

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2007

**Celebrating a Century of Hope**

*YWCA St. Paul Marks its 100<sup>th</sup> Year and Asks, "What's Your YW Story?"*

Saint Paul, MN – The YWCA St. Paul has cause for celebration. 2007 marks their 100<sup>th</sup> year and Centennial Celebration. Founded in 1907 to serve the young women moving to St. Paul to pursue work in the factories and mills, the YWCA has been building hope and transforming lives for 100 years.

Today's YWCA St. Paul helps people transcend the differences of race, class, age and gender and to develop to their fullest potential. Each year, thousands of people from all walks of life come through the doors at YWCA St. Paul. Once inside, homeless families find a place to call home, children and youth develop their talents and people of all ages build skills that lead to brighter futures.

The YWCA St. Paul has been both a starting off place and a starting over place for many who call St. Paul home. Whether a successful professional who began her career while living in the YWCA residence for women, an adult who took their first swim in the YWCA pool or a young mother emerging from homelessness – there are many stories to honor and share.

As the YWCA St. Paul celebrates its centennial, it invites friends and neighbors to join the celebration and share their YWCA memories. "2007 is an exciting year for the YWCA St. Paul," said William L. Collins, Jr., Executive Director. "We look forward to reconnecting with old friends and celebrating our past as well as the next 100 years to come."

Community celebrations and events will include a 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party held on May 19, 2007; An evening celebration "Sharing Stories of Hope" on September 27, 2007 and a Community Cell Phone Drive in October 2007. A complete calendar of events is available online at <http://www.ywcaofstpaul.org/events.html>

The theme for the centennial year is "100 More Years of Hope." Kelly Flynn, Development Officer notes, "From the very beginning our story has been one of hope. Whether you first came through our doors hoping to find affordable housing, opportunities for your children, a job you love or a six minute mile, we've been honored to share your hopes and help you meet your goals. We look forward to learning more about your story and our own."

To share your YWCA St. Paul story, contact Kelly Flynn at (651) 222-3741 or email [stories@ywcaofstpaul.org](mailto:stories@ywcaofstpaul.org)

**Photos and press packet available upon request. For more information, contact Darcie Moore at (651) 265-0718.**

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**About the YWCA St. Paul**

YWCA St. Paul was founded by the women 13 years before they had the right to vote. By 1911, funds had been raised and a new building constructed. The first building located at 123 W. Fifth Street and provided lodging for permanent and temporary borders, a full service cafeteria, gymnasium, and educational offerings in life and vocational skills.

With each new decade, the YWCA St. Paul expanded its services to the people of St. Paul. Key achievements include: Hosting the first Festival of Nations; Fostering community including Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, Traveler's Aid and International Institute; Founding one of Minnesota's first emergency shelters for women and children; Founding the first Transitional Housing Program in the Twin Cities; Collaborating to establish Minnesota's first all-day Head Start Program for homeless children; Consistently achieving excellence in programming for youth and young adults; Delivering unique services in Ramsey County to help eliminate emergency shelter use and stabilize families; Earning designations as an Area Learning Center and Alternative Summer School Site for St. Paul Public Schools.

Through programs and supportive services in housing, health, education and employment, the YWCA St. Paul equips and empowers women, children and families to grow and thrive.

**About the Centennial Celebration**

The Centennial Celebration has been made possible in part through the generous contributions of our sponsors: **Gold Sponsor:** Travelers; **Silver Sponsor:** 3M; **Bronze Sponsors:** Anchor Bank, Bremer Bank, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, Ecolab, Larsen • King, LLP, US Bank, Wellington Management.