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YMCA of Greater St. Louis and YMCA of Southwest Illinois

Approve Combination

Newly Named "Gateway Region YMCA" will Lead to Improved, Expanded Services for Youth and Families in Bi-State Region

ST. LOUIS (Jan. 29, 2014) – The Boards of Directors of the YMCA of Greater St. Louis and the YMCA of Southwest Illinois announced today they have voted in favor of combining under one new Y association. The combination takes effect March 1, 2014, pending approval of the necessary regulatory bodies. The new association will be named the *Gateway Region YMCA* to best reflect the membership of the two associations and provide an accurate geographic reference to the communities served. The new Metro Board of Directors will consist of leadership and members from the two current boards.

"As two of the region's leading nonprofits, the YMCA of Southwest Illinois and the YMCA of Greater St. Louis are excited to combine the strengths of our organizations to better serve the communities where we operate throughout the bi-state region," said Al Kent, chairman of the board, YMCA of Greater St. Louis. "By taking this action, we have set forth on a course that positions the Y to serve more youth and families, and improve more lives at a time when the needs for our services have never been greater."

"Our two associations have long partnered on financial development activities and healthy living programs," said Bill Gavin, chairman of the board, YMCA of Southwest Illinois. "This action is the natural next step that will allow us to build on those successful efforts, maximize our resources, improve efficiencies, and develop and implement programming that more effectively supports our youth development, healthy living and social responsibility initiatives."

The associations have been engaged in a strategic alliance since July 2013. Through this agreement, a task force was formed to assess the idea of strategically combining the two Ys and provide a recommendation to both boards of directors.

"Both associations entered into this process driven by the goal of determining how the YMCA could best serve our communities," stated Gary Schlansker, incoming president and CEO of the Gateway Region YMCA. "This is an incredible opportunity to combine staff, volunteers, facilities and financial resources to elevate our impact in all of the communities we serve."

The Gateway Region Y will include 23 branches, with more than 200,000 members, serving nearly 730,000 youth and adults through hundreds of programs and services. Combined, the two associations provided more than \$5.3 million in direct and indirect financial assistance last year through the Y's scholarship program, which helps ensure no

one is turned away from using Y programs and services based on their inability to pay. The new association will cover St. Louis City and seven Missouri counties including St. Louis, St. Charles, Jefferson, Franklin, Washington, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, as well as St. Clair, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, Clinton and Marion counties in southwestern Illinois.

At this time, the existing membership types and pricing structures will remain the same for members in both associations while work will begin immediately on sharing best practices and enhancing the quality of programs offered to incorporate the strengths of both Ys. The combination will not impact branch employees and operations.

About the YMCA of Southwest Illinois

The YMCA of Southwest Illinois is a nonprofit organization with a mission focused on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Featuring 5 traditional Y branches, 200 community partnerships and over 70 program sites in southwestern Illinois with branches located in East Belleville, Downtown Belleville, Maryville, Columbia, O'Fallon and Red Bud. Our Y is a proud member of the United Way. For more information, please visit www.ymcaswil.org or call 618-233-9485.

About the YMCA of Greater St. Louis

The YMCA of Greater St. Louis is a nonprofit organization dedicated to youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Featuring 17 traditional Y branches and two Campus Y student leadership facilities on the Missouri side of the St. Louis Metro Area, our Y also includes YMCA Camp Lakewood and Trout Lodge in Potosi, Missouri. The Carondelet Park Rec Complex and O'Fallon Park Rec Complex are owned by the City of St. Louis and operated by the Y. Our Y is a proud member of the United Way. For more information, please visit www.ymcastlouis.org or call 314-436-1177.

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