



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 11, 2016

Contact:
Krista Brunette
YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing
(517) 827-9690
kbrunette@ymcaoflansing.org

YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing Launches Healthy Living Mobile Kitchen

Bus turned mobile kitchen will help feed families in tri-county area

Lansing, MI – Nearly one in four Michigan children go to bed hungry every night. The YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing understands that hunger is a reality facing children and families in the tri-county area, that's why the YMCA has provided community feeding programs since 2011.

Today, the YMCA announced the launch of its newest program, the **Healthy Living Mobile Kitchen**, at a press conference at Baker Donora Center Park in Lansing. Funders, partners and supporters of the project came to hear how this year-round feeding and educational program will impact thousands of children and families in the tri-county area.

"The need is real. So many of our families struggle every day to put food on the table, and oftentimes, they don't have the extra money to feed their kids healthy lunches. The YMCA's mobile kitchen is just what our community needs. By giving kids a healthy lunch, they will learn better and they'll grow up healthier and more active. This one step can change a family and a community," said Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero.

The mobile kitchen, a 54 passenger, handicap accessible bus, donated by Kellie Dean, president of Dean Transportation, has been retrofit with a demonstration kitchen which will serve meals to children year-round in partnership with the Lansing School District's food vendor SodexoMAGIC and the Greater Lansing Food Bank.

"Besides delivering meals, the demonstration portion of the kitchen will provide valuable hands-on education by showing people how to prepare seasonal foods, read labels, how to use foods that are readily accessible and affordable and even how to set up gardens and grow food," said Kellie Dean, president of Dean Transportation.

The mobile kitchen will also distribute fresh foods and non-perishable items in neighborhoods throughout the tri-county area. Trained YMCA staff will oversee the Healthy Living Mobile Kitchen and its year-round programming.

Funding partners of the Healthy Living Mobile Kitchen include the Walmart Foundation; Dean Transportation; Lansing School District's food vendor, SodexoMAGIC; Maloney Carpet One Floor & Home; Driven Collision and Skyline Outdoor, who provided the wrapping for the bus.

(Continued on next page)

“At the heart of the YMCA’s mission is our dedication to supporting the community in three areas of focus; youth development, healthy living and social responsibility,” said Larry Leatherwood, board member at the YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing. “It’s wonderful to see the smiles on the kids’ faces as we pull into a neighborhood to hand out lunches. As we empower families with affordable ways to eat and live healthier, this may start a ripple effect of academic achievement, job attainment and the overall economic progress of the community”

The YMCA began a summer feeding program in 2011 for children in their camps. Then in 2013, the YMCA started to feed children during the school year at its afterschool program sites. In 2015, the Y served more than 30,000 meals and 30,000 snacks during the summer feeding program. In June of 2016, the Y has served more than 9,700 meals and 4,900 snacks.

About the YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing

The YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing has six operating units, including Mystic Lake Camp near Clare and branches downtown, on Lansing’s west side, in the Oak Park area to the south, in East Lansing and DeWitt. The YMCA employs nearly 500 individuals and serves nearly 16,000 members throughout the community. A volunteer board of directors provides leadership to the association, a member of the national organization – the YMCA of the USA.

The YMCA is one of the nation’s leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,700 YMCAs 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 YMCA has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. Visit ymcaoflansing.org for more information.

###