

For Immediate Release

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YWCA to Provide Free Prom Dresses for Girls in Need

Birmingham, AL, March 6, 2017 – YWCA Central Alabama will host a **Prom Palooza** event in Pell City and provide free prom dresses to St. Clair County girls in need. The event will take place on **Saturday, March 11, 2017** from **9 a.m. to noon** in the **Parish Hall at St. Simon Peter Episcopal Church**, 3702 Mays Bend Road, Pell City, AL 35128.

Girls receiving the dresses have been referred by their high school guidance counselors, and they will be able to select the gown of their choice from a variety of sizes and colors. Accessories such as jewelry and shoes will also be available. “We want to make this a wonderful experience for them,” said Vernetta Bowman, rural domestic violence services coordinator for the YWCA. “Every girl dreams of going to her prom, and we want to make sure that everyone has a chance to make that dream a reality.”

The YWCA has operated My Sister’s Closet, which provides free clothing to clients and a high-quality, low-cost shopping option for the community, in downtown Birmingham for years. When the staff realized that the high cost of prom dresses made it impossible for some girls to attend, the idea for Prom Palooza was born. Last year, more than 150 girls in St. Clair and Jefferson County received free gowns.

The YW has had a presence in St. Clair County since 2009, when it opened Our Place, an emergency shelter for domestic violence victims and their children, in Pell City. Each year, the Purse & Passion St. Clair County Luncheon raises critical funding for the shelter. Members of the luncheon’s Steering Committee help organize the Prom Palooza event.

“We are so grateful for everything they do to help the women and children served by the YWCA,” Bowman said. “Whether it’s a prom dress or clothing and household items for a domestic violence victim who is starting over, they see a need and they fill it.”

YWCA Central Alabama is a United Way agency dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. The YWCA provides child development programs for children of homeless and working poor families; safe, affordable housing; a broad array of domestic violence services; and social justice programs. For more information, please visit www.ywcabham.org, <http://www.facebook.com/YWCACentralAlabama> and <http://www.youtube.com/ywcentralal> or follow @YWCentralAL on Twitter.