



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**NORTH SUBURBAN
YMCA**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

YMCA Receives \$150,000 Challenge Grant for Youth Fitness Center

Northbrook, Illinois: February 2013 – In an exciting example of community commitment, an anonymous local foundation has offered the North Suburban YMCA a two-part challenge grant worth \$150,000 to fund the Y's proposed **Youth and Family Wellness Center** – a unique facility designed specifically to attack the epidemic of youth obesity. The foundation has provide \$75,000 in seed funding and will match up to \$75,000 more if the Y can raise the additional \$75,000 within the next six months. The facility will be outfitted with unique equipment designed to motivate youth and their families with fun, engaging exercise. The Center's program umbrella, Fit Happens, will be tailored to activities that objectively measure progress, improve health and diet, and promote positive behavior changes.

The statistics on youth obesity are staggering: the Centers for Disease Control report that about 17% of children and adolescents are overweight – more than 12.5 million kids. These kids face the risk of diseases once only known in older populations, including type 2 diabetes, hypertension, obstructive sleep apnea, and cardiovascular disease. Additionally, many overweight kids suffer psychosocial consequences such as poor self-esteem, social isolation, and depression. With a generation of young people at risk for chronic, serious health issues, YMCAs nationwide are taking affirmative action to battle this growing epidemic.

The NSYMCA's proposed **Youth and Family Wellness Center** will be a permanent home for the Y's groundbreaking youth health programs, including Fit Happens and Family Fitness Fridays. Located in currently unfinished lower level space, the 800 square foot Center will contain an innovative TRX Suspension Training system that uses bodyweight exercise to develop strength, balance, flexibility and core stability simultaneously, providing an engaging workout for all ages and ability levels. Specialized lighting for yoga will additionally be installed, along with a floating wood floor and mirrors for studio use. The room will also be designed to serve as a small youth gym outfitted with low collapsible baskets for younger children, goals for salon soccer or handball, and mats for the walls when needed. When

classes are not in session, the TRX and other fitness equipment in the Center will be available on a scheduled basis for classes, group and personal training.

“I believe that helping kids and youth live healthier, well balanced lives is essential to our community, state, and country,” noted Casey Schmit, Youth and Adult Fitness Director at the NSYMCA. “Our new Youth and Family Fitness Center will have kid-friendly equipment like speed ladders, dot drills, jump ropes and TRXs. It will also include cardio equipment like ellipticals and bikes that are specific to the youth participants. It’s all about getting their heart rates elevated and educating kids about healthy living.”

This grant is another major milestone for the Y, located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook, following on the heels of the major renovations completed in September 2012 that have resulted in a huge surge in membership. “We’ve learned here at the Y that if we build it right, they will come,” commented CEO/Executive Director Howard Schultz. “This grant gives us an outstanding opportunity to address a serious public health need in a way that will benefit our entire community both now and for the future. The successful completion of this challenge will create a positive, exciting fitness environment that will improve the health of our youth for their entire lives.”

Donations must be received by July 31, 2013 to qualify for the grant’s matching program. To support the YMCA’s capital campaign, contact Tara Bilby, tbilby@nsymca.org.



Photo Caption: Jordan Brandwein, Y personal trainer, supports a child on a portable TRX system as his sibling does pull-ups in the background. A new Youth and Family Fitness Center planned for the Y will offer a complete studio with TRX installed to enhance programs to battle childhood obesity.

About the North Suburban YMCA

The YMCA is a not-for-profit entity and relies on donations to fund capital improvements and keep its programs available to all, including those facing financial hardship. All board members are community volunteers, who donate their time, talents and financial resources. Located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook, the YMCA has served area families in its twelve-city region for over 40 years. The Y is about youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, providing programs and services that meet the needs of our community and are accessible to all. For more information or to make a donation call Tara Bilby at 847-272-7250, tbilby@nsymca.org, or visit www.nsymca.org.

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