

For immediate release

In response to the community rally in south Minneapolis on October 3, 2009:

We at the YWCA of Minneapolis believe that our mission to eliminate racism and empower women and girls can only be achieved when diverse people work together for positive change. The best example of this is the community demonstration that happened this past Saturday at our Midtown YWCA location. Community members of all backgrounds stood together in the face of hate, and their chants of “no hate in our state” rose in the face of white supremacy. Each person was there to take a stand against four protestors who opposed a workshop on understanding white privilege.

One by one, courageous, committed, and passionate people began gathering outside our front doors and along the sidewalks ringing our facility. Eventually, hundreds showed up to firmly state the message that racism is not something we will allow in our community. Despite the rain, many peaceful demonstrators stood outside all day long to ensure that the workshop inside the YWCA continued as scheduled.

The YWCA applauds this grassroots mobilization, and shares the sentiment that racial justice is essential for a strong and vibrant community. The YWCA thanks all those who continue to fight against racism and hatred, the courageous women who offer this important workshop, the police who kept everyone safe and allowed voices to be heard, and YWCA members whose support validates the power of our mission to eliminate racism.

We proudly stand with our community as we all continue the important work of racial justice.

-- **Anita Patel**, is Director of Racial Justice & Public Policy Programs at the YWCA of Minneapolis, a nonprofit organization that works toward the empowerment of women and girls, and the elimination of racism