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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 18, 2019

Ankeny Family YMCA facility to close March 1

Des Moines, Iowa – The Board of Directors of the YMCA of Greater Des Moines has voted to close the Ankeny Family YMCA facility effective March 1.

The closure comes in the wake of the decision last month by the Ankeny Community School District to terminate the shared use agreement that provides for the operation of the Ankeny YMCA at Northview Middle School. The impending loss of its facility is the latest in a series of events that have made it increasingly difficult for the Ankeny Family YMCA to attract and retain members and meet its financial obligations, said Leisha Barcus, president and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Des Moines.

“This was a very difficult decision for everyone,” Barcus said. “The Ankeny Family YMCA has served the community at its current location for 30 years. It has meant a lot to the community, and the community has meant a lot to the Y. However, over the past several years, declining membership and revenue have created a financial situation that is no longer sustainable.”

Barcus noted that the Ankeny flood of 2018 – which heavily damaged the Y facility and forced it to close for several weeks – was a major setback for a branch that was already struggling financially. When the Y reopened in August, members returned to a facility still in need of substantial repairs.

“Although our staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to provide the best possible member experience, membership and program participation have continued to erode,” Barcus said. “With only a limited time remaining in our shared use agreement with the school district, we determined the most responsible course of action is to vacate a facility that is no longer available to us and no longer working for us.”

Barcus said there are no immediate plans to build a new YMCA facility in Ankeny. "Financially, building and operating a fitness center in Ankeny is not a viable option at this time," she said. "But even though our current facility is closing, the Y will remain active in Ankeny and will continue offering programs and services to meet community needs."

She said the YMCA of Greater Des Moines is retaining the charter for the Ankeny service area and is in the process of meeting with community and business leaders to discuss the future of the Ankeny YMCA and how the Y can best serve the needs of residents and the community. Plans for 2019 call for the Y to offer summer day camp and maintain a practice site for the DSMY Marlins youth swim team.

"We're exploring additional ways to continue meeting the needs of the community in the Y's core focus areas of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility," Barcus said. "The YMCA is much more than a building. Our cause of strengthening community and providing opportunity for all will go forward in Ankeny."

Ankeny YMCA members have been notified of the decision via email and the organization's website, and will soon receive a letter outlining details of the closure and their options for continuing their membership at other branches. The branch currently has about 1,100 membership units.

Human Resource staff members from the YMCA of Greater Des Moines are meeting with staff to assist them through the transition and provide information about employment opportunities available at the Y. Two full-time and 85 part-time employees will be impacted by the closure.

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About the YMCA of Greater Des Moines

The YMCA of Greater Des Moines is a powerful association of men, women and children of all ages and from all walks of life united by a shared passion: to strengthen the foundations of community. We serve more 100,000 citizens from communities throughout central Iowa and operate eight full-facility YMCAs, the YMCA Supportive Housing Campus in downtown Des Moines and Y Camp resident camp in Boone. For more than 150 years, the Y has remained dedicated to its mission of putting Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Find out more at www.dmyymca.org.