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## A Thanksgiving Race Connects 8,000 Families & Neighbors

*YMCA Bethesda's Turkey Chase has raised over \$4.2 million in its history for Montgomery County's at-risk youth and families*

**Bethesda, MD, November 27, 2014** – During the holidays, children and adults alike find solace in family traditions that have been passed down through the generations. Thanksgiving morning is one such holiday that brings with it many different traditions. While some are putting turkeys in the oven or nestled on the couch watching the Macy's Day Parade, over 9,000 DC-area residents of all ages will be making their way to YMCA Bethesda to connect, work up an appetite, and celebrate the spirit of giving at the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Turkey Chase.

"With our work schedules, it's not often that we get a day to spend with each other and our children," shares Susan Coller Monarez, who participates every year with her husband Ed. "Thanksgiving is one of those rare days, and for the past several years... it has begun with the Bethesda YMCA Turkey Chase. It's such a wonderful event to see friends in the neighborhood, bond over sweat and really do something as a family."

In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year, Turkey Chase is the largest 10K in Montgomery County, and the signature charity event of YMCA Bethesda-Chevy Chase and the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary Club. Our Grand Marshals this year are Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett, his wife Catherine and Philanthropist Jeffrey Slavin. The event features a 2-mile fun run, a USATF-certified 10K race, and a 50-meter Tot Trot, where kids 8 and under will chase the elusive mascot while dressed as turkeys. We'll also announce the coveted Principal's Prize, in which the local public or private high school with the highest participation is awarded \$1,000 and \$2,000 respectively.

Conceived in 1982, Turkey Chase launched as a Biathlon with 100 runners, but continues to grow in participants, age range and impact every year. Last year's race embraced 9,100 runners' age 0-85, 350 volunteers, and 30 corporate donors who supported the cause. This tradition personifies the holiday spirit of family, fellowship and charity... and the observance continues well into Thanksgiving dinner. Through snowstorms, 9/11, and other incidents, the spirit of Turkey Chase only grows stronger. It's made possible every year through the Y's partnership with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary Club and generous sponsors. Over \$4.2 million has been raised since the race's inception so Montgomery County's at-risk youth and families can take part in enriching YMCA programs and local Rotary charities.

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### **ABOUT THE YMCA OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON**

The Y is one of the nation's leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. We've been connecting and supporting men, women and children in Greater Washington for over 160 years – regardless of age, income or background. Anchored in Washington, DC, southern MD, and northern VA, the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington creates a positive difference in the lives of more than 200,000 people each year through its 17 branches and program centers. We have the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. For more information, visit [www.ymcadc.org](http://www.ymcadc.org) or follow us at [www.facebook.com/ymcadc](http://www.facebook.com/ymcadc).