



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**NORTH SUBURBAN
YMCA**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

YMCA Developmental Basketball Program Inspires Love of the Game

Northbrook, IL: October 2015 – As the weather turns cooler, families turn to indoor sports to keep kids active and involved during the fall and winter months. Basketball, in particular, combines the benefits of cardio exercise with an emphasis on teamwork, coordination, and mental focus. Children as young as kindergarteners can enjoy these benefits in a supportive, encouraging environment through the North Suburban YMCA’s Developmental Basketball League, which kicks off November 14.

The YMCA approach to basketball balances athletic skills instruction with an equal focus on character development. Children work with professional, YMCA-trained coaches, who teach game skills in an age-appropriate manner that values each child’s abilities and contributions. The program also emphasizes values of sportsmanship, respect, and responsibility to ensure that all participants feel welcome and encouraged. In addition to weekly practices, teams compete in intra-league games, with playoffs at the end of the season for older children. For players ready to step up to an additional challenge, the Y also offers a travel basketball team. Tryouts for that team, covering grades 3 through 8, will be held at the Y on November 3 and 5, from 7:00 to 8:00pm.

The Y’s basketball program is led by Coaches Marshall Dennison, Jaaken “Jay” Thompson, and Shannon Harper, who each bring considerable experience and a passion for the game. Dennison coached girls’ basketball at the high school varsity level for over 25 years, and Thompson and Harper have each coached for six years. They are dedicated to teaching players strong fundamentals and helping kids develop on and off the court.

“The Y’s house league is designed to be inclusive and supportive,” explains Carol Sassorossi, NSYMCA Sports Director. “We give the kids the skills to play with confidence, and create a setting where every member of the team has an equal opportunity to participate. With this strong foundation, players build a positive attitude that can keep them involved in basketball and other sports for their lifetime.”

Professional parenting advisors endorse the Y's program for its encouraging, balanced approach. As Lauren Bondy, LCSW and Co-Founder of Parenting Perspectives in Northbrook, notes, "In our fast-paced, competitive world, children and parents feel enormous pressure to succeed. This frequently causes us to miss the big picture in our children's activities. It's refreshing to have programs like the Y's where kids aren't under pressure to win at all costs. As parents, we need to seek out opportunities for them to try new things and learn at their own pace."

The North Suburban YMCA's Developmental Basketball League runs from November 14, 2015 to March 5, 2016. The league schedule includes once-weekly team practices and Saturday games. The Y is located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook. For detailed information and registration, visit www.nsymca.org or contact Carol Sassorossi, csassorossi@nsymca.org.



Photo Caption: *Basketball at the North Suburban Y promotes skill development, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Registration for House Leagues is open now.*

About the North Suburban YMCA

The YMCA is a not-for-profit entity and relies on donations to make services available for all families and individuals in its 15-city region. All board members are volunteers, who donate their time, talents and financial resources. Located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook, the YMCA has served the northern suburbs of Chicago for over 45 years. The Y is about youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, providing programs and services that address the needs of our diverse community and are accessible to all. For more information or to make a donation, contact Barb Flanagin at 847-272-7250 or bflanagin@nsymca.org, or visit www.nsymca.org.