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CHOICE HEALTH & FITNESS IS OFFICIAL NAME FOR NEW GRAND FORKS FACILITY

(Grand Forks, ND) **Choice Health & Fitness** is now the official name of the Grand Forks Park District's new health and fitness facility being developed in Grand Forks, ND.

Members of the Grand Forks Park Board unanimously approved the name earlier today and will implement its use in all future references to the building as part of an agreement with naming sponsor Choice Financial.

The Red River Valley-based financial institution helped jump start the project last March when it pledged \$2.75 million to name the facility, according to Park District director John Staley.

"Their sponsorship gave us the cornerstone we needed to inspire never-before seen collaboration for a community project of this magnitude," Staley said.

Since then, more than 300 area business and individuals have given monetary support for the project. In addition, eleven partners, including Altru Health System and the U.S.D.A. Human Nutrition Research Center, have come onboard with a common desire to provide a unique integrated concept, all under one roof. Choice Health & Fitness will house an assortment of health-related entities, including a first-class fitness center, medical research facilities, and healthcare offices.

"These partnerships have moved the project well beyond the initial wellness center concept," said Choice Financial CEO Brian Johnson. "We are thrilled to have selected a name that clearly defines the expanded scope and focus of the building."

Owned and operated by the Grand Forks Park District, the estimated \$23 million building, Staley said, is the centerpiece to the new Altru Wellness Village (the official name of the 42 acre site/park) located east of South Washington Street between 40th and 47th Avenue South. Several construction bids have been awarded and work is set to begin this month.

When finished, Choice Health & Fitness will operate in partnership with the Y Family Center, which is located downtown and scheduled for a major renovation of its own beginning this summer.

According to Staley, a single membership will allow access to both facilities and people of all ages are welcomed to join.

Childhood obesity, diabetes, and sedentary lifestyle are among the many health issues to be faced head on by Choice Health & Fitness.

"Our investment in Choice Health & Fitness is a long-term commitment to a healthier Grand Forks, East Grand Forks, and surrounding area," said Wayne Zink, President of Choice Financial's Grand Forks locations.

Staley says the next effort will be to find additional sponsors to help ensure every child who wants a membership to Choice Health & Fitness and partnering Y Family Center will have access to these facilities.

Choice Health & Fitness is scheduled for completion in fall 2012.
