



RICHARD MERWIN, CHAIRMAN  
GERRY VANDEMERWE, CEO

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**For Immediate Release**

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## **YMCA OF GREATER ERIE ANNOUNCES \$898,271 IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN 2010**

### *YMCA of Greater Erie Annual Meeting 2010 Community Impact*

Erie, PA – The YMCA of Greater Erie’s Metropolitan Board of Directors held their annual meeting and employee and volunteer recognition luncheon today, Tuesday, June 21, 2011 at 12 p.m. at the Avalon Hotel. More than 140 gathered to hear the Association’s 2010 Community Impact and recognize 64 employees and volunteers for their service to the Association – one employee and one volunteer marking 30 years.

“The Y isn’t just a name on our building. We’re spirit, a movement and a cause. Members join us because they believe in us and the values we stand for: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility,” said Richard Merwin, Chief Volunteer Officer for the YMCA of Greater Erie. “We are a powerful association of men, women and children of all ages and from all walks of life joined together by a shared passion: to strengthen the foundations of community by nurturing the potential of kids and teens, improving our community’s health and fostering a sense of social responsibility.”

Merwin presented the Association’s 2010 Community Impact report stating, “the Y is deeply rooted in the community for 150 years. Our Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change.”

Associates from Malin Bergquist & Co. reported the Association’s 2010 audited operating revenue at \$16,360,405 and expenses at \$15,570,548.

Merwin, joined by YMCA of Greater Erie Chief Executive Officer Gerry Vandemerwe recognized the service of 64 employees and volunteers including that of Glenwood YMCA employee Ann Berndt and YMCA of Greater Erie volunteer Ginny McGarvey for their individual 30 years of service.

Highlights from the 2010 Community Impact Report:

### **Financial Assistance**

In 2010, thousands of children and adults engaged in Y membership programs like camp, afterschool, youth sports, teen clubs, early learning, family activities and wellness programs as a result of \$898,271 provided in financial assistance through the Y to those in need; this is up from \$728, 603 awarded in 2009 – a 23% increase.

**YMCA OF GREATER ERIE** [WWW.YMCAERIE.ORG](http://WWW.YMCAERIE.ORG)

Our Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.



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### **New Look, New Messaging**

For the first time in 43 years, the national YMCA unveiled a new brand strategy to increase the understanding of the impact of the YMCA in our community. Through our new brand strategy and framework, we'll extend our reach into communities to nurture the potential of kids and teens, improve the nation's health & well-being and provide opportunities to support neighbors.

### **Membership and Program Participation**

During 2010, over 30,000 youth, families, adults and seniors engaged in YMCA programs and membership. Membership exceeded 20,000 individuals and retention held at 62%, well within the standards of the national YMCA.

### **Senior Adult Programming**

Seniors at the Y receive the opportunity to stay active and socialize with friends, new and old. The SilverSneakers Fitness Program grew nearly 8 percent during 2010. The program provides a unique opportunity for seniors to focus on building muscle strength, balance, coordination and conditioning, and cardiovascular health.

### **Early Care & School-Age Enrichment/Camping**

Y Early Care & School-Age Enrichment provides the critical foundation for children to grow and develop in a safe and encouraging environment. Last year we served over 2650 in our 18 Early Care and School-Age Enrichment Centers and a variety of preschool classes and programs. Our centers at the Downtown and Eastside Family Y sought and earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), paving the way for the other centers. NAEYC accreditation is a widely recognized sign of high-quality early childhood education.

During the summer months, Y summer camps were filled with young people singing songs, meeting new friends, learning new skills and living the Y's four core values. In 2010, we provided 100 families with financial assistance and subsidies for children who attend our Day Camps. We served 650 throughout Erie County at YMCA Summer Day Camps.

### **Unique Partnership Blooms with Goodell Gardens & Homestead**

A unique partnership with Goodell Gardens & Homestead bloomed in 2010 for the County Y in Edinboro. Set among the beautiful flowers and expansive grounds, Y staff offered holistic programming such as yoga, meditation, pilates and music. The tranquility of the atmosphere enhanced the spiritual and physical benefits of these very popular programs. The partnership continues for the summer of 2011.

### **10-Year Anniversary Celebrated of YMCA Kids Clubs**

YMCA Kids Clubs serve youth residing in the neighborhoods served by the Erie Housing Authority. As many as 75 youth a day (more in the summer months) ages 6-18 years old spend up to 6 hours per day participating in activities and programs that enhance their overall well-being. Additionally, youth are served snacks and meals, have access to many collaborative community programs and are loved by the caring staff.

### **Play & Learn Program Ensures a Brighter Future for Youngsters**

A grant received from Boeing International seeded the Y's popular Play & Learn program. The program, for youth up to age 5 and their caregivers, is a free community program that provides a supportive atmosphere for interactive, imaginative play between the child and caregiver. The program builds on the child's natural desire to play and become more self-reliant. In 2010, 95 children and their caregivers participated in this free program at the Eastside Family Y and collaborative site at the Christian & Missionary Church Alliance in Union City.

### **Giving Back to our Neighbors**

We've been working alongside our community neighbors and Y members to support other non-profits with donations of time and treasure throughout 2010. With a renewed commitment to social responsibility, the Y partnered with more than 25 nonprofits in 2010. Some highlights include: back-to-school bookbag collection, Community Shelter Services, Toys for Tots, Second Harvest Food Bank, Junior League of Erie, Erie City Mission and the Upper Room.

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## **About the Y**

**The Y's Mission:** To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

**The Y's Cause:** At the Y, strengthening community is our cause. Every day, the Y works side by side with our neighbors to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

**The Y**, founded in 1860, is one of Erie's leading nonprofits (501 c-3), committed to strengthening our community in the areas of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility:

### **Youth Development: Nurturing the potential of every child and teen.**

The Y believes that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. That's why, through the Y, thousands of Erie's youth today are engaged in programs that encourage Y core-values – character, honesty, respect and responsibility. Unique community partnerships with the City of Erie and the Erie Housing Authority serve Erie's most at-risk, underserved kids and teens directly in their neighborhoods. In our membership and program centers, award-winning childcare, before & after school care, summer camp, youth sports, swimming, youth fitness, leadership, mentoring and volunteerism, are all Y programs that are helping Erie's kids and teens reach their full potential.

**Healthy Living: Improving health and well-being.**

Through advocacy and leadership, the Y is a leading voice on health and well-being. With a mission centered on balance, the Y brings families closer together, encourages good health and fosters connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests. As a result, thousands of Erie's youth, adults and families are receiving the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being for their spirit, mind and body.

**Social Responsibility: Giving back and providing support to our neighbors.**

Across Erie County, the Y helps people give back and assist our neighbors by offering them opportunities to volunteer, advocate and support programs that strengthen community. At the Y, we are volunteer-founded, volunteer-led organization. Volunteers are found at every level of the Y – in childcare, health & wellness, youth mentoring, board leadership and more. Through the Y's We Build People annual scholarship campaign, the Y provides financial assistance and income-based membership rates so that everyone can benefit from Y programs and membership. Additionally, the Y partners with other area non-profits enabling our members to support the community through donations and volunteerism.

**Involvement at the Y:** The Y strives to engage more people in the communities it serves whether it is as a member, volunteer, supporter or advocate. Each YMCA association is an independent, autonomous organization with its own governing board, professional staff and assets.

**The Y By the Numbers:**

The Y has 4 membership branches: the County Y located in Edinboro, the Downtown, Eastside and Glenwood Park Ys. Eighteen award-winning childcare centers provide care to children as young as six weeks. Unique community partnerships with the City of Erie and the Erie Housing Authority serve Erie's most at-risk, underserved kids and teens directly in their neighborhoods.

30,000 people of all ages, incomes, backgrounds and abilities are served by the Y and Y programs. Financial assistance is available for all Y memberships and programs.

*To learn more about the Y, [www.ymcaerie.org](http://www.ymcaerie.org).*