



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **YWCA and MassVOTE Join Forces to Register Voters**

Lawrence—The YWCA of Greater Lawrence launched a voter registration campaign to run from August 1 to October 19. In conjunction with MassVote, a statewide organization devoted to educating voters and encouraging participation in the political process, the YWCA's launched its campaign at five of its sites on the North Shore and in the Merrimack Valley.

“The YWCA played a role in the women’s suffrage movement nearly 100 years ago when the 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment was passed. Encouraging voters to exercise that hard-won vote is part of our mission,” said Mary O’Brien, Executive Director of the YWCA of Greater Lawrence. “The YWCA has been active in winning and maintaining voters’ rights for decades,” she added.

O’Brien added, “In Lawrence, known as the ‘immigrant city,’ we serve many new U.S. citizens. It is a privilege to think the YWCA can play a small part in introducing some of them to the election process,” she added.

Voter registration cards are available in Spanish and English at these YWCA locations: the main YWCA building at 38 Lawrence Street in Lawrence; the YWCA Fina House on Haverhill Street in Lawrence; the YWCA Enrichment Center on Broadway at the Arlington Mills; YWCA Haverhill at 107 Winter Street in Haverhill; and the YWCA North Shore Rape Crisis Center at 20 Central Avenue in Lynn.

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The YWCA provides year-round affordable child care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age children. It offers a comprehensive range of services for victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, including an emergency shelter. Its Women's Health Advocacy Services assists underserved women in obtaining health insurance, mammograms, and other women's health services.

The YWCA voter registration effort is also an educational campaign to inform voters about Massachusetts' new Early Voting process. For the first time, Massachusetts voters will be able to vote before the Nov. 8 General Election day. From October 24 through November 4, voters can cast their ballots at the designated location in their municipality, typically a city hall or town offices.

In addition to registering new voters, YWCA voter registration teams are asking those already registered to sign pledge cards promising that they will vote on September 8, the state primary election for U.S. representatives, and of course, on November 8, the General Election.

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## **YWCA IS ON A MISSION**

**For over 150 years, the YWCA has been at the forefront of the most critical social movements — from voting rights and civil rights, to affordable housing and pay equity, to violence prevention and health care reform. But despite important work being done on the ground by more than 220 local associations across the country, not enough people understood the size, impact, or relevance of the modern YWCA.**

**The YWCA of Greater Lawrence was founded in 1892 to provide safe affordable housing to single women moving to Lawrence to work in the mills. Its housing, child care, domestic violence and sexual assault response and prevention programs, and women's health care advocacy programs serve over 15,000 women and families annually in the Merrimack Valley and on the North Shore.**

**YWCA Haverhill was founded in 1891. It became a YWCA of Greater Lawrence site in 2013, and will complete a \$1.7 million restoration project in fall, 2016, to re-open the YWCA Haverhill Residence, providing ten single-room-occupancy housing units to low income women.**

**YWCA North Shore Rape Crisis Center provides emergency and non-emergency intervention and support services for victims and survivors of sexual assault. It serves 27 town and cities across Essex County.**