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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers of the Year Recognized

Volunteer-led YMCA of Columbia-Willamette Honors Eugene Wallace

Portland, Oregon—September 24, 2009—Volunteer-led since its inception in 1868, the YMCA of Columbia-Willamette is grateful to the 4,000 volunteers that contribute to our communities through their involvement in the YMCA.

Each year the YMCA recognizes Volunteers of the Year for their commitment to the mission. In 2009 this distinction goes to outstanding volunteers who contributed their time, talent and resources through their YMCA volunteer work. Each of these volunteers shares their unique skills and passions in a variety of capacities, including fundraising, policy development and coaching.

Eugene Wallace is one of the volunteers being recognized for his commitment to the YMCA of Columbia-Willamette. Wallace was honored when he was first approached to participate on the Board of Trustees, but because of his perception of the YMCA as, “only a health and sports facility” was not initially interested. He quickly recognized the YMCA was intent upon living out the Christian principles the organization was founded on in a real and practical way and immediately knew, “he was all in.” Wallace currently serves on the Board of Trustees and has done so for the last four years. He is a strong financial supporter of the Association and a key advocate for the YMCA. Since 2007 he has chaired the Christian Principles Committee. Under Wallace’s direction an effective community-based, Christian principles leadership team was built to create relationships with the local faith community. On November 12th the YMCA of Columbia-Willamette hosts the 4th Annual **Christian Principles in Business and Life Dinner**, which reaches out to the Christian business community.

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Wallace connects with the Christian heritage of the YMCA and is motivated by the emphasis on people taking personal responsibility. According to Wallace, “The YMCA is a tremendous resource in the Columbia-Willamette regional community.” Because the YMCA has an impact on kids and families Wallace is able to clearly see how his volunteer leadership has a positive impact as well. “The YMCA was founded on the development of the entire person and actively honors that holistic approach today.”

Wallace is also inspired by the Ys expanded reach in this economy and is impressed that financial assistance has risen to \$2.9 million, enabling more than 10,000 people annually to participate in healthful activities at the YMCA. “Families are facing barriers to access, but the Y is in the community breaking down those barriers. I see the YMCA as a truly forward thinking charitable nonprofit. I’m also extremely impressed by the superior strength of President and CEO Bob Hall's leadership and the high quality of the Board of Trustees.”

According to Bob Hall, “Since our Association opened its doors in this community volunteers have made the most important decisions for our YMCA. We are thankful to have Eugene’s leadership to help guide our YMCA Association.”

Eugene Wallace

Wallace is the president of Excell Oregon, which provides a process and creates an environment for presidents and CEOs to address their most important concerns.

YMCA of Columbia-Willamette

The YMCA of Columbia-Willamette builds strong kids, strong families and strong communities. Since 1868 the local YMCA has offered people of all ages, faiths, backgrounds, abilities and income levels the ability to lead healthier lives and now reaches 86,000 people annually throughout the Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington five-county regional area. The mission of the YMCA propels the Y to reach out in our local communities to help build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

For more information, please contact Tammy Spencer, Senior Director of Communications and Marketing at 503.382.4394 or tspencer@ymca-portland.org or visit <http://www.ymca-portland.org/home.html>.

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