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FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 6, 2024

## ***Otto Bremer Trust Invests in Waushara County-Launching YMCA Capital Campaign***

Waushara community members, donors and the Stevens Point YMCA are working together towards the development of a new YMCA in Waushara County. This initiative marks a significant step towards meeting the diverse needs of rural areas and fostering healthier and more connected communities. The new YMCA aims to be a lot of things to a lot of people--desperately needed childcare, youth learning and activities, healthy living and social connectedness for all ages.

With a generous matching grant of \$300,000, the Otto Bremer Trust recognizes the impact this initiative can make on the region.

“The Stevens Point Area YMCA and its partners have put careful thought and planning into the new YMCA of Waushara County,” said Caroline S. Johnson, co-CEO and trustee, Otto Bremer Trust. “The facility will become an anchor for the community, driving economic and social progress through its varied programs.”

To fully realize the Otto Bremer Trust gift, the YMCA needs to raise an additional \$300,000 in matching community support.

Seed money provided by a local family will be put towards the project. Lanie DeMars says, “Our family is proud to support this Waushara County YMCA. Kyle and I have been members in various communities and have seen the incredible impact the Y can have on kids, families and seniors. Our own kids have played youth sports, taken dance, attended early childcare programs, and we’ve had hours of fun shooting hoops or playing at gymnastics open gyms. This new facility in rural Wisconsin is a once in a lifetime opportunity for us to give something to this community that we love, and to make a difference to people in our area.”

With the initial gift and that from others, the project has already secured nearly \$5.6 million on a \$10 million goal, including a \$500,000 no tax increase investment from the City of Wautoma. The steering committee is also working on new market tax credits that could help toward the project with over \$2 million. The public capital campaign hopes to raise the additional \$1.5 million necessary to bring this vision to Waushara County.

The proposed YMCA in Waushara County aims to serve as a hub for youth development, providing a safe and supportive environment where young people can learn, grow, and thrive. The Waushara County YMCA will open 40-50 childcare slots, making it easier for families to be employed and easier for local businesses to recruit employees. With a range of programs designed to nurture character development,

leadership skills, and a sense of community, the YMCA will be a place where children and teens can unlock their full potential.

In addition to youth development, the facility will focus on promoting healthy living among residents of all ages. State-of-the-art fitness equipment, group exercise classes, and wellness programs will be tailored to cater to individuals with varying fitness levels and preferences. The YMCA will strive to make health and wellness accessible to everyone in Waushara County, fostering a community-wide commitment to healthier lifestyles.

Furthermore, the Waushara County YMCA will uphold the principle of social responsibility, working towards making a positive impact on the community at large. Collaborative efforts with local organizations, outreach programs, and initiatives aimed at addressing pressing community needs will be integral to the YMCA's mission. The goal is to create a sense of unity and shared responsibility that transcends individual interests.

In partnership with the Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin, the YMCA and community leaders launched a community needs assessment early in 2023. The results of that assessment helped to outline and direct future efforts of impact. "The community needs assessment was critical to aligning the most pressing needs of Waushara County and the ability of the YMCA to serve." Said Ryan Zietlow, President and CEO, Stevens Point Area YMCA. "We heard from the community the need for support and opportunity of our youth, adults and seniors. Through our work as a YMCA, we look forward to expanding life-changing services to Waushara County."

"We are thrilled about the potential of bringing a YMCA to Waushara County. This facility will not only provide a space for youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility but will also serve as a community hub where individuals of all ages can come together to strengthen bonds and build a healthier, more vibrant Waushara County," said Zietlow.

The YMCA and steering committee have begun working with Waushara County to explore the revitalization of the former courthouse location in the heart of Wautoma. This investment in the community will bring both jobs and economic development to the county seat. More details on this effort will be shared when available.

To learn more as well as join in and make a tax-deductible contribution in making this community asset a reality visit the website at <http://spymca.org/wausharacountyymca>.

The Stevens Point Area YMCA is in the early stages of planning and the YMCA is also actively seeking community input and support. Please contact Ryan Zietlow, President and CEO Stevens Point Area YMCA to offer input or support toward this vision.

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### ***About the Stevens Point Area YMCA***

The Y is one of the nation's leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Currently serving Portage County (for more than 55 years). The Stevens Point Area YMCA has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. [www.spymca.org](http://www.spymca.org)