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Linda Sadowsky is the new executive director of the Euclid YMCA.

## 'I want to play a critical role in this community' Longtime resident to lead Euclid YMCA

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Only one week into her new role as executive director of the Euclid Family YMCA, Linda Sadowsky had to lead to a dysfunctional treadmill.

She posted a note on it, but instead of simply writing that the machine was out of order and leaving would-be runners to guess what was wrong, Sadowsky took the time to explain that a repairman had examined the problem, a replacement part had been ordered and that the treadmill should be up and running again by the end of the week.

"The members come first," said Sadowsky, explaining the approach she intends to take in leading the Greater Cleveland YMCA's Euclid branch.

It's a role the 18-year Euclid resident readily embraces.

"I love this community. I'm very invested in this community. I own a home in this commu-

nity," said the 58-year-old mother of two.

"I'm very excited to work with an organization I have passion for in a community I have passion for."

One way in which Sadowsky hopes to join her two passions is by building collaborative partnerships with the city's hospital, school system and library.

In doing so, she hopes to strengthen and develop YMCA programs aimed at career development, mentoring, and health and fitness.

Also, Sadowsky wants to expand on the YMCA's youth programs as well as its child-care offerings for families with two working parents.

"My ultimate goal is to have this YMCA recognized in the community as a valuable asset," she said. "I want to provide services and programs that are meeting the community's needs and enhance the well-being of everyone in Euclid."

Sadowsky is no stranger to the

YMCA. As a child, she learned to swim at the YMCA in Anderson, S.C. Years later, she joined the Greater Cleveland YMCA as a part-time aerobic and strength-training instructor.

"I've seen the YMCA in every capacity," she said.

In 1989, she became executive director of the YMCA Cleveland Corporate Challenge, where she developed and implemented the largest first-time annual corporate health, sports and fitness program in the country.

After three years in that capacity and five subsequent years as corporate vice president of financial development, Sadowsky was named the executive director of the local YMCA's flagship branch in downtown Cleveland.

While her four years of experience leading the downtown branch should help her in her new role, Sadowsky said leading the Euclid branch will present its own unique challenges.

"YMCAs present different challenges based on location and

demographics," she said. "You have to develop programs. What would work at the Genoa 'Y' would not work here, for example."

Sadowsky left the YMCA in 2003 to become a development director for the Cleveland Clinic, but when a friend told her the executive director position opened up at the Euclid Family YMCA, she felt called to the job.

"It was in the back of my head that I would really love to do that," she said.

"I kept thinking I could do something wonderful (at the Euclid Family YMCA) and work in my community."

It's Sadowsky's vision for her city and determination to make a difference through the YMCA that might just lead to that "something wonderful."

"I want to play a critical role in this community," she said. "I want to help make Euclid a place where people want to go, a city people want to live in."