FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Eugene Family YMCA Celebrates 130 Years of Service in Lane County

Eugene, Oregon, April 18th, 2017 – In 1887, Grover Cleveland was President, the United States was in the middle of the Gilded Age, the phonograph was invented, Georgia O’Keeffe was born and the Eugene Family YMCA got its start.

Locally, ‘The Guard’ newspaper was just 20 years old and the University of Oregon’s first class had convened just 11 years prior. On April 22nd, 1887, a group of volunteers gathered on the campus of what was then known as the State University; that meeting was the catalyst for what has become one of Eugene’s longest lasting legacies: The Eugene Family YMCA.

“We began as a small gathering of volunteers chartered with welcoming new students to Eugene City,” said Julie Grossman, Executive Director of the Eugene Family YMCA. “Our mission began with a specific constituency and has evolved to embrace all of our citizens. The Y has a legacy of addressing the needs of our community and to that end, we have served the greater Eugene area for more than a century.”

During the past 130 years, the Y has supported families through wartime, provided young men and women with job training, assisted refugees in assimilating to a new country and earn citizenship, integrated curriculum-based youth programming to address Achievement Gap and STEM-related learning deficiencies and added chronic disease prevention to our mix of health programming.

“In Eugene and our surrounding communities the Y is more than a gym, it’s a place of community,” continued Grossman. “Today we work to ensure that everyone has the tools they need to reach their full potential — whether that’s through afterschool programs, swim lessons, diabetes and arthritis classes, cancer survivor programs and more — we’re here for you and your family.”
To celebrate 130 years of serving Eugene and Lane County, the Eugene Family YMCA is inviting our community to take part in the celebration. This Saturday, April 22nd, the Y will be hosting a Birthday Block Party! EVERYONE is INVITED to the FREE celebration! There will be live music, inflatable bounce houses, an obstacle course, kid crafts and more. Food will be available for purchase from local food trucks and of course there will be birthday cake!

“Congratulations to the Eugene Family YMCA on celebrating its 130th birthday and best wishes for many more years of success in Oregon nurturing the potential of our young people, supporting a healthy, able workforce, and engaging everybody in a true sense of community,” offered Oregon Senator Ron Wyden.

It's a big year for the Eugene Family YMCA - not only because we celebrate our 130th year - but because we’re excited to start building a foundation for our next 130 years. While still fundraising dependent, the Eugene Family YMCA is firmly on track for a groundbreaking of our new facility at 24th and Hilyard Streets later this year.

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**About the Eugene Family YMCA**

The Eugene Family YMCA is one of the region’s leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across Lane County, the Eugene Y engages nearly 16,000 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 just our building on Patterson Street, the YMCA has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change.