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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **KY United Methodist Homes for Children & Youth Break Ground on Nicholasville Property**

*Breaking Ground Will Jump Start New Chapter in Service for Kentucky Families*

**NICHOLASVILLE, KY - July 18, 2016** – Attorney General Andy Beshear, Commissioner Sandra Dunahoo and other state and local officials along with former Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children and Youth (KyUMH) residents broke ground today to celebrate a new chapter of hope and healing for Kentucky families.

The ceremony jump started the creation of a 31,000 square foot program facility, renovation of a historic home to serve as an administrative space, a new 12,500 square foot Chapel and Training Center and an equine therapy complex to provide the best care for children with histories of abuse and neglect.

“The nature of how we help kids has changed dramatically and the current campus simply doesn’t meet our program needs,” said Reverend Randy Coy, KyUMH CEO and President.

The organization began in 1871 as an answer to hundreds of widows and orphans left destitute because of the Civil War. Over time, KyUMH transitioned first to an orphanage, and now as a children’s service agency in Versailles, KY, providing residential and community services to at-risk children and their families.

“We want to invest in programs that will remain viable and relevant for the future; develop programs that will directly impact the greatest number of Kentucky families and communities and maintain good stewardship of all resources entrusted to us. These principles helped guide us in our decision to purchase the 35 acre property and design our Nicholasville Campus,” said Coy.

Relocating KyUMH to the picturesque Jessamine County property will not only be therapeutic to those served, but the strategic location also provides a partnership with one of the best alternative school systems in the state.

“Besides the new location being serene, it gives us access to an excellent alternative public education system which is where our youth thrive.”

Melinda Ryles-Smith, KyUMH VP for Advancement, sees a vision for the new campus that involves more emphasis on meeting families in their homes and communities.

“We realize that there will always be a need to care for the most traumatized children through a residential facility. From our years of experience working with children who are abused and neglected, we know in many cases, had there been early intervention, the crisis in the family could have been alleviated.”

KyUMH impacted the lives of more than 750 children and youth in 2015 and has a campus in Owensboro (Mary Kendall Campus), an independent living program in Lexington, as well as community programs throughout the state.

***About The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children & Youth:***

*For 145 years, The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children & Youth has served young people—originally as an orphanage and now offering care to children with histories of abuse, neglect and/or family trauma. Our programs are both residential and community-based. For more information, visit [kyumh.org](http://kyumh.org).*