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# FINDING COMMUNITY

## The Robinson Family's Story

Hi, we are the Robinson family. I would like to express our experience at Five Points Branch YMCA located at 201 Tucker Avenue in Union, New Jersey. My husband Jason, our 5-year-old son Bryce, our 2-year-old son Jayce and I, Cassandra live in Edison, N.J. However, we commute to Union every Saturday morning, so that our son's can attend swimming classes at this facility.

We initially decided to commute from Edison to Five Points Branch YMCA in Union because we wanted to expose our kids to a diverse cultural environment. We want our boys to experience diverse communities and ethnicities so it can help them develop open minds. Studies and experiments show how babies as young as 19 months old are actively learning new task and this exposure to diversity helps children become more confident in showing their willingness to learn. We have witnessed both our boys build self-confidence, swimming skills and developed their awareness, appreciation and inclusion of diverse beliefs and cultures, while attending the YMCA weekly.

My husband and I believe that a child's interaction with parents, other children, community, the media and caregivers can inevitably shape their perception and judgment of others. In addition, young children have the intellectual capacity for undoing any pre-existing unfair perceptions of others as they engage in meaningful, culturally responsive experiences with the primary caregivers in their lives. Placing our boys in an organically diverse setting allowed them to recognize the differences and uniqueness in every individual and it's helping our kids become more compassionate and less judgmental. Five Points Branch YMCA has provided all of this to our children and more.

Bryce and Jayce have been attending this faculty's swimming program since they were 6 months old. We have not missed a semester for 5 consecutive years. Rain, shine, sleet or snow, we are at the YMCA every Saturday morning. My husband and I have witnessed our kids grow extremely confident in the water. Bryce has advanced through 4 classes, from Water Discovery to Water Stamina which he is currently in. Jayce has advanced from Water Discovery to Water Exploration and we have seen him grow to the point where he loves being in the water and is now comfortable with swimming by himself (with a floaty on).

This YMCA facility is clean, comfortable, convenient and welcoming. The staff is always upbeat, friendly and greets you with a smile. The small class sizes, dedicated and patient swimming instructors, work collectively with you and your child to ensure that your child makes consistent as well as sustained progress. Our kids love going to swimming lessons weekly and they enjoy the heated pool. In addition, there is a warm relaxing Jacuzzi in the pool area that adults can enjoy.

Overall, the YMCA has become an integral part of our family's life. God willing, we will continue to come weekly and be apart of the Five Points Branch YMCA family for many more years to come.

Thank you for all you do!

*Cassandra Robinson*

**For Family. For Community. For All.**  
**The Y.™ For a better us.**



**The Gateway Family YMCA**