



LAURA GREENE | HPE

Lynn Lomax, right, CEO of the YMCA of High Point, shown with Carlvena Foster, executive director of the Carl Chavis Memorial YMCA, each deliver opening remarks at the celebration of the Carl Chavis YMCA grand reopening Sunday.

YMCA celebrates Chavis branch renovations

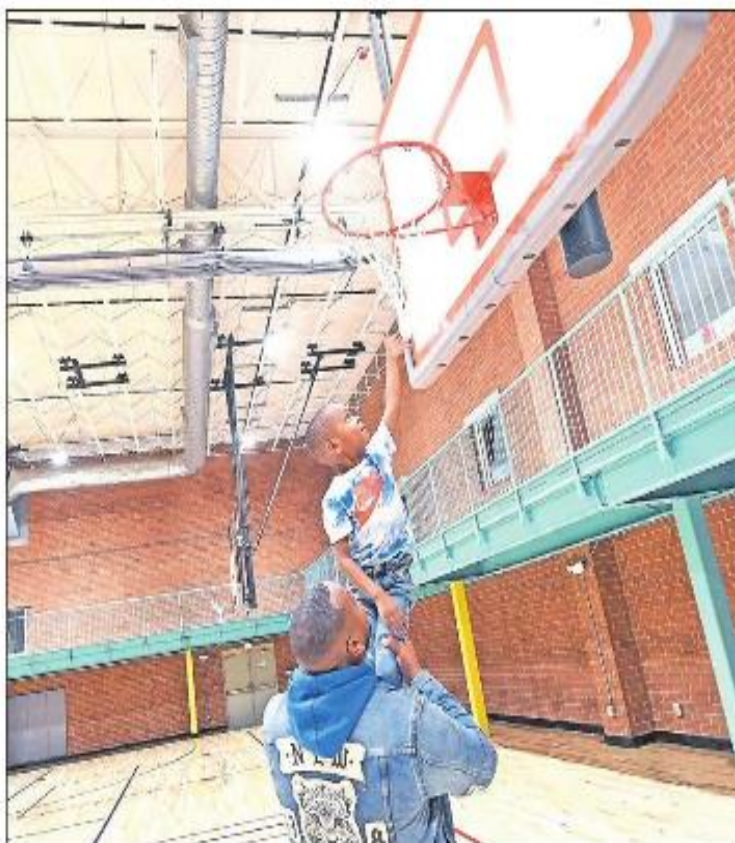
BY GUY LUCAS
ENTERPRISE EDITOR

HIGH POINT — The freshest, shiniest, swankiest YMCA branch around now is the one that sits on Granville Street in southeast High Point.

It doesn't have all its furniture or fitness equipment yet, and it will be March 20 before all its programs are up and running again, but the Carl Chavis branch welcomed a crowd of well over 100 people Sunday for a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tours of the expanded and newly renovated building, and more people arrived as the afternoon passed.

Lynn Lomax, the president and CEO of the YMCA of High Point, called the \$4.5 million renovation and expansion the centerpiece of more than \$10 million in projects planned at all of the Y's facilities in High Point.

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PHOTOS BY LAURA GREENE | HPE

Cameron Neal lifts his nephew, Landon Neal, 5, up to touch a basketball goal inside the newly remodeled gymnasium at the Carl Chavis YMCA while touring the facility during the grand reopening Sunday.

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"We wanted to set the foundation for the next 20 to 25 years," he said. "We're doing work everywhere."

The renovations include a new lobby expansion and entrance, renovated classrooms, a new childwatch and teen center, a raised indoor track in the gym, fully redone flooring for the basketball court, and a state-of-the-art fitness center.

It also includes a feature in the lobby that Lomax said will be added to all of the High Point branches: a prayer wall. It consists of a section of stone slabs, and people can write down their prayers and slip the paper into a crack between the stones, similar to a part of the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

Renovation of a separate building that will be a new child care center continues. YMCA officials announced in June that the building will

vis branch for more than 20 years.

A pillar of the community since being established in 1943, the Chavis branch is named in honor of the first African-American soldier from High Point to die during World War II. In addition to offering wellness services, the branch serves more than 130 children per week in summer day camp and nearly 50 children newborn to age 5 in its child care.

Plans for the renovation were announced in 2020, but Lomax said the details kept evolving during the project, driven largely by Foster.

Speaking to the jubilant crowd just before Sunday's ribbon-cutting, Foster credited Lomax for wanting to get the renovation done, and she expressed relief that it finally had come to pass.

"This has been a long time coming, but we're here, and that's all that matters," she said.