



YMCA

We build strong kids,
strong families, strong communities.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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YMCA Celebrates National Military Family Month *Locals Benefit from YMCA Military Family Outreach Initiative*

OKLAHOMA CITY (Nov. 18, 2009) –The YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City salutes local military families in celebration of the first National Military Family Month during November, but the organization’s support doesn’t end there.

“We recognize the sacrifices that members of the military and their families make on a daily basis,” said Mike Grady, President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City. “We are proud to celebrate National Military Family Month and provide support to families of deployed military service members not just in November, but all year long.”

The YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City has provided 233 free Y memberships and respite childcare services to eligible military families and active duty personnel through the YMCA Military Outreach Initiative that began last year. The Armed Services YMCA (ASYMCA) and the Department of Defense teamed up with local Y’s to establish this initiative, offering military families who live far from an installation expanded access to child development, family strengthening and health and well-being programming.

“This initiative is a way for Ys across the country to engage families facing the hardship and uncertainty of military deployment,” Grady said. “We have a unique capacity to respond to the needs our local military population through supportive, community-based programs that foster a healthy spirit, mind and body.”

More than 22,000 family and individual Y memberships have been issued across the nation since the YMCA Military Outreach Initiative began in 2008. The program also served more than 36,000 military children in the last year.

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The Y has a proud history of supporting military personnel dating back as far as the Civil War. Military Family Month was originally established by ASYMCA and first recognized by former First Lady Nancy Reagan in 1993 as a way to pay tribute to military families for their dedication and service. President Obama recently proclaimed November as National Military Family Month, showing continued support of initiatives like the YMCA Military Outreach.

In addition to the Military Outreach Initiative, the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City also operates the Military Welcome Center at Will Rogers World Airport. The center offers a place where military personnel can rest and receive care during extended layovers in the airport while en route to or from one of Oklahoma's four military bases. More than 76,000 military personnel and their families have passed through the center since it opened in 2007.

For more information on the YMCA Military Outreach Initiative or Military Welcome Center, visit www.ymcaokc.org.

About the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City

The YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City is a charitable, not-for-profit organization that serves children, families and adults of all ages, regardless of gender, race, abilities, or income. Major program areas include aquatic and water safety, youth sports, before and afterschool childcare, camping, health and wellness, teen leadership and community development. The YMCA served nearly 130,000 people in the greater Oklahoma City area last year. For more information please call (405) 297-7777 or visit www.ymcaokc.org.

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