



We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges launches their *Strong Kids Campaign* with the aim of providing over \$1 million in financial assistance

Livingston, NJ, January 26, 2010 - The Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges launched their 2010 Annual *Strong Kids Campaign* with a special Kick-Off Celebration at the Hanover Manor. The YMCA's six week *Strong Kids Campaign* is designed to raise the necessary funds so the YMCA can fulfill its mission and once again provide over 1 million dollars in financial assistance as they did in 2009. This year the YMCA's *Strong Kids Campaign* will raise upwards of \$755,000, which will go directly to the children, families and individuals throughout the state of New Jersey who need it the most.

The Kick-Off Celebration was held in honor of the *Strong Kids Campaign* Storytellers, who volunteer as fund raisers during and after the Campaign and serve as true ambassadors of the YMCA's Mission. There were over 250 people in attendance and the evening was highlighted by moving stories from a select few of the YMCA's financial aid recipients and also a special gymnastics performance by the East Orange YMCA Girls Gymnastics Team. Bethany Joseph, Campaign Chair of the South Mountain YMCA served as the evenings MC, Bethany is also a current YMCA Storyteller and former financial aid recipient who continues to give back to the YMCA, "so they can give to the community."

Former Governor Richard J. Codey came to show his support for the YMCA and will serve as the 2010 West Essex YMCA *Strong Kids Campaign* Chair. He spoke about the vital role the YMCA plays in helping children and how critically important it is for young people to have mentors, teachers and most importantly a safe place to grow into the successful adults of tomorrow. Former Governor Codey thanked the YMCA for making a big difference in the lives of the children of New Jersey and helped to energize the Storytellers, Staff and Board Members for the upcoming campaign.

Richard K. Gorab, President and CEO of the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges, said, "The goal of our *Strong Kids Campaign* is to ensure that no one is ever turned away due to inability and so far this year we have received an overwhelming response from our Staff and Boards. The *Strong Kids Campaign* is a vital part of our Mission to enrich the people we serve through programs that build spirit, mind and body."

The *Strong Kids Campaign* supports a variety of programs at the Metropolitan YMCA of Oranges' five branches, which help to enrich the lives of the communities they serve. The vast majority of

recipients are families with children who require assistance to access much needed childcare, summer camps and before/after school care. In addition, the *Strong Kids Campaign* also supports programs which benefit families and their communities by providing an educational outlet and a safe haven for children, such as:

- Teen centers and collaborations with High Schools and Middle Schools that engage teens in positive activities.
- Sports and fitness programs which help combat childhood obesity and sedentary lifestyles, while promoting a healthy way of living.



(left to right) Ted Foug, Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges Strong Kids Campaign Chair, Former Governor Richard J. Codey, West Essex YMCA Strong Kids Campaign Chair, Richard K. Gorab, Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges President and CEO and Helen Flores, West Essex YMCA Executive Director

“There is any number of reasons why families may need help from time to time. A guardian may have been laid off, or the tragic loss of a close loved one may leave families finding it difficult to afford the important programs they need such as after school care,” said Ted Foug, Chair of this year’s *YMCA Strong Kids Campaign*. “Fortunately, contributions made to the *Strong Kids Campaign*, allow the YMCA to help these families in their time of need by helping them to gain access to much needed programs that allow parents to continue providing for their families.”

The Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that depends on the generosity of its supporters to continue providing quality programs for the community. Last year the YMCA distributed over \$1 million in scholarships, camperships and financial aid, and with the help of this year’s Campaign, the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges will continue to provide assistance to those who need it most.

The Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges is the local charity of choice. For more information about the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges or their *Strong Kids Campaign*, call 973-758-9622 or visit www.metroymcas.org.

The Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges is the largest YMCA in the state of New Jersey, serving over 146,000 members and program participants annually. Its mission is to enrich the lives of the children, families and communities it serves, through programs that build spirit, mind and body, welcoming all people, in an environment nurturing positive values. Its five branch facilities, located in East Orange, Livingston, Maplewood, Hardyston and Stillwater, provide a wide variety of services and activities:

- Quality all-day and after-school childcare, pre-school classes, recreational and enrichment programs e.g. swimming and other sports, arts, computer activities and day and sleep-away camps.
- Programs for adolescents and teens that include sports, parties and club activities.
- Programs for adults and seniors.

Press Only: Please note that upon request the included photos are available in a high quality print version (2.5+MBs). For more information about the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges or to speak with their President and CEO Richard K. Gorab, please contact Peter Louzek at (973) 410-0500 or p.louzek@bergerbrown.com.