



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**For Immediate Release**

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**JCPENNEY SHOPPERS INVITED TO DONATE 'PENNIES FROM HEAVEN' FOR THE YMCA OF GREATER ERIE**  
*Fundraising Event Collects Change Benefitting Erie Youth in Afterschool Programs*

**Erie, PA** - From Nov. 30 through Dec. 12, shoppers at the jcpenny Millcreek Mall are invited to turn small change into "pennies from heaven" by rounding up their holiday purchases and donating the difference to the YMCA of Greater Erie. The YMCA of Greater Erie is one of 1,100 afterschool organizations from across the country matched with a local jcpenny store that will benefit from the entire proceeds raised during the pennies from heaven campaign.

"It takes the support of our entire community to make it possible for more kids to be involved in a positive learning environment after school," said Tammy Roche, vice president of financial development for the YMCA of Greater Erie. "As customers shop jcpenny this holiday season, we hope they will keep this mission in mind so that the social and academic learning opportunities we provide after school will continue to be available to Erie students."

National research shows that one out of four students in the U.S. is on their own between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. each day.\* The afterschool program offered at the YMCA of Greater Erie serves more than 600 students each year by involving them in programs that help kids develop social skills, provide opportunities to be physically active and achieve academic success in school.

"For more than a decade, jcpenny has been deeply committed to helping kids spread their wings by making it possible for more students to participate in life-enriching afterschool programs," said Ken Shannon, store manager for jcpenny. "When we leverage the power of a penny to create opportunities for learning, we can make a positive difference in the lives of our future leaders."

For more information related to the pennies from heaven initiative, visit [jcpennyafterschool.org](http://jcpennyafterschool.org).

## 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).

**About jcpenny's commitment to afterschool**

As the leading corporate advocate for the afterschool issue, jcpenny partners with leading afterschool organizations to make life-enriching afterschool programs accessible for working families. Through its legacy of supporting youth and charitable organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the Y, National 4-H, United Way and *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Robotics, jcpenny formalized its commitment to the afterschool cause by establishing the jcpenny afterschool fund, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Since its inception, more than \$100 million has been distributed to afterschool programs across every jcpenny community thereby making it possible for more kids to spread their wings. For more information, visit [www.jcp.com/pennies](http://www.jcp.com/pennies).

\* Data from Afterschool Alliance 2009 report *America After 3PM*.

