



YWCA
CANADA

A TURNING POINT
FOR WOMEN
UN POINT TOURNANT
POUR LES FEMMES

For immediate release

**NATIONAL MEETING OF CANADA'S LARGEST WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION TO
FOCUS ON LEADING THE WAY TO SAFER COMMUNITIES FOR WOMEN**

Yellowknife, NWT, June 2, 2011 – Leadership and women's safety will be the focal point of YWCA Canada's 119th Annual Membership Meeting, taking place in Yellowknife, NT June 3-4. Attended by leaders from the YWCA movement globally, across Canada and the United States, the meeting is the most important gathering of the year for the YWCA Canada, the country's oldest and largest multi-service women's organization.

The theme of this year's meeting is, *YWCA: Leading the Way to Safer Communities*, and will focus on issues of community safety and outreach; sheltering women in diverse and challenging environments; empowering women's safety; and leadership and women's agency. It will feature speakers from the North, across the country and across the globe.

"The meeting will be a celebration and investigation of women's leadership, particularly in the North, where it is well recognized that conditions for women are fraught with challenges as they are among the fastest growing group at risk of homelessness and isolation," says YWCA Canada CEO, Paulette Senior. "We are interested in best practices in providing services and the ways in which we can work together to create change."

YWCA Canada will host Judie Bopp, Ph.D., co-founder and director of the Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning as keynote speaker. Ms. Bopp will speak about her research on women in the North and building northern service models to address poverty, violence and homelessness. She is author of the landmark report called *Just Blink and It Can Happen* on women's homelessness across the north.

"Our theme acknowledges our new focus area of leadership as part of our strategic directions," says YWCA President Lynne Kent. "We are asking some important questions. How can we be leaders in building safer communities, what does that leadership look like, and how can we broaden our perspectives to be as diverse as possible in doing our outreach?"

This year's meeting will be particularly meaningful as the membership will vote in the 34th YWCA Member Association, YWCA Aggvik Nunavut. Aggvik operates both the 21-bed Qimaavik shelter for women fleeing violence, and the 12-bed Sivummut House for homeless women and children.

YWCA Canada works to address issues of violence against women, women's economic security, child care and women's leadership, and together with its Member Associations provides service to one million women, girls and their families each year.

All media are invited to attend the following presentations:

- Judie Bopp, Ph.D., co-founder and director of the Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning, Keynote Address, 9:30 am, Friday June 3rd
- Induction of YWCA Agvvik Nunavut, 10:15 am, Friday June 3rd

Interviews with Ms. Bopp, Paulette Senior and other YWCA spokespersons including those from our various Member Associations will take place immediately following the presentations.

The address will take place at the Explorer Hotel, Katimavik Room, Yellowknife, NT.

Media are also invited to attend the welcome and official opening of the 119th YWCA Annual Membership Meeting hosted by YWCA Yellowknife and YWCA Canada at 9:00 am MDT.

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For more information and/or to arrange interviews please contact:

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About YWCA Canada:

YWCA Canada is the country's largest women's multi-service organization. With 34 Member Associations operating in more than 400 districts and communities across the country, our Turning Point Programs for Women™ - which address personal safety, economic security and well-being - reach 1 million women, girls and their families. YWCA is the largest national provider of shelter to women, serving 25,000 women, children and teen girls including 6,000 fleeing woman abuse each year. We are the largest provider of literacy, life skills, employment and counselling programs in the country, and the second largest provider of childcare services. YWCA Canada is a member association of the World YWCA which unites 25 million women and girls worldwide and spans 125 countries. For more information about YWCA Canada and our Member Associations, visit www.ywcacanada.ca. For more information visit www.ywcacanada.ca or find us on Twitter @YWCA_Canada or Facebook at www.facebook.com/ywcacanada.