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**YMCA OF METROPOLITAN MILWAUKEE CHOSEN TO TAKE PART IN  
POTAWATOMI BINGO CASINO'S 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL *MIRACLE ON CANAL STREET***

(MILWAUKEE) The YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee has been chosen as one of 17 local children's charities to participate in Potawatomi Bingo Casino's 15<sup>th</sup> annual *Miracle on Canal Street* program.

"Our goal is to maintain and increase the educational opportunities for youth through programs that will strengthen their families and communities," said Bob Yamachika, President and CEO of the YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee. "The support from *Miracle on Canal Street* will allow us to expand these programs and ensure that even more people have an opportunity to participate in the enriching programs offered by the YMCA."

The YMCA mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. The YMCA is a not-for-profit family organization that serves more than 160,000 individuals each year at 11 membership branches, three full-day child care centers, a K4-8 charter school, two resident camps and dozens of after-school sites. Each location has programs and services uniquely tailored to the needs of the community.

YMCA educational programs produce inspiring results. The Sponsor-A-Scholar mentoring program links academically promising, motivated students from low-income families with long-term mentors and financial sponsors. The 2007-2008 class graduated 47 students, all of whom are now enrolled in college. Since the program began in 1996, 99% of the students have graduated from high school, and 97% have been accepted to and enrolled in a college or university.

Additionally, the One on One program serves 250 middle school students annually at 10 sites throughout the Milwaukee metropolitan area. For students in Milwaukee Public Schools, an emphasis is placed on improving reading and literacy skills through participation in Help One Student To Succeed (HOSTS), a nationally recognized literacy curriculum. Each student is matched with a mentor from the business or education community. During the last school year, 100% of those students participating in HOSTS achieved some measure of academic success – improved grades, accomplishment of one or more literacy skills, or perfect attendance at HOSTS sessions.

Students at the YMCA's Young Leaders Academy Charter School continue to perform well on the Wisconsin Knowledge Concepts Examination tests. The most recent scores (from 2007) indicate 73.5% of the students tested were proficient or advanced in Reading, and 53.4% were proficient or advanced in Math. Both of those scores are significantly higher than their African American peers across the state (56.5% in Reading, 39.7% in Math).

The YMCA is an organization for all individuals. No one is turned away due to an inability to pay, thanks to our Strong Kids Scholarships. More than 70,000 members and community participants have benefitted from these scholarships.

Celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> year, *Miracle on Canal Street* has raised more than \$7 million dollars for children's charities in Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, Racine and Waukesha counties. *Miracle on Canal Street* began in 1994 as a way to carry on the Potawatomi tradition of nurturing younger generations so they grow to lead healthy, productive lives.

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Money for the program is raised through special *Miracle* bingo games, the Casino's annual vendor golf outing/auction and other initiatives. Potawatomi Bingo Casino keeps each year's *Miracle* total a secret until the program concludes with its awards event in the Nest of Life Bingo Hall. This year's *Miracle on Canal Street* Awards Program is scheduled for Friday, December 19, 2008.

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***The YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee builds strong kids, strong families, and strong communities. Since 1858, Milwaukee YMCAs have helped kids and families live healthy lives in spirit, mind and body. Supported in part through contributions to the Strong Kids Campaign, the YMCA provides membership assistance and scholarships to programs like summer camp, child care, and teen activities, so that no one is turned away due to an inability to pay.***