



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

For Immediate Release
Thursday, December 6, 2012

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J.A. Wedum Foundation awards \$500,000 grant to Alexandria Area YMCA

Funding for expansion project will increase building by 8,000 square feet..

[ALEXANDRIA, MN] – The J.A. Wedum Foundation in Minneapolis announced that the Alexandria YMCA has been awarded a \$500,000 grant to assist with constructing an 8,000 square foot addition to the existing building. The addition will bring the total square footage of the YMCA building to 64,000 square feet. This new grant is the second one awarded to the YMCA by the J.A. Wedum Foundation. In 2008, the J.A. Wedum Foundation provided a \$20,000 grant towards the capital campaign to build a new YMCA in the community. Since then, the YMCA has experienced tremendous growth and currently has a need for additional space to accommodate its current membership.

The YMCA has been extremely successful in its first two and a half years of operation and will continue to meet the needs of its membership and community with additional space. At its peak, the YMCA serves over 5,800 members, 136 families in child care, and countless other program participants. In addition, last year, YMCA supports its members and program participants by awarding over \$178,000 in financial assistance.

“The J.A. Wedum Foundation has its roots in Alexandria and a long history of supporting local non-profit organizations in the community. The Foundation is extremely pleased to announce our support for the Alexandria YMCA expansion. The facility will provide many generations with a quality place to change and improve their lives,” said Jay Portz, President of the J.A. Wedum Foundation.

The J.A. Wedum Foundation was incorporated in 1959 by the Wedum Family of Alexandria Minnesota. J.A. Wedum owned and operated a number of hardware and lumber businesses throughout west central Minnesota. He was an entrepreneurial banker and business man who worked with rural farmers in Douglas, Grant and Pope counties. It wasn't until after J.A. Wedum passed away, that his assets were truly known. Throughout his life, he provided dozens of loans to rural farmers on a simple hand shake. These appreciative farmers diligently made payments on their loans long after J.A. Wedum's death. It was these payments that were used to start the J.A. Wedum Foundation.

John Wedum, J.A. Wedum's grandson, soon became the driving force behind the Foundation. John followed in his grandfather's footsteps and became a very successful business man and long time supporter of charitable causes. John married Mary Beth, and as a team they continued to drive the Foundation forward. It is from their hard work and dedication that the Foundation has continued to grow into what it is today.

In addition to the YMCA, the J.A. Wedum Foundation has provided grants to the community of Alexandria through the following organizations, Alexandria Uncompensated Care Plan, Theatre L'Homme Dieu, Alexandria Public School Foundation, Kensington Historical Society, Alexandria Technical College and Foundation and Knute Nelson.

The mission of the J.A. Wedum Foundation is to develop and utilize the resources of the Foundation to positively improve people's lives in the spirit of stewardship and generosity exemplified by John A. Wedum, the grandfather, and carried forward by John A. Wedum, the grandson.

Additional information about the J.A. Wedum Foundation can be found online at www.wedumfoundation.org.

"The timing of the receipt of this gift could not have been better," said YMCA Executive Director, Jeff Bartholomew, "having a dollar for dollar challenge match gift gives potential donors additional incentive to give, knowing their gift will be matched, in essence doubling the impact of the donor's gift. We are confident that this gift will provide the momentum we need to raise the remaining dollars and achieve our goal," said Bartholomew.

On Jan. 1, the YMCA will re-engage the "Continue the Dream" Capital Campaign to raise the remaining dollars to meet the \$2.5 million goal. The "Continue the Dream" Capital Campaign began in earnest June 2012, but paused in August due to the annual United Way campaign.

The Phase II priorities for expansion include the construction of a new multi-purpose room, dedicated to group exercise and youth program space; new child watch center to compliment the number of growing children and families; development of outdoor field space, to accommodate youth and adult programs on site, and renovation of the existing child watch center to a cycling studio. A portion of the \$2.5 million will also retire existing debt from the original capital campaign. Upon completion of the campaign in April, the YMCA will break ground, and complete construction by February 2013.

To date, the YMCA has raised over \$888,000, in addition to the J.A. Wedum Foundation gift, and is well on its way. The YMCA will utilize the \$500,000 matching gift from the J.A. Wedum Foundation to provide the impetus to raise the balance needed to reach the campaign goal. The crux of the YMCA campaign will be "500 for 1000," and will be recruiting 500 individuals/businesses to give \$1000.

"The contributions of this community are, and always have been, critical to our success. One person can make a difference and influence the outcome of our campaign," said Wagner. Capital Campaign Co-Chairs Jill Wagner and Jon Ballou said the real impact of this gift will be felt for many years to come, as the YMCA places added focus to youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

For more information on the YMCA Capital Campaign effort or to contribute, visit the YMCA website at www.alexandriaymca.com or call Jeff Bartholomew, Executive Director at 320-834-9622.

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The Y is one of the nation's leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,687 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.