

Central School Gets YMCA Activate America Grant

by Helen Gates of the YMCA

(February 5, 2009) Central School is kicking off 2009 with a healthy start courtesy of a grant from the Rye YMCA's Activate America school wellness program. Central, along with 5 other local schools, each received a \$1,000 grant from the Y as a way to encourage physical fitness and healthy eating habits among school children, a primary goal of the Y's Activate America initiative in the Sound Shore community.

"Our jump rope program will kick off the week of March 23, which is also Nutrition Week," explained Kim Larsen, a Central School parent who is also a member of the Activate America coalition and chair of the Larchmont Safe Routes to School Committee. "And Jump for Heart will be held on April 21, during Turn Off TV week. I love synergy and the way we can promote healthy living in fun, educational ways," she added.



(L-R) Kim Larsen, YMCA Activate America coalition member, presents a wellness grant award to Central School's John Savage (PE teacher), Carol Houseknecht (principal), & Joan George (PE).

This is the second year in a row that Central's "Jump Rope for Fitness" has secured a YMCA grant.

Additional grant recipients include Rye City Schools: Osborn (Dance, Dance Revolution), Milton (sustainable garden) and Midland (cross-curricular fitness program). Rye Neck winners are: Daniel Warren School (sustainable garden program) and F.E. Bellows (FoodPlay nutritional theater group).

Since 2006, the Rye YMCA and its coalition of community partners have provided approximately \$30,000 in grants to fund Sound Shore schools wellness initiatives. In working across school districts and municipalities, the Activate America coalition has mobilized over 200 volunteers to implement a wide range of nutrition and fitness programs that impact approximately 7000 school children in the four communities served by the YMCA: Rye, Harrison, Larchmont and Mamaroneck.

For further information about Activate America and the Rye YMCA, contact Helen Gates, Director of Marketing and Strategic Initiatives, at (914) 967-6363, ext. 101, or helengates@ryeymca.org