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MEDIA RELEASE

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YES Celebrates 43 Years

Youth, Volunteers and Valve Software Honored at Annual Meeting

BELLEVUE, Wash. (May 18, 2011)—Youth Eastside Services (YES) Board of Trustees held its annual meeting this week, recognizing the milestones and challenges of the past year as well as some special people. During the event, which marks the 43rd anniversary of the organization, staff, clients, volunteers and a local company were all honored for their contributions.

Valve Software

Based in Bellevue, Valve is a highly respected entertainment software and technology company. They have been supporters of YES for four years and employees donated almost \$14,000 in their last holiday giving drive. In addition two Valve employees serve as mentors for YES youth. "We are honored to work with such a community-conscious organization and we look forward to a long partnership," said YES Executive Director Patti Skelton-McGougan.

Community Volunteers Dona Golden & Linda Reichenbach

Last month, the annual Invest in Youth breakfast raised an unprecedented \$455,000 for uncompensated care and underfunded programs at YES. Dona Golden and Linda Reichenbach, were recognized for their long-term commitment to YES and their help in planning the breakfast. "For 10 years, these ladies have worked to support the mission of YES and the kids & families we serve. They have each made significant contributions not only in fundraising, but in being advocates for the work YES does," said Skelton-McGougan.

Youth

Each year, YES recognizes youth who have made significant progress in their treatment goals. This year, five youth received awards, including Joseph, 14, who has a father in jail and lost his mother to a drug overdose and has had to cope with abuse. He is now doing well, processing his traumatic past and in the process being adopted. Efrain, 15, was recognized for overcoming a serious drug addiction and is now clean and sober and on his way to being a star soccer player. Others were recognized for their accomplishments and leadership skills despite challenging circumstances.

The Challenges and Accomplishments

During the meeting of more than 100, which is also an open house for the community, Skelton-McGougan acknowledged the hard work of the board and staff who have managed to balance the budget and maintain service levels despite funding cuts and challenging economic times. Milestones of service were recognized for five staff, ranging from 5-15 years, Stan Mandell a volunteer psychologist for 25 years of service, and Board Member Rich O. Wagner who has served for 15 years. "We remain committed to ensuring no one is turned away for inability to pay and we've been able to keep that promise thanks to dedicated staff and generous support from the community," she said.

Some of the trends noted have been an increase in severity of problems and in marijuana use among teens. "These are challenging times for families and the additional stress contributes to more family violence, substance abuse, depression, anxiety and other emotional stresses. And fewer can afford to pay for the treatment they need," noted Skelton-McGougan.

Christ Katzmar Holmes, President of the Board of Trustees noted what YES is doing to remain stable and financially viable during this time. The Board developed a detailed strategic plan calling for, among other things more aggressive fund development and community outreach including the addition of a new parent education program.

About YES

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

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Photos Attached:



Psychologists and 25-year volunteer Stan Mandell (L) accepts a service award from Counselor Evan Kimble (R) while YES Executive Director Patti Skelton-McGougan looks on.



YES Executive Director Patti Skelton McGougan congratulation Youth Achievement Award Recipient Joseph for overcoming challenges including abuse, the loss of his mother to a drug overdose and a father in prison. Joseph has made great progress in therapy and is in the process of being adopted by his foster family.



YES Executive Director Patti Skelton-McGougan thanks Dona Golden (L) and Linda Reichenbach (R) for 10 years of service on the Invest in Youth Fundraising Breakfast Planning Committee.