

August 2009 Success Story *DIANE CAPORALE-HARTLEB*



*“Success is the sum of small efforts,
repeated day in and day out.” Robert Collier*

Diane became a member of the YMCA in 1999, *ten* years ago! She joined in an effort to stay fit to increase her chances of surviving breast cancer; and after joyfully defeating cancer, she continues to exercise to help her stay healthy and active for her two young daughters. She chose the YMCA because, she says, “It provides me with a wonderful, safe environment to exercise in. It’s nurturing and not intimidating for someone my age.... The YMCA gives me incentive to continue to exercise.”

As a biology professor, Diane keeps a busy schedule, so she tries to treat her aerobics classes like a part of her weekly schedule. She admits, “Sometimes I have to schedule appointments during exercise class when there is no other option, but family time is at night, so I try to include some kind of exercise, walking or biking, with my family.”

She has particularly enjoyed attending regular Aerofit classes and has developed strong relationships with the women in her class. While Diane battled breast cancer, her friendships with these women became a touchstone and a source of strength. She continued attending Aerofit throughout her chemotherapy and radiation treatments and remembers her class cheering for her when she first took off her wig. “The day before my last chemo treatment,” Diane reflects, “the Aerofit class got me a huge, gorgeous plant and a ‘congratulations’ card for getting through it all. The Aerofit class consists of wonderful women who constantly gave me encouragement over the years, writing inspiring notes during my treatments and genuinely making me feel good inside and out. They helped me to get the courage to adopt a baby during my treatments, the best decision I ever made. It made me feel like I was invincible and could accomplish anything I put my mind to.”

Diane’s positive energy inspires us to keep moving forward despite the setbacks we will inevitably encounter. While regular exercise has helped her physically, she also credits the friendships and commitments she has made at the YMCA with helping her through some of the most difficult times in her life. “My mind, body and soul have benefitted so much,” she says. Diane reminds us, “Even when the pain is there in your joints or muscles, realize that the next day you’ll feel better.”