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**NORTH SUBURBAN
YMCA**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

YMCA Delivers Fun-Filled Evening at Pinstripes in Support of Strong Kids Fund

Northbrook, IL: March 2015 -- The North Suburban YMCA presented its Ninth Annual Ken & Alta Thiel Strong Kids Fundraiser on February 26, with a new venue and format that brought warmth and excitement to a cold night. Over 400 guests attended the event at Pinstripes in Northbrook, which included bowling, bocce, and carnival-style games in addition to an impressive array of live and silent auction opportunities. The fundraiser netted over \$200,000 to help the Y make programs and benefits available to everyone in the community, regardless of their ability to pay.

Organized by event chair Sarah Leverenz of Northbrook with YMCA Director of Development Barb Flanagan and a volunteer committee, the 2015 Strong Kids Fundraiser included a number of format changes to make the evening fun, exciting, and relaxed. The move to Pinstripes created opportunities for friendly competition on the bowling alleys and bocce courts. Guests enjoyed a massive spread of delicious food and cocktails while mingling with friends and browsing the auction items. New technology from AuctionsByCellular added convenience and efficiency to the auction process: guests were able to monitor and bid on their favorite items right from their smartphones via text message, and checkouts were completed swiftly with pre-registered credit card information. These innovations gave attendees more time to enjoy the festivities.

“Our Strong Kids event was a tremendous success again this year,” noted Howard Schultz, NSYMCA Executive Director/CEO. “With sponsors, the dinner grossed over \$261,000 and will net \$200,000 for the Strong Kids Fund. That brings us over the \$2 million mark in funds raised over the past nine years, which has enabled us to help over 13,000 children, adults and seniors gain access to Y programs, helping them to learn, grow and thrive.

The evening maintained the Y’s tradition of honoring community leaders with the Ken & Alta Thiel Award for Leadership and Social Responsibility. Dr. Paul Pryma, principal of Glenbrook North High School, received the 2015 award in recognition of his support of Y programs and his positive impact on all of Northbrook. In accepting the award, Dr. Pryma said, “I am honored to accept this award from

[NSYMCA Co-Founder] Alta Thiel. Ken and Alta build a wonderful foundation for Strong Kids. It is an honor to be here this evening, and an honor to represent Glenbrook North High School. Strong Kids need strong support, and I'm so grateful to you tonight for your generous support to help our kids in Northbrook and the surrounding areas be stronger people through their relationship with the YMCA."

Most importantly, the Strong Kids Dinner was about supporting programs that improve the lives of real people. Following a heartfelt speech from Strong Kids recipient Fernando Hood, a 12 year old Northbrook resident, Northbrook Bank & Trust presented the Y with a donation of \$10,000. As the bank's CEO, Doug Boersma, said during the presentation, "At Northbrook Bank we've been big supporters of the Y for 14 years, and the reason is simple: it's because of kids like Fernando. It's a great cause and a great community."



Photo Caption: Glenbrook North Principal Dr. Paul Pryma, NSYMCA Co-Founder Alta Thiel, and NSYMCA Executive Director/CEO Howard Schultz.



Photo 2 Caption: Fernando Hood, age 12, spoke eloquently about the importance of the North Suburban YMCA in his life.



Photo 3 Caption: Ron Bernardi (left) of Sunset Foods conducted a live auction, including personal training sessions with the YMCA's Carl Marella.

About the North Suburban YMCA

The YMCA is a not-for-profit entity and relies on donations to make services available for all families and individuals in its 15-city region. All board members are volunteers, who donate their time, talents and financial resources. Located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook, the YMCA has served the northern suburbs of Chicago for over 45 years. The Y is about youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, providing programs and services that address the needs of our diverse community and are accessible to all. For more information or to make a donation, contact Barb Flanagin at 847-272-7250 or bflanagin@nsymca.org, or visit www.nsymca.org.