



## **Indiana Pacer Paul George to serve as honorary chair of Hawthorne Community Center Capital Campaign**

INDIANAPOLIS – April 15, 2014 -- Hawthorne Community Center kicked off a \$3.5 million capital campaign today for building renovations to enhance services to the community. The announcement was made at a preview of the Hawthorne Community Center's newly renovated early childcare rooms, which are the first phase of the Center's renovations. The new early childcare rooms make Hawthorne Community Center a leader in the United Way of Central Indiana Path to Quality initiative to offer affordable high quality full-day licensed early childcare throughout the city.



"We were proud to invest with Hawthorne in getting a new generation of children off to a great start with the center's commitment to provide the highest quality early learning child care program," said Ann D. Murtlow, United

Way of Central Indiana's president and chief executive officer. "We extend our congratulations on a strong launch of the public phase of their capital campaign so that this important neighborhood resource can continue helping entire families become financially stable, safe and connected to their community."

Indiana Pacer Paul George will serve as the capital campaign honorary chairperson. He was unable to attend the kickoff because the Pacers are on the road, but he sent a video message saying: "I've been a fan of the Hawthorne Community Center ever since I came to Indianapolis. It's a wonderful place for kids, teenagers, senior citizens and people of all ages. But like any athlete at the beginning of a new season, Hawthorne Community Center's buildings need to get in shape to keep the programs for kids and adults running smoothly. I look forward to being a symbol of the work Hawthorne Community Center has done in this community for the past 90 years."

Hawthorne Community Center executive director Diane Arnold announced that the campaign already has gifts and pledges totaling more than \$2 million. Early gifts and pledges have been received from United Way of Central Indiana and the Ruth Lilly Philanthropic Fund and other donors.

The largest individual contribution to the campaign is a \$500,000 bequest from the late Katie Wadsworth, a Westside resident and business person who was also a participant in Hawthorne Community Center activities.

“We will honor Katie in the renovated courtyard,” said Arnold. “We know she would be pleased to see her bequest used in ways that will benefit people in our Westside neighborhood for generations to come.”

Arnold also announced that the next \$500,000 in gifts to the capital campaign will be matched by the Ruth Lilly Philanthropic Fund.

“That gives our next donors the opportunity to see their gifts have double the impact,” said Arnold.

Hawthorne Community Center has served the people of the near west side of Indianapolis since 1923 when neighborhood residents pledged 25 to 50 cents a week to purchase a property for the betterment of the community. Hawthorne Community Center still sits on that property today in a cement-block building built in 1979 after fires damaged the original building. In 2000 Hawthorne Community Center acquired a Carnegie Library Building across the street.

“After 90 years of service, we are once again out of room and our buildings need renovations,” said Arnold. “The roofs are leaking and we can’t delay renovations much longer.”

Hawthorne Community Center is located at 2440 West Ohio Street and serves more than 2,500 people every year, including 50 young children and 100 school-age youth participants every day. Eighty five percent of the families served live at or below the poverty level. Hawthorne Community Center is one of the nation’s models for combining services in its Center for Working Families.

The renovations to the main building will replace the roof, replace the heating and cooling system, upgrade plumbing, technology and electrical service, replace doors and windows, and upgrade the interior and exterior appearance. There will be a 9,400-square-foot expansion of the main building.

Arnold expects it may take another 12 months to raise the additional \$1.3 million, so construction can begin. “The Ruth Lilly Philanthropic Fund match may help us get there more quickly, which would be really good news,” said Arnold. “We are eager to transform our facilities so we can continue to transform lives.”

For more information visit [www.hawthornecenter.org](http://www.hawthornecenter.org).

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