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**Berkshire Family YMCA Announces Awards Event Honoring
Community Members Over Age 55**

PITTSFIELD — Berkshire Family YMCA announces the inaugural Changing Lives After 55 awards to celebrate and recognize community members over the age of 55 who have made significant contributions and achievements in Berkshire County. Local financial management firm, Berkshire Money Management, has signed on as the event's title sponsor.

The awards night, slated for October 3 from 5-7pm at Berkshire Money Management in the historic Model Farm, the former Crane and Co. Mansion in Dalton, will salute honorees in the areas of Education, Arts & Culture, Business, Nonprofit, Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility.

"Berkshire Money Management needed to be part of observing this group because they are our tribe. The people we work with are local change makers, especially in business. The description of the potential awardees describes so many of our clients that it's really just an extension of celebrating them.", said Allen Harris, CEO & Chief Investment Officer of Berkshire Money Management.

The Changing Lives After 55 selection process will be nomination driven. Nominees over the age of 55, on or before July 1, will need to have demonstrated a commitment to the Y's core values - Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility - while making significant contributions and achievements in Berkshire County. We will celebrate the work that often goes unheralded, and the people who have selflessly made community connections to build upon the Y's efforts toward a healthy spirit, mind and body for all. A panel of judges will review the nominations and select individuals who best represent those ideals in each category.

Berkshire Family YMCA CEO/Executive Director, Randy Kinnas said, "Simply put, we couldn't be more excited about hosting this event! We have numerous stories of individuals over 55 giving back in big ways. We have two challenges ahead - deciding on the honorees and getting those individuals to agree to be in the spotlight. We know the people doing this work are not doing it for the recognition. We are grateful to Berkshire Money Management for signing on as a title sponsor to help us kick off this event right."

Nomination forms will be available at bfymca.org/changinglives55 on Thursday, August 2. The submission deadline is Sunday, September 2.

The event, which aims to be an annual tradition, is a major fundraiser for Berkshire Family YMCA. Proceeds will support the YMCA financial assistance program - the Y's

promise to the community that no one is ever turned away due to inability to pay. From a child becoming comfortable in the water, overcoming their fears and saving a life to a single mom having peace-of-mind knowing her child is building character and life skills through youth sports and the Y's core values to a senior enhancing connections, decreasing a sense of isolation, and improving overall well-being to a family reconnecting after trauma has forced them apart - the Y has a commitment to the community.

The Changing Lives After 55 awards night tickets will be available for purchase in September at bfymca.org/changinglives55. The event will include a reception with hors d'oeuvres and light fare.

The Berkshire Eagle and iBerkshires have signed on as media sponsors of the Changing Lives After 55 event. For information about sponsorship opportunities, contact Randy Kinnas, rkinnas@bfymca.org.

About the Berkshire Family YMCA: The Berkshire Family YMCA's Pittsfield Branch is located at 292 North St. in Pittsfield and the Northern Berkshire Branch is located at 22 Brickyard Court in North Adams. The Y is one of the nation's leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,687 Ys engage 21 million men, women and children – regardless of age, income or background – to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation's health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. Anchored in more than 10,000 communities, the Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change.

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