



YMCA of
Niagara



2022
2023

Annual Impact Report



Our Greatest Aspiration...

is to leave a mark, make a difference,
and positively impact the health and
well-being of our Niagara community.

YMCA of Niagara

Annual Impact Report

2022-23

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A Transformative Year of Community Impact at the YMCA of Niagara

At the heart of our charitable, mission-driven organization lies an unwavering commitment to fueling a healthy, connected, and engaged Niagara. As we step into a new year filled with promise and potential, the YMCA of Niagara extends its sincere appreciation for the steadfast support that continues to propel us forward.

Over the past year driven by the vision of creating a vibrant community, our team worked tirelessly to make a positive impact on thousands of lives every day. This commitment is deeply rooted in the belief that a flourishing community is built upon inclusivity, collaboration, and a shared dedication to the well-being of all.

Support needs in Niagara are rising due to the region's growth, leading to an increased demand for assistance in our sector. Currently, 1 in 5 children and youth in our YMCA benefit from our financial assistance program. Despite this evolving landscape, the YMCA remains committed to meeting the increasing demand, providing opportunities for individuals and families to grow in spirit, mind, and body.

The stories of hope and transformation in the following pages illustrate tangible and meaningful outcomes for Niagara residents.



CEO | Christian Wulff
YMCA of Niagara



Chair | Allie Hughes
YMCA of Niagara

Narratives such as Murat's, Roxy's, Cyril's, and Jeff's showcase the profound impact of community support, exemplifying the positive change we strive for.

Looking ahead to 2023/24, our Reignite Strategy, a deliberate approach to advancing our sector in Health and Wellness, Child Care, and Youth Newcomer services, seeks collaboration to unite efforts and challenge paradigms in delivering services and support to those who need it most.

Through creative solutions and active involvement, we aim to address diverse needs and ensure that no one is left behind. Our shared objective is to genuinely mirror the communities we serve, accurately reflecting their unique and ever-evolving needs.

Thanks to the dedication of our leadership, staff, volunteers, and community support, the YMCA of Niagara remains committed to being a leader in community services and dedicated to providing opportunities for all to Shine.

With gratitude and anticipation,
Christian Wulff and Allie Hughes

Handwritten signatures of Christian Wulff and Allie Hughes in black ink. Christian's signature is on the left, and Allie's is on the right.

YMCA Board of Directors

Chair | Allie Hughes
CEO & Founder, Hughes&Co

Past Chair | Ian Brown, MD Retired,
Former Chief of Surgery, Niagara Health
System

Vice Chair | Glen King, CPA, CA
President & CEO, FortisOntario Inc.

Rusty Baillie
Retired, Former CEO, Oakville Community
Foundation

Amanda Bell, BArtsSc, MD, MSc, CCFP, FCFP
Regional Assistant Dean, Niagara Regional
Campus, McMaster University

Nick Colamartini
Vice President Commercial/Development,
Mountainview Building Group

Tim Krause
Partner, Startbystarting

Vivian Kinnaird
Strategy Lead/CEO, Workforce Collective

Andrew MacLellan
Director, Business Banking Operations,
Meridian Credit Union

Tisham Mohammed
Business Development Manager, Niagara
Norfolk and Ontario Central South
Scotiabank

Bruno Petitti
Executive Director of Strategy and
Innovation, Ridley College

Julie Rorison
Manager, Municipal Sponsor Office,
Metrolinx

YMCA Senior Leadership

Christian Wulff
Chief Executive Officer

Tracey Cosco
General Manager, Camp, Community
and EarlyON

Deanna D'Elia
General Manager,
Employment & Newcomer Services

Mai Eltom
General Manager, Finance & Administration

Homam Kanafani
Human Resources Manager

Dominik Klopfer
Manager of Information Technology

Sarah Maragoudakis
General Manager, Children's Services

Ben McDermott
General Manager, Health, Fitness and Aquatics

Jennifer Schmaltz
Manager of Marketing and Communications



**“We never felt alone,
as the YMCA of Niagara
was always there for us,
like a part of our family.” –MURAT**



Bridges of Hope

Meet Murat, a beacon of hope and resilience, whose journey began with support from the YMCA of Niagara.

In Turkey, religious tensions had escalated, compelling Murat's family to seek a brighter future elsewhere, free from enforced beliefs. They made the decision to relocate to Canada, drawn by Murat's belief in the values of democracy, liberty, and social justice that the country embodies on a global stage, signifying genuine freedom. Niagara Falls stood out as their chosen destination, as Murat eloquently put it: "It is a city of promise, with bridges of hope for those seeking a new life. It's a city that embraces diversity and welcomes all."

Arriving in 2022, they were strangers in a new land, finding solace in a warm bed at a Niagara Falls hotel. In the aftermath of a global pandemic, the YMCA of Niagara Newcomer Services extended a welcoming embrace. They offered informative workshops and abundant support to asylum-seeking families, proving to be a lifeline. Murat expressed gratitude, stating, "We never felt alone, as the YMCA of Niagara was always there for us, like a part of our family." It was here that Murat crossed paths with Kathy, an Employment Coach.

Kathy, a seasoned job facilitator with over 11 years of experience, recognized Murat's potential. Equipped with bilingual skills and

freelance translation experience from Turkey, he was guided to highlight these talents on his resume. In due course, an opportunity arose for a translator at the YMCA of Niagara Newcomer Services, and Kathy recommended Murat enthusiastically, citing his kindness and understanding of challenges for those new to Canada. Murat now serves as a translator, bridging gaps and aiding fellow newcomers, empathizing with their challenges.

In this newfound home, Murat, and his wife, Ganiye, have found stability and joy, eagerly anticipating the arrival of their baby. Though the ache of leaving his adoptive mother lingers, he hopes to reunite with her on Canadian soil someday. The YMCA of Niagara has been an instrumental force in their journey, providing vital guidance and support.

Murat cherishes his role at the YMCA of Niagara, aiming to extend comfort and community to those grappling with the uncertainties of a new life. He shares, "We want to let them know that they are not alone, and that we are here to help them navigate the challenges of adapting to this new life together." Their aspiration is to create a sense of belonging and assist newcomers to thrive in their new environment through teamwork and support.

Surrounded by Community

The ability to offer swift and impactful support to families in times of sudden loss is invaluable. Jeff's story shines a light on the incredible resilience... and strength, of children when they experience the powerful 'embrace' of a caring community.

In April, within the YMCA of Niagara Child Care community, two young children faced an unexpected change with the sudden loss of their mother. Despite the parents' separation, they maintained joint custody, and their children had been active participants in the YMCA's program for more than a year. Jennifer, an experienced supervisor, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Child Care Centre, with 35 years of experience in Early Child Care Education displayed her skill in managing this sensitive situation by offering support to their father, Jeff.

She initiated assistance through the Stronger Together Campaign, aiming to alleviate the family's financial burden for child care. After gaining approval, Sarah, the General Manager, ensured the family's child care fees were covered for the next three months. This provided Jeff some relief during a challenging period.

Jennifer didn't stop there; she wanted the children to find joy and laughter again, so she sought and secured funding for the YMCA of Niagara Summer Day Camp, granting the kids three weeks of camp, a pleasant surprise for Jeff and his children. The experience was a first for them, filled with excitement and stories about their adventures.

As the new school year commenced, Jennifer maintained a supportive relationship with the family, noting their resilience and progress. The children, supported by their grandparents, are engaging in counseling and extracurricular activities. Jeff, an entrepreneur, is grateful for the flexibility to manage their busy schedules and appreciates the quiet moments with the family dog, Galaxy, during nightly walks.

In addition to looking for ways to connect the family with YMCA programs, Jennifer further assisted





“Thank you to the child care and camp teams who offered encouragement and support when I needed it the most. It is reassuring to know that my family is surrounded by people who care.”

—JEFF

Jeff in applying for a fee subsidy for child care services, enabling him to join other families in receiving financial support from the YMCA of Niagara. Jeff expresses immense gratitude for the ongoing support from the YMCA staff, acknowledging their role in helping his family navigate this difficult time.

Despite the challenges, Jeff remains optimistic, acknowledging the phenomenal strength of his children. He appreciates the care and encouragement offered by the YMCA of Niagara staff, knowing they are surrounded by a community that genuinely cares for their well-being.

"Foundations for the Future," outlines our strategy to revitalize our YMCA. It prioritizes inclusivity and accessibility in our membership, programs, and leadership. The plan focuses on four key areas to guide us to the end of 2024.

A STRONG, COMMITTED,
COMMUNITY-FOCUSED
STAFF TEAM

THE RESILIENCE OF OUR PROGRAM MODELS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

OUR IMPACT



**read full
strategic plan >>**

In 2022-23, the YMCA of Niagara helped families and individuals to thrive in 126 locations across the region through seven centers of community impact.



**With the help of generous donors, gifts and grants,
the YMCA of Niagara programs and services
help participants reach their potential to
grow, lead, thrive and belong.**





The YMCA of Niagara is currently the largest Child Care provider in the region, with **47 Centres** impacting **1,351 Niagara families**



12,284 individuals are supported in their personal fitness and wellness journeys across 3 health, fitness and aquatics centres in Grimsby, Welland and Port Colborne



5723



impactful interactions delivered at Youth Action Evenings in **18 locations** across Niagara



2088 Jobseekers received guidance and support

1144

Donors were a part of our bigger impact story



1908

children registered for 2023 Summer Day Camp region-wide

Stronger Together Community Campaign



child & youth program participants received Financial assistance through the Stronger Together Annual Community Campaign

126
Niagara Locations
Delivering Programs

The YMCA was present and serving the community in **126 locations** across Niagara



A place to grow & belong

4043 parents and children had access to play, learn and connect at YMCA EarlyON Centres

3141

Newcomers assisted

Employment and Immigration services welcomed **3141** newcomers to receive one of their first settlement supports at the YMCA of Niagara

Most Valued Member

Long-time member Cyril Warren embodies the YMCA core values!

Caring

Acting with compassion and concern for the wellbeing of others.

Health

Being committed to physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.

Honesty

Demonstrating integrity and trustworthiness.

Inclusiveness

Appreciating diversity. Striving to be open to all. Seeking to understand differences and find common ground.

Respect

Recognizing and protecting the inherent worth of every person, including oneself.

Responsibility

Being dependable and accountable for choices, actions and commitments.

Cyril, a humble senior embodying our YMCA Values, graces the Welland YMCA with his warm smile and engaging conversations, accompanied by a diverse group of participants with disabilities. High fives and hugs abound as he is greeted by staff and members alike. Cyril is indeed a most-valued member.

Fifteen years ago, Cyril, a retired service industry professional, joined the Welland branch, eager to stay active and engage socially by participating in various classes. However, health issues occasionally caused him to faint during exercises. Staff, aware of his conditions, closely monitored him, ensuring his safety. Medical investigation uncovered a damaged heart valve, necessitating surgery. Grateful for a second chance, Cyril resumed his activities at the Welland branch, touched by the compassion he received, fueling his desire to give back.

Regularly attending a Gentle Fit class, Cyril's influence on Denise, a middle-aged woman with a developmental disability, was noticeable. Encouraged by Denise's mother, Cyril became her caregiver during the class, sparking a passion for helping others. The community took notice, and soon, Cyril's group expanded to eight individuals with diverse disabilities. Seeking assistance, Cyril partnered with Jenn, a fellow cane-wielding individual recovering from significant health challenges, forming a powerful duo.

Together, they facilitated social activities for their group, including enjoyable bowling sessions on Thursday and Friday evenings. Within this group was Alex, whom Cyril had met in a martial arts class years prior. Cyril became Alex's

caregiver at the request of his parents, nurturing his talent for bowling. Proudly, Cyril announced that Alex would represent Ontario in 5 pin bowling at the Special Olympics in Calgary 2024.

During the pandemic, when YMCA branches closed, Cyril and Alex maintained their fitness by walking outdoors, covering up to 30,000 steps per day. Now that the branches have reopened, the group reunites, engaging in

volunteer shirts as a token of appreciation.

Their journey began with a helping hand extended to overwhelmed parents at the YMCA of Niagara, evolving organically into a movement transforming numerous lives over a decade. Cyril's motivation isn't financial gain; he personally covers memberships and event passes, eagerly watching his extended family thrive and contribute to the community.



various activities at the Welland branch, fostering a strong sense of camaraderie.

This close-knit group, already volunteering at a soup kitchen and offering assistance at the Welland branch, exemplifies community spirit. Melissa, the Centre Manager, commends their dedication and plans to involve them in YMCA events. The group's tireless efforts have earned them brand new

In Melissa's words, "Cyril, the ambassador of the Niagara Centre YMCA, is busier than ever in his retirement, shaping lives and making an indelible mark on the community. Cyril's actions embody the true essence of the YMCA values, inspiring us all."

Life in Full Swing

Roxy, a single mom raising her two beautiful daughters, Kayla, and Brittney, navigates a challenging work schedule within Niagara's healthcare system. Grateful for her parents' nearby support, Roxy acknowledges the difficulty of managing everything on her own. The YMCA of Niagara becomes a crucial support system, offering programs like day camps and the Adventure Club to enrich her children's lives while she's at work.

Life took a turn for the better when Connie entered Roxy's life. Connie introduced Roxy to the YMCA of Niagara Adventure Club, a fully subsidized camp providing camp experiences without the financial burden. "Connie has been fantastic, helping my family sign up for the YMCA Adventure Club," Roxy expressed. She was particularly thankful for the Adventure Club operating on Saturdays, granting her a day for groceries and chores, allowing for "quality family time" post-camp.

Impressed by the positive impact of the YMCA Adventure Club, Roxy decided to enroll her daughters in various other camps like the YMCA of Niagara Nature Quest Day Camp at Fireman's Park in Niagara Falls, YMCA of Niagara Theatre Day Camp, and Mad Science Camp at Cherrywood Acres Public School.

Expressing deep appreciation, Roxy commended the YMCA and its partners for subsidizing these programs, making these enriching camp

experiences possible for families who might struggle with the costs. "Camp truly has important impacts on children's lives," she emphasized.

Roxy fondly recalled a morning during summer break when Kayla was hesitant to wake up, risking missing camp. Her younger sister, Brittney, emotional at the prospect of missing camp, declared her love for it. Roxy was moved by her 8-year-old daughter's heartfelt statement and took a moment to reflect with tears of joy in her eyes, ensuring they wouldn't miss camp that day.

Roxy firmly believes in the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child," and values the caring YMCA of Niagara camp staff who left a lasting mark on her daughters' hearts. The bonds formed were evident in the girls' desire to make bracelets for the camp counselors, showcasing their appreciation.

Kayla's achievement of receiving the Camper of the Week certificate in a previous summer filled Roxy with pride. The values instilled by the YMCA—Inclusiveness, Integrity, Kindness, Optimism, Respect, and Well Being—are evident in the girls' friendships with other YMCA children beyond camp, fostering a sense of community and compassion.

In the fall, a new student at the girls' school, previously a fellow camper, found comfort and joy in recognizing Kayla and Brittney. Reflecting the values learned at the YMCA camp, the girls warmly welcomed the nervous new student, embodying the love and kindness they experienced throughout the summer.



“Camp truly has important impacts on children’s lives. –ROXY

Financial Highlights

Year Ending August 31, 2023

The report includes selected financial information extracted from statements audited by KPMG. Complete financial statements are available upon request.

Statement of Financial Position	2023	2022
	(000's) \$	(000's) \$
Assets		
Current Assets	7,816	6,247
Cash Internally Restricted Fund	1,000	1,000
Long Term Investments	8,860	8,540
	17,676	15,787
Long Term Investments	1,514	1,506
Capital Assets	16,941	18,046
Total Assets	36,131	35,339
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	5,190	5,816
Due to related parties	379	–
Deferred Capital Contributions	11,151	12,083
Total Liabilities	16,720	17,899
Fund Balances		
Endowment Fund	3,499	3,371
Internally Restricted Fund	1,000	1,000
General Fund and other	14,912	13,069
Total Fund Balances	19,411	17,440
	36,131	35,339

Statement of Operations

Year Ending August 31, 2023

Statement of Operations	2023	2022
	(000's) \$	(000's) \$
Revenue		
Grant Revenue	12,622	13,226
Programs & Services	12,470	7,880
Others	871	319
Donations - Strong Kids	109	167
Gain on Disposal of Capital Assets	4	7,960
	<u>26,076</u>	<u>29,552</u>
Financial Assistance	(205)	(72)
Total	25,871	29,480
Expenses		
Wages and Benefits	17,232	16,021
Occupancy and Facility Maintenance	2,869	2,853
Program and Support Costs	2,345	2,078
Participant Wage Subsidies and Training Supports	967	1,019
	<u>23,413</u>	<u>21,972</u>
Excess of Revenue over Expenses before Net Amortization	2,458	7,508
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	1,079	1,125
Amortization of capital assets	(1,693)	(1,780)
Excess (deficit) of Revenue over Expenses	1,844	6,853



The Year Ahead 2024

With support, we believe that everyone has the potential to shine.

Illuminate

our commitment to the Niagara community

Spark

conversations, tell stories, rekindle relationships

Light

a path of curiosity and innovation

Ignite

the potential in our people

Our **Mission** is clear
Our **Vision** is sustainable
Our **Values** remain strong

The YMCA of Niagara is a charity dedicated to providing opportunities to individuals, families, and communities for personal growth in spirit, mind and body and service to others since 1859.

Each year, over two million Canadians of all ages and life stages overcome obstacles and improve their well-being at the Y.

Mission

The YMCA of Niagara is a charity open to all, providing leadership and opportunities for people and their community to grow in spirit, mind, and body.

Vision

Inspiring health, wellness, and community – for life.

Values

Caring, Honesty, Responsibility,
Respect, Health, Inclusiveness



**“It truly does
take a village
to raise a child. –ROXY**



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St. Catharines, ON L2M 7X3
ymcaofniagara.org



Charitable Registration
#11930 7064 RR0001