



Contact: Donna Gillen
youthrive
(651) 224-3066

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum of Guatemala
to Engage Youth as Peace-builders at youthrive's PeaceJam April 24 - 26;
University of Minnesota in partnership with University YMCA to Serve as Host Site**

*Menchú Tum to Give Public Lecture on Fri., April 23 at
University of Minnesota's Northrop Auditorium*

(Saint Paul, Minn., February 2010) – Nobel Peace Prize Laureate **Rigoberta Menchú Tum** of Guatemala will join several hundred area high school-aged students, advisors, college mentors, and community groups to focus on “Healing Communities Torn by Racism and Violence” during the annual youthrive PeaceJam conference April 24 – 26. PeaceJam, organized locally by the Saint Paul-based nonprofit **youthrive**, will be held in Minneapolis at the University of Minnesota, in partnership with the University YMCA and the PeaceJam Club at the University of Minnesota.

As part of PeaceJam, Menchú Tum will give a public lecture on Fri., April 23 at 7 p.m. at the University of Minnesota's Northrop Auditorium. Tickets may be purchased through the Northrop Box Office and are \$10 for students and \$20 for non-students. She will speak in Spanish with an English translator. The PeaceJam conference will also include a service project in south Minneapolis, which is planned by a team of community members and youth leaders who have been meeting weekly since October 2009 at Hope Community Inc., in South Minneapolis. The service project will be open to community members to participate. On Mon., April 26, youthrive and Menchú Tum will also visit Minnesota Correctional Facility - Red Wing, to discuss with juvenile residents their role as peacemakers, both at Red Wing and when they re-enter their communities.

Menchú Tum, a Mayan Indian from Guatemala, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 for her work in social justice and the rights of indigenous peoples. In 1996, all of Menchú Tum's

non-violent work helped lead to a peace accord in Guatemala, ending the country's 36-year civil war and giving many rights back to the Mayan people. Menchú Tum continues to work for justice and peace for her people and all indigenous people worldwide. She is the youngest woman and the only indigenous person to ever win the prize. In addition to talking about her experiences in Guatemala, she will also provide insight into the true Mayan prophecy about the year 2012, centered around a message of hope for the future.

In previous years, **youthrive** has brought youth together with Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Betty Williams of Northern Ireland, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel of Latin America, Dr. Shirin Ebadi of Iran, and Wangari Maathai of Kenya.

"Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, many of whom have come from environments of extreme violence and oppression, are an inspiring reminder that each of us can take nonviolent action to make positive changes in our communities," said Donna Gillen, executive director of youthrive. "Rigoberta's message of how to move beyond the hurt to actual healing is important and timely for many communities. The opportunity for youth to learn from each other and from Rigoberta, combined with the opportunity to benefit from the University of Minnesota and the University YMCA, promises to make this an incredible PeaceJam experience."

youthrive, the Upper Midwest affiliate of PeaceJam Foundation in Denver, provides young people with leadership and service learning opportunities related to peacebuilding, social justice, anti-racism, human and environmental rights and ethical leadership.

During the two-day PeaceJam conference, young people will present an overview of service projects they are undertaking in their own communities. Youth also will attend workshops focused on PeaceJam's Ten Global Calls to Action, developed by Nobel Laureates working with the PeaceJam Foundation. The Call to Action encourages young people to carry out one billion acts of peace in the next 10 years.

For information on how youth may participate in the PeaceJam conference or the community-wide service project in south Minneapolis, contact youthrive at (651) 224-3066. College students interested in serving as mentors are invited to contact Lauren Randall and Laura Schenke at Student.Board@ymcamps.org. For more information on youthrive, visit youthrive.net.

###

Note to Editors: youthrive does not capitalize its name.