

YMCA Receives \$15,000 Grant to Expand Special Needs Program



(l to r) Michael Lee, trustee of the Albert E. and Birdie W. Einstein Fund; Vicki Pugh, executive director of the Peter Blum Family YMCA of Boca Raton; and Joyce Boyer, Einstein Fund trustee.

Boca Raton, Fla. -- The Albert E. & Birdie W. Einstein Fund, a Tequesta, Fla.-based organization established in 1963 to help those in need with art, education, healthcare and childcare costs, has awarded the Peter Blum Family YMCA of Boca Raton a \$15,000 grant to expand the special needs program for high school students at the Peter Blum Family YMCA of Boca Raton.

For the past two decades, the YMCA has offered after school and summer camp programming for children with disabilities through its Exceptional Child Program, which has grown from serving only elementary school children to including middle school students as well. Thanks to a recent endowment established by Craig and Judy Donoff, whose autistic son, Chase, attended the program, the YMCA recently expanded the program even more to include high school students.

The new *Chase Donoff Special Needs After School and Camp Program* is the only after school camp program of its kind in Palm Beach County. Special needs students, ages 13 to 19, enjoy a variety of inclusive activities designed just for them. They enjoy field trips, plan special events, participate in arts activities, play sports and complete homework.

"The YMCA is meeting a growing need in our community to provide support and programs for special needs teens," said Vicki Pugh, executive director of the Boca YMCA. "The generous grant from the Einstein Fund will allow us to further support this important initiative."

For more information about the special needs programs offered at the YMCA, contact Janice Labat at (561) 237-0949 or jlabat@ymcaspbc.org.