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MEDIA RELEASE

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YES Invest in Youth Breakfast Huge Success

Husky Basketball Coach Lorenzo Romar helps attract 800 guests and raise \$455K

BELLEVUE, Wash. (April 27, 2011)—With funds still coming in, the 2011 Youth Eastside Services *Invest in Youth Breakfast* raised \$455,000, more than ever before. Held April 26 at the Hyatt Regency in Bellevue, the event attracted approximately 800 guests who were captivated by encouraging stories of triumph.

The breakfast featured two YES clients sharing their very personal stories resulting in a standing ovation from the audience. UW Men's Head Basketball Coach, Lorenzo Romar also spoke of his experiences growing up and his philosophy about coaching.

All money raised benefits the YES Lifeline Fund, which supports uncompensated care as well as underfunded prevention programs. YES saw an unprecedented 27.5% increase in the cost of uncompensated care last year. In addition, key prevention programs lost funding due to government budget cuts.

"The breakfast allows every guest to see how important their individual support is to the Eastside community and the hope, healing and courage YES is able to bring to the lives of young people and their families through the support of generous donors," said YES Executive Director Patty Skelton-McGougan.

Romar shared his story of growing up in Compton, Calif. and how he experienced first-hand the threat of gang violence. And he spoke of his love and admiration for a father, and the difficulties of his dad's struggle with alcoholism. As a kid, Romar used basketball as an escape from the chaos that surrounded him.

He also touched on his philosophy on the importance of guiding his players to be good people as well as great players. "The easy thing is to kick them off the team when they fall off track," he explained. But Romar, like the counselors at YES, believes in helping people overcome their mistakes and learn to make better choices in the future.

Corrine, a young woman who came to YES as a young teen shared the despair she felt and the difference YES made in her life. "Through outside support, a lot of hard work on my part, and the consistent guidance and love of my YES counselor, I was able to get my life back in order," she said as she mesmerized the audience with a story of her battle with depression and addiction.

Shari, a mom of three who was fleeing domestic violence, shared the importance of the Lifeline Fund that enabled therapy for her and her children. She outlined a year that included a suicide attempt by her son, a severe beating from her ex-husband and her eventual breakdown. "YES continued to stand beside me and my three sons to help us become survivors with a bright future."

Donations are still being accepted at www.YouthEastsideServices.org and gifts of \$500 and over made before May 15 will be matched dollar-for-dollar by other generous donors.

YES is a nonprofit organization and a leading provider of youth counseling and substance abuse services in the region. Since 1968, YES has been a lifeline for kids and families, offering treatment, education and prevention services to help youth become healthy, confident and self-reliant and families to become strong, supportive and loving. While YES accepts Medicaid, insurance and offers a sliding scale, no one is turned away for inability to pay.

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Photos attached: UW Head Basketball Coach Lorenzo Romar, Client Speaker Corinne and Romar with Client Speaker Shari.
Photos courtesy of Baker Rawlings, Depth of Field Photography

About Youth Eastside Services: *YES is a nonprofit organization and a leading provider of youth counseling and substance abuse services in the region. Since 1968, YES has been a lifeline for kids and families, offering treatment, education and prevention services to help youth become healthy, confident and self-reliant and families to become strong, supportive and loving. While YES accepts Medicaid, insurance and offers a sliding scale, no one is turned away for inability to pay. For more information, visit www.YouthEastsideServices.org.*