist
The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Roger Mudd, award-winning TV journalist and broadcaster
Herb Alpert, musician
Richard Wilbur, former poet laureate of U.S.
Michael Landon, author
Derek Bok, former president of Harvard
Thad Cochran, U.S. senator from Mississippi
Neil Goldschmidt, former governor of Oregon
Daniel Inouye, former U.S. senator from Hawaii
Bart Conner, Olympic gold medal winner in gymnastics
Emery Moorehead, former NFL player with the Chicago Bears
Amanda Jones, former Miss USA
Jon Porter, U.S. representative from Nevada
Charles Percy, former U.S. senator from Illinois
Erwin Griswold, former Harvard Law dean and solicitor general
Richard Celeste, former governor of Ohio
Lennox Lewis, former heavyweight champion boxer
Anthony Hopkins, actor who played one of his first parts in "Othello" at his local YMCA
Tim Allen, actor and comedian

Staying at the Y

Andy Rooney, "60 Minutes" commentator
Frederick Exley, award-winning author whose autobiographical novels include the Y
Claude McKay, poet, leading contributor to Harlem Renaissance
Malcolm X (when he was Malcolm Little)
Jack Kerouac, author and poet
Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's restaurants
Bill Blass, fashion Designer
Bob Crane, actor in "Hogan's Heroes"

Sidney Sheldon, author and screenwriter
Vernon Alley, jazz musician

Parents/children

John/Sean Lennon

Volunteers

Walt Whitman (during the Civil War)

Ernie Banks, Hall of Fame Major League Baseball player in the 1950s, '60s and '70s

Steve Owens, Heisman Trophy winner in 1969

Lorado Taft, sculptor