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**YMCA OF GREATER SYRACUSE ANNOUNCES A GRANT FROM THE
SAINT AGATHA FOUNDATION FOR A BREAST CANCER SUPPORT PROGRAM
AT THE DOWNTOWN YMCA**

***A grant in honor of the late Laurie Mezzalingua allows the Downtown YMCA
to offer programs to address the physical activity and well-being needs
of those facing breast cancer***

August 24, 2010 – The YMCA of Greater Syracuse proudly announces receipt of a generous grant from the Saint Agatha Foundation in honor of Laurie Mezzalingua. The funds will allow the Downtown YMCA to offer physical activity and well-being programs to breast cancer survivors – defined as anyone living with breast cancer – with a particular focus on low-income women. This program will help breast cancer survivors maintain health and well-being through the first year of their cancer journey. The program will include a YMCA membership, peer support, survivor mentors, cancer survivor health and wellness programs, referrals, advocacy, and practical assistance to help survivors improve their quality of life.

Laurie Mezzalingua was an accomplished young woman, a skilled professional, and a passionate community volunteer. Laurie was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1997 at the age of 29. Despite a discouraging prognosis, Laurie demonstrated great courage and drive. She refocused her career to fight breast cancer and became a passionate advocate of patient support. The Saint Agatha Foundation benefits breast cancer patients “who cannot afford their illness,” as Laurie said. Laurie passed away on July 4, 2009, leaving the Saint Agatha Foundation as her legacy. She will continue to impact lives for decades to come.

The YMCA of Greater Syracuse is a 152 year-old not-for-profit service organization putting Christian principles into action through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. In Onondaga County, the YMCA is the largest provider of school age child care and youth swimming lessons and is the area’s largest employer of teens. The YMCA is committed to building strong kids, strong families and strong communities and currently has more than 30,000 members in the Greater Syracuse area.

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