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FROST VALLEY YMCA

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Frost Valley Retreat Teaches Urban Families to Live Healthy

Families made Action Plans for healthy cooking, indoor growing, and fit living

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Frost Valley YMCA hosted its first-ever "Family Retreat for Healthy Living," which taught 17 NJ families how to cook healthy meals, grow their own food, and develop a plan to get more physically active at home. Families from Trenton, Camden, New Brunswick, Vineland and Newark received scholarships to participate in classes and active fun over the weekend of November 13-15.

"**Several participants had never been outside their city and never experienced being in outdoor settings**, but all were very motivated to participate and each person actively engaged in every activity they could possible get to," said Olivia Lightle, Frost Valley's Assistant Director of Program Innovation. "Families learned a great deal about cooking healthy meals, increasing physical activity, and growing their own food, which a majority of participants indicate that they plan to do at home!"

Families participated in cooking lessons at Frost Valley's Teaching Kitchen (where they learned to substitute healthy ingredients in their own family recipes), enjoyed small-space gardening classes, and took part in a wide variety physical activity programs. Each family received materials and skills to take home so that they can put their new knowledge to use, including recipe booklets; sub-irrigated planters with herbs; pedometers to monitor their daily steps (with a goal of doing a minimum of 10,000 steps per day); knowledge of local community gardens, farms, and farmers' markets; and a renewed enthusiasm to continue their journey towards healthier lifestyles. In addition, they were able to enjoy Frost Valley's active programs: archery, dance, hiking, climbing, zipline, and more.

The Retreat was developed in collaboration with the NJ Alliance of YMCAs and the NJ Partnership for Healthy Kids as a part of Frost Valley's commitment to youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. **The program has been awarded a $90,000 grant from the National Recreation Foundation to host four more weekends in 2016.**

Photos and interviews are available upon request. Please contact Director of Marketing and Communications Amanda Hinski at AHinski@FrostValley.org

About Frost Valley YMCA Frost Valley YMCA is a values-driven organization that fosters youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility through outdoor educational and recreational programs for all. Located in the heart of the Catskill Mountains, Frost Valley provides year-round access to nature and fun through programs such as summer camp, adventure trips, farm camp, equestrian programs, group and family retreats, school trips, teambuilding and more. Frost Valley is guided in this pursuit by its core values which serve as pathways for guests as they bond with nature and each other: Caring, Community, Diversity, Honesty, Inclusiveness, Respect, Responsibility, and Stewardship.

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