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FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs launch Michigan Health Endowment Fund Grant Work.**

**Lansing, MI** – The State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs is please to announce the launch of their Statewide Healthy Out of School Time initiative and the Michigan Swims Program.

### **About the Y's Healthy Out of School Time Initiative**

With the support of the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, YMCAs across Michigan will immediately begin offering evidence based physical activity and healthy eating programs to over 60,000 Michigan's Children in nearly 200 program sites. During the summer months, before and after the school day local Ys will combat childhood obesity by offering opportunities for school aged children to eat healthy and be active. Ys will follow a program curriculum developed by the Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity and YMCA of the USA. It supports nutrition, physical activity, and parent connectedness, and aligns with Governor Snyder's Health and Wellness 4X4 initiative.

### **About the Michigan Swims Program**

In Michigan, drowning is the number two leading cause of accident death for children ages 14 and under. Nearly seven out of 10 African American and Hispanic/Latino children are unable to swim, twice that of white children. Since Michigan's 3,177 mile freshwater shoreline is the longest in the country, many of our state's most vulnerable children live near the water. Through partnerships with schools, municipal parks, and apartment complexes, Ys will provide over 30,000 Michigan children knowledge of water safety and emergency response, and increase

participants' practical swimming skills. Michigan children will be better equipped to appreciate and safely experience lifelong fitness benefits of aquatic activities.

"The State Alliance of YMCAs is grateful to the Michigan Health Endowment Fund for recognizing our local Ys are uniquely positioned to create opportunities for healthy living where Michigan lives, learns, works, and plays" says Alliance Executive Director Fran Talsma.

### **About the Health Endowment Fund**

The mission of the Michigan Health Endowment Fund is to improve the health of Michigan residents and reduce the cost of health care with special emphasis on the health and wellness of children and seniors. The Fund was created through the passage of Public Act 4 of 2013, which authorized certain changes to how Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) operates in the state. The law requires BCBSM to contribute up to \$1.56 billion over 18 years to the Michigan Health Endowment Fund.

### **About the State Alliance**

The State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs includes 27 independent Associations throughout the state with more than 60 locations. The YMCAs in Michigan have a service area that includes 8,287,365 Michigan residents representing 83.9% of the state's population. The Alliance is led by a volunteer Council made up of representatives of the 27 corporate YMCA CEOs in Michigan. Each YMCA represented is a member Association of the YMCA of the USA. 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 22 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 also to deliver lasting personal and social change.

For More Information please contact Fran Talsma Executive Director of the State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs at [ftalsma@Michiganymca.org](mailto:ftalsma@Michiganymca.org) or 734-430-9622 or visit our website MichiganYMCA.org