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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Gaston County Family YMCA Launches Stowe Family YMCA Renovation and Expansion Campaign

With more than 100 supporters cheering on this effort, the Stowe Family YMCA launched the public phase of its \$13.5 million capital campaign to expand and renovate its eastern Gaston County campus in the Gateway District, just off Exit 27 of I-85. The gala event was held on Tuesday, October 3 at the Grand Hall in Mount Holly, North Carolina

"Eastern Gaston County is experiencing explosive growth and we are excited to expand and modernize our YMCA facility to meet the needs of our growing population for the next 20 years and beyond," says Sharon Padgett, CEO of the Gaston County Family YMCA. "Once expanded, the Stowe Family Y will be able to offer more than 50 programs to meet the needs of more than 10,000 eastern Gaston County residents", she added.

One of the top project priorities is adding an outdoor waterpark, featuring a six lane 25 meter pool, splash pad, and waterslide. Since neither Belmont nor Mount Holly offers an outdoor pool experience, this is a top priority based on our surveys of the community. In response to the pandemic, we're also dramatically increasing our emphasis on outdoor recreation and exercise options, says Padgett. In addition to the outdoor aquatic park, the Y project will add outdoor pickleball and basketball courts, new athletic fields, and outdoor exercise areas. Plans also envision linking up with the Carolina Thread Trail, which ultimately will span from Spencer Mountain to Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden.

Our members also expressed a strong desire for expanded exercise and fitness space. "This project will give it to them, along with newly renovated locker rooms, sauna, and steam rooms", says Mary Moffitt, Executive Director of the Stowe Family YMCA.

Youth obesity has reached epidemic proportions, with over 20% of our youth now considered obese according to the Surgeon General. "Creating more than 8,000 square feet of new space in a dedicated Youth Wing to offer exercise and programming options to address this disturbing trend", says Mick McMahan, CEO of Gaston Capital Partners, and Co-Chairman of the Capital Campaign. The new facility will also feature a chapel sponsored by The Pointe Church for counseling, meditation, prayer, and small group studies to help meet members' spiritual and emotional needs, in addition to their physical fitness.

The YMCA is an invaluable community asset and the new facility will offer a warm, welcoming and inviting living room space to encourage increased social interaction and help combat the epidemic of isolation and loneliness that developed during the pandemic.

The project has been in the works since 2019, but was paused during the pandemic, and these plans have been vetted by more than 1,000 members of the Y and local community. "We're ready to move forward," says Campaign Co-Chairman, John McGill. "Having raised more than \$9 million of our goal, we plan to complete fundraising later this year and begin construction in 2024."

For more information on the campaign, Building a Legacy of Impact, or to schedule a tour of the Stowe Family YMCA

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