YMCA of Greater Louisville Picked to Pilot Summer Program to Increase Reading Skills Among 1st- and 2nd-Graders

Louisville, KY (June 25, 2013) – This summer, the YMCA of Greater Louisville will offer a learning loss prevention program for children entering first and second grade who are most at risk of falling behind in their reading skills over the summer. The program is one of three pilot programs being tested by YMCA of the USA, the resource office for the nation’s Ys, as part of the nonprofit’s efforts to address gaps in academic achievement among the nation’s most disadvantaged youth. It is funded nationally by YUSA and the Annie E. Casey Foundation and locally by the Louisville Out-of-School Time Coordinating Council.

The Y’s summer learning loss prevention pilot program will be held for six weeks beginning June 24 at Wheatley Elementary, 1107 S. 17th St., and Wellington Elementary, 4800 Kaufman Lane. It will run Monday through Thursday and provide literacy instruction by certified teachers, as well as enrichment through art, music and physical activity. Each school will identify 32 students, 16 in each grade, to participate in the program.

Studies show that without access to summer learning activities such as camp, travel, and visits to libraries and museums, children from low-income environments can experience more significant learning loss than their more economically stable peers. Over time, these children continue to lose ground and by the fifth grade, many are years behind their middle- and high-income peers. The goal of the Y’s pilot program is to help children read at grade level by the third grade – a key milestone that is important to children’s academic performance.

“We know that the combination of extended learning and enrichment activities is essential to increasing children’s success in school, and we are dedicated to helping more kids achieve their potential,” said Steve Tarver, President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Louisville. “This program will help ensure these children have the opportunity to stay on track over the summer and read at or above grade level when the new school year begins.”

The YMCA of Greater Louisville is one of 43 Ys across the country offering the program this year. For more information, please contact the YMCA’s Marketing and Communications Director, Nina Walfoort, at 502-376-4988 or contact her at nwalfoort@ymcalouisville.org.

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About the Y

The Y is one of the nation’s leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,700 Ys engage 21 million men, women and children – regardless of age, income or background – to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation’s health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. Anchored in more than 10,000 communities, the Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change.