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City of Duluth Communications Office

411 West First Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55802
218-730-5230 | www.duluthmn.gov | Don Ness, Mayor

For more information contact Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator 218-730-5309
or Amy Norris, Public Information Coordinator 218-730-4312

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SUBJECT: Duluth to be recognized as Yellow Ribbon City

BY: Pakou Ly

Duluth to be recognized as "Yellow Ribbon" City

On September 22, Duluth will be recognized as a "Yellow Ribbon" City for its work to support military members and their families. Duluth is the first City of the First Class in Minnesota to achieve this designation. Duluth and Rochester are the largest cities in Minnesota to be given this honor. Mayor Ness and several community representatives will travel to Farmington to receive the designation on behalf of the city.

This recognition is a culmination of work completed Mayor Ness's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Steering Committee led by co-chairs Richard Dumancas and Jennifer Kuhlman. In April, the committee hosted a training, with over 40 community members in attendance, to develop the foundation for Duluth's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon action plan. The action plan was submitted to the state office of Beyond the Yellow Ribbon for review and approval.

"I am proud that Duluth is a city that honors and supports our military families, especially during overseas deployment. This designation reflects commitment to continue to expand the support and services we can offer," said Mayor Don Ness. "I am grateful for the leadership of the Duluth's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Steering Committee and their success in building community support for our military families."

As a Yellow Ribbon city, Duluth will be part of a statewide network that helps connect service members and their families with community resources. Duluth is poised to be a role model for other cities planning to undertake this endeavor. Duluth's action plan includes specific actions such as identifying volunteer services, developing a military resource guide, and creating a relocation package for military families moving into Duluth. The action plan involves business, education, health, social services, elected officials and faith communities and is aimed at ensuring that military members and their families receive assistance before, during, and following deployment.

The designation is timely as the community gathers for the Northland Heroes Tribute at Wade stadium on Saturday and the Lakewalk Festival events, both of which will take time to honor the lives lost on September 11 as well as the service members who are protecting our country, 19,000 of whom are

Minnesotans.

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