



My Y Story

By Monica Martinez

Back in January of 2014, I was considering canceling my Y membership; I'd been trying to lose weight and I failed each time. I had resigned to be a "fat girl."

Then I met Athena Towns. I watched her weight loss journey and I thought, *maybe I could ask for some help and give it my last shot.* Everything started right then. I was so overweight, at 211 pounds and wearing size 18 in pants. Day one started and I'm still going strong. I have lost 60 pounds, and I'm down to a size 8.

At one point I was unable to afford my membership so I applied for a scholarship and I was approved. It made me so happy that I didn't have to quit on my goal of getting fit. Two years after I started, I got an offer for teaching a group fitness class. With the help of the Y I became a group fitness instructor, and I have been teaching Step Aerobics since January of 2016.

I also learned how to swim at the Y, with the help of Linda Selee. One month after I started my swimming classes, I did three triathlons; that was in August 2016. I've also participated in several 5Ks and I'm training for my next goal, which is to run a marathon.

I'm thankful for all the support I have had from my family, especially my kids who always cheer me up. They have been the key to my success, because if it wasn't for their love and support I wouldn't be where I am now.

I didn't only find a place to do my workout at the Y, but I found a family. I have met the most incredible people there; people who work so hard every day to reach their goals, and they inspire me so much. I feel proud and thankful to be part of such a great team. I went from being shy with low self-esteem, to confident and enthusiastic. Thank you so much for all your help and support in my weight loss journey. I've always felt so much support from the YMCA.



Monica, size 8, after losing 60 lbs.