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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Debra Baker Named New Board Chair of YWCA of the City of New York**

*BNY Mellon managing director succeeds Marcia Sells of Columbia University as chairperson of leading women-and-girls empowerment, education and advocacy social justice organization*

**NEW YORK CITY, NY** – Debra Baker, managing director and head of Global Risk Solutions at BNY Mellon, has been named Chair of the Board of Directors of the YWCA of the City of New York, effective July 1, 2015.

Baker brings more than 25 years of experience in multinational banking and financial services product, strategy, project planning and management, with expertise providing solutions for nonprofit organizations, foundations, government agencies, financial institutions, corporations and insurance companies. She joined BNY Mellon in 1996, having previously served with J.P. Morgan, Bankers Trust Company and Merrill Lynch Capital Markets. Baker holds a B.S. in Economics from Niagara University and has been a member of the YWCA of the City of New York's Board of Directors since late 2009. Both Baker and BNY Mellon have been supportive of the YW's mission in the past and expressed excitement about continuing this support in the future.

"I am humbled and gratified to sustain and build upon the success of this incredible organization," Baker said. "Providing meaningful outlets and competitive opportunities to deserving women and the girls who will be tomorrow's leaders is vitally important in creating a better, stronger and more vibrant New York City."

In addition to Baker's seat on the board, BNY Mellon has jointly hosted an International Women's Day event with the YW and helped support their annual Summer Soiree. Baker also leads a sub-committee at the firm that meets biweekly to plan initiatives to support the YW mission. As an example, BNY Mellon volunteers helped with skills-building programs for the YWCA's Women's Empowerment Network (WEN).

Baker succeeds Marcia Lynn Sells, who has served as the YWCA's Board Chair for nearly eight years. As associate dean, Outreach and Education, and associate vice president, Government and Community Affairs, with Columbia University's School of the Arts, Sells assumed leadership of the Board shortly after the organization's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since then, Sells has led the Board through the Recession of 2008, the untimely losses of two CEOs and the introduction of various new programs, while forging new partnerships with leading corporations and bringing Dr. Danielle Moss Lee to the YWCA as its new CEO.

“The big challenge was to find a new CEO,” Sells said. “We met that challenge and hired Danielle. Her work and that of her senior team have led to an increase in the professional skills of staff, growth in more effective programs and re-establishing the YWCA’s presence as the go-to organization for strong programming for girls and women.”

As Chair of the Board of Directors, Baker will support and lead current strategic initiatives of the YWCA, including those focused on early learning, out-of-school enrichment, college and career readiness, community engagement and leadership. She will also help direct and propel fundraising initiatives and cultivate strategic partnerships in collaboration with YWCA president and CEO Dr. Lee, who joined the organization in 2012 with more than 20 years of experience in education and human services.

“Working with Marcia Sells to usher in a new age of relevancy and impact for the YWCA of the City of New York has been a tremendous privilege, stated Danielle Moss Lee, the organization’s Chief Executive Officer. She has a relationship with this organization, its brand and its mission that spans back to her childhood, and the passion that history spurred helped her to be incredibly effective at eliciting the same kind of enthusiasm and volunteer support for the YWCA and in attracting me to this role. Because of the foundation she laid, Debra Baker and I have a unique opportunity to continue that legacy of honoring the YW’s past while ushering in a new age of support and service for New York from all walks of life. I’m thrilled to be partnering with her on this next leg of my YWCA journey.”

#### **About the YWCA of the City of New York**

The YWCA of the City of New York was founded in 1858 to provide safe housing and educational resources for women. In its 157 years of operation, the organization has maintained its commitment to advancement and opportunity for girls and women through housing, job training and educational classes, while upholding its commitment to the elimination of racism and the empowerment of women. For more information, visit <http://www.ywcanyc.org/>.

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