

## **Media Release - YWCA Auckland turns 125**

2010 marks the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the YWCA in Auckland – the oldest women's organisation in Auckland and the largest in the world.

Established in 1885, the YWCA's history provides a fascinating insight into the lives of women and society in Auckland during the last century and a quarter. Over the coming months the organisation will be celebrating their longevity, history and current community service programmes.

YWCA Auckland CEO, Hilary Sumpter says the key to staying relevant for women is through empowerment. Sumpter adds that "most Aucklanders have an aunt, mother, sister or grand-mother who has attended a free YWCA programme or stayed at a YWCA hostel at some time in their lives.

We have touched the lives of so many women. From beach camps and thrift clubs to holiday programmes and self defence courses, we have always been part of Auckland's fabric and are still here today working diligently on issues which strengthen our communities through empowering women".

Today, the YWCA focuses on three key initiatives;

- Future Leaders Programme; mentoring and skills development for 14-18yr old young women from 1-4 decile schools.
- Encore; an exercise recovery programme for women who have had breast cancer surgery.
- YWCA Hostel; low-cost, long or short term accommodation in central Auckland which pays for community service programme delivery.

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The YWCA will be celebrating throughout the year with a series of significant events, details of which will be released in March.

The YWCA is inviting Aucklanders to celebrate the past 125 years and to join with them in being part of the next 125 years.

Tell us your YWCA story, find information on events and how to make donations on the website: [www.akywca.org.nz](http://www.akywca.org.nz) Office contact 09 375 9242. Postal: PO Box 8749, Symonds St, Auckland 1150.

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