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**WEST MICHIGAN 100 STRONG RAISES \$9,000 TO SUPPORT
LOCAL CHILDREN'S CHARITIES AT FIRST MEETING**

Newly formed group gives big from the beginning

Grand Rapids, Mich. (March 22, 2011) – West Michigan 100 Strong, a newly formed group of community members, raised \$9,000 for three local children's charities at their first meeting this week due to an unexpected matching gift from a local couple.

More than 40 people gathered at Thousand Oaks Golf Club to hear presentations from three local children's charities: The Conductive Learning Center, Grand Rapids Youth Commonwealth, and the Multi-Sensory Room at Lincoln School. The group intended to give \$5,000 in donations from the evening to the charity that received the most votes. Lincoln School received the winning number of votes, but the evening offered a turn of events that sent all three charities home as winners.

West Michigan 100 Strong members Bob and Marcia Schaub offered a challenge to the group for matching funds to support the other two charities. An additional \$2,000 was donated and, with the Schaub's matching gift, West Michigan 100 Strong was able to support the Conductive Learning Center and Grand Rapids Youth Commonwealth with gifts of \$2,000 each.

According to Kathy Vogelsang, coordinator of West Michigan 100 Strong, "It was amazing to see the number of individuals who joined the group and attended our first meeting, but more amazing to see the outpouring of generosity in a two-hour period." Vogelsang, along with co-coordinators Cindy DeWald and Gerilyn May, hope to continue to increase the level of giving to local charities with quarterly meetings in 2011.

"Our goal is simple," said DeWald. "We want to impact local charities by gathering people four times a year to learn more about charitable work in our communities and collectively support local organizations while meeting new people and creating a community outreach."

Membership is open to anyone who would like to make an impact and attend meetings four times a year. The next three meetings will feature arts organizations, education, and health and welfare of humans or animals.

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Inspiration for West Michigan 100 Strong

To provide a charitable giving experience with others who share that goal by engaging 100 or more individuals to contribute \$100 four times per year totaling approximately \$40,000+ annually to support local, worthy charities. Each quarter members will have an opportunity to share an evening together and select one charity to be the recipient of that quarter's donations, while enjoying fellowship and building relationships among members.

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