



2023
2024 | **Annual
Impact
Report**



YMCA of Niagara

The YMCA of Niagara is a trusted charity, fostering connection and belonging, dedicated to nurturing every individual's potential through diverse programs and services.

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Chief Executive Officer
Christian Wulff
 YMCA of Niagara



Board Chair
Allie Hughes
 YMCA of Niagara

Igniting Potential: Our Impact in Niagara

This year's Annual Report captures the meaningful impact of our work across Niagara, showcasing the YMCA of Niagara's dedication to igniting potential in individuals and families throughout our community. Fueled by stories of personal growth, community connections, and the transformative support we provide, these pages underscore our mission and the progress we've made together.

Among the impact stories this year are Anthony and Joey, a father-son team who've built a new fitness routine together, strengthened by friends and mentors at the YMCA. Their story highlights the power of connection and shared goals.

You'll also read about our summer play program, generously funded by McCall MacBain Foundation, which provided children with a joyful and safe space to gather during school breaks. Our dedicated Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) team helped bring these moments to life, fostering friendships and fun.

Another highlight is the journey of one team member who, starting swim lessons at age six, has now taken on a leadership role in Human Resources. Her story reflects the YMCA's role in lifelong development and the impact of nurturing potential from childhood through adulthood.

These stories are just a glimpse into the lasting impact our programs and services have made across Niagara.

As we embark on a new five-year strategic plan, we are advancing our vision to elevate the potential of everyone in Niagara. Our focus on transformation guides us in meeting Niagara's evolving needs, ensuring that each person who steps into our spaces finds opportunity, support, and a place to fulfill their potential. We are committed to adapting to the changing needs of our community, ensuring that we remain a relevant and effective resource for all.

Thank you to our team members, volunteers, and supporters for making these stories—and the community we all care for—possible. Your contributions are invaluable. Together, we're creating brighter futures.

With gratitude and anticipation,
 Christian Wulff and Allie Hughes

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and Communications

Jonna Wolfenberg

Manager of Philanthropy

The Shared Journey Back to Well-being

Anthony and his son Joey were no strangers to fitness. Before the pandemic, they had been members of the YMCA of Niagara in Grimsby. Still, like many others, their routine was interrupted when the world came to a standstill. With the reopening of the YMCA post-COVID, Anthony and Joey saw an opportunity to reignite their health and fitness journey together.

Finding the Right Fit: The YMCA Difference

Anthony had previously tried working out at other gyms in his youth, drawn by the affordability and ease. However, the convenience of a gym nearby made all the difference. The YMCA was just a 6-8 minute bike ride away, making it the perfect choice for the duo. Whether it was sunny or rainy, Anthony and Joey would hop on their bikes and head to the Y, with biking becoming a part of their warm-up routine. Even when the bike was out of commission, or the weather was extreme, they were determined to drive to the Y to ensure they got their workout.

An Accountability Partnership: Strengthening the Father-Son Bond

The real magic happened when Anthony and Joey decided to work out together. They became accountability partners, pushing and encouraging each other to stay consistent. This partnership strengthened their bond and helped them stick to a routine like never before. Joey, now 11, initially needed his dad's help with the equipment, but as time passed, he became more independent in the gym. Their fitness routine, which they adapted and customized with the help of an app, became a shared passion that brought them closer together.

The Impact of Community: Nic, The YMCA Staff Member

The YMCA of Niagara isn't just a gym; it's a community, which became especially clear when Nic, a YMCA staff member and personal trainer, noticed Anthony and Joey's regular presence. Nic's genuine friendliness and welcoming attitude made the gym feel like a second home for the pair. Nic would spot them during workouts, offer advice, and even engage in friendly banter—he affectionately called Joey "Yeoj," Joey spelled backwards.

The sense of community extended beyond the gym as Anthony and Joey began recognizing

When asked to describe the YMCA to someone considering joining, Anthony and Joey emphasize the sense of community and safety.

familiar faces around town, further deepening their connection to the Y. Nic played a crucial role in fostering this community spirit, making the gym a social and enjoyable place rather than just a chore.

Going Beyond Fitness: A Commitment to Well-being

Anthony and Joey's commitment to their fitness routine has a ripple effect on other areas of their lives. Joey's confidence has grown, and he's now



PICTURED: NIC, JOEY AND ANTHONY

setting future goals, like following in Dad's footsteps and playing football in high school. The consistency they've built at the Y has translated into other activities, such as summer bike rides and coaching soccer, contributing to Joey's overall physical and mental well-being.

The YMCA: A Safe and Welcoming Space for All

When asked to describe the YMCA to someone considering joining, Anthony and Joey emphasize the sense of community and safety. It's a place where everyone is welcome, and no one feels out of place. For them, life without the Y would mean missing workouts and lost opportunities for father-son bonding and personal growth.

Looking Ahead: A Bright Future Fueled by Consistency

As Joey looks forward to pursuing his dream of making the high school football team and continuing his fitness

journey, the foundation built at the YMCA of Niagara plays a crucial role.

The consistency and support offered by the Y, mainly through the encouragement of dedicated staff like Nic, have fostered Joey's physical growth and deepened the bond between him and his father, Anthony. Nic's approachable nature and genuine support exemplify the positive impact that a strong community and personalized guidance can have on one's fitness journey, making the YMCA more than just a place to work out but a place to build lasting connections and achieve long-term wellness.

Anthony suggests to those contemplating a YMCA membership: "Do it. Nic is the second coolest guy ever—after Dad, of course."

The Power of Play

In the summer of 2023, an idea took root within the Niagara community, driven by a shared commitment to creating meaningful experiences for refugee families temporarily residing in hotels. Launched in partnership with the McCall MacBain Foundation, this initiative aimed to provide more than just a refuge from the transitory nature of hotel living.

That it did. As the program unfolded, it blossomed into a vibrant community where children could revel in the joys of summer, discover new friendships, and explore their talents. By the end of summer 2024, the program had profoundly touched the lives of

organized by the program, Maximiliano unveiled four pieces of artwork impressing both peers and leaders with his artistic skill. With equal flair, Fernanda performed “Beautiful Things,” showcasing her musical ability and the program’s capacity to nurture such talents.

play, and talk with us about their day.” underscoring the transformative impact of the Summer Play Program, not just in entertaining the children, but in engaging them intellectually and emotionally, fostering a vibrant home life even amidst the challenges of displacement.



104 children, creating impactful interactions and weaving a tapestry of cultural exchange and shared experiences in Niagara.

One memorable story involves two particularly creative participants, Maximiliano and Fernanda. At a talent show

Maximiliano’s father, Manuel Adrián Ochoa, expressed a heartfelt gratitude that resonated with the program’s core mission: *“The summer camp helped our family because my children came back motivated and had a purpose during their summer break. They had different daily activities that made them think,*

Heidy Guevara, Fernanda’s mother, shared similar sentiments, appreciating the program’s role in providing her daughter a joyful escape from the confines of hotel life: *“We noticed that our daughter was very happy to share experiences and activities with us. She seemed more animated and*

less stressed.” This reflection points to the program’s broader benefits—reducing stress and enhancing the mental well-being of children thrust into unfamiliar environments.

Other parents echoed these reflections. Melannie Marquez highlighted the program’s role in breaking the monotony of everyday routines: *“The camp was very helpful in providing a distraction and a change in the children’s daily routine. It was comforting to know they were well-treated and had different activities to help them learn or release their energy.”*

Edinson Oliveros praised the program for its recreational value and its support for working parents: *“The program was very fun for my children. It is an excellent option that they give us so that during the summer they have fun and recreational activities to do. It is a space that*

It is a space that they also give to parents who work so that the children do not stay in the hotels without doing some type of activity beneficial to them.

they also give to parents who work so that the children do not stay in the hotels without doing some type of activity beneficial to them.”

Through these stories, “The Power of Play” stands as a testament to the power of compassion, creativity, and the transformative potential of play. It demonstrates how, even in challenging circumstances, children can thrive, parents can find respite, and communities can unite to celebrate the resilience and potential of every member.

IGNITING POTENTIAL THROUGH PARTNERSHIP: We would like to acknowledge the essential role of our funding partners at the McCall MacBain Foundation in the creation and advancement of this program.



IMPACT IN ACTION

In 2023-24, the YMCA of Niagara helped families and individuals to thrive in 151 locations across the region through our centres of community.



CHILD CARE



COMMUNITY



EMPLOYMENT
SERVICES



HEALTH, FITNESS
AND AQUATICS



DAY CAMP



IMMIGRANT
SERVICES

A Charity Igniting the Potential in People.

At the YMCA, we believe in the potential of every individual. With the right support, people can achieve incredible things. As a charitable organization, the YMCA of Niagara creates inclusive spaces and provides resources and opportunities that help children, youth, and families thrive while making a lasting impact across the Niagara Region.



Impact by the Numbers: Transforming Lives in Our Centres of Community



The YMCA of Niagara is the largest Child Care provider in the region, with 47 Centres impacting **2486 Niagara families**



14,280 individuals were supported in their personal fitness and well-being journeys across 3 health, fitness and aquatics centres in Grimsby, Welland and Port Colborne



4831

1199 children registered for 2023 Summer Day Camp at 12 locations region-wide



**Stronger Together
Community Campaign**

\$221,825

IMPACTFUL INTERACTIONS

delivered at Community Youth Programs in 16 locations across Niagara



2415 Jobseekers received guidance and support

1403

Donors were a part of our bigger impact story

was generously donated to support child and youth program participants through the Stronger Together Annual Community Campaign

151
**Niagara Locations
Delivering Programs**

The YMCA was present and serving the community in 151 locations across Niagara



A place to grow & belong

6407 parents and children had access to play, learn and connect at YMCA EarlyON Child and Family Centres

6689



Newcomers assisted

Employment and Immigrant Services welcomed 6689 newcomers to receive one of their first settlement supports at the YMCA of Niagara

From Program Participant to People Leader

From her first swim lesson to leading the YMCA of Niagara's people and culture initiatives, Connie's lifelong journey with the YMCA is one of growth, resilience, and dedication. Beginning as a young swimmer hesitant to get her face wet, she overcame countless challenges to become a mentor, a first-generation university graduate, and now an HR Manager. Throughout every chapter, the YMCA has provided Connie with steady support, a sense of community, and the opportunity to build a career helping others thrive. Her story embodies the Y's lasting impact on individuals and families.

Connie's journey with the YMCA began at six in Chatham, where her first challenge was learning to swim. Overcoming an initial fear of water, Connie faced early setbacks, including failing pre-beginner lessons twice and a nerve-wracking experience with treading water. Yet, she kept at it, advancing through swim levels and lifeguarding certifications, demonstrating a dedication that would define her relationship with the Y for decades.

By 12, Connie volunteered in youth and camp programs, just as her community faced economic hardship due to industry downturns. For Connie and many families, the Y became a steady presence, offering support and stability in uncertain times. This inspired her growing commitment to the YMCA, sparking a dream to work on the pool deck one day.

At 16, Connie realized that dream of becoming a lifeguard and swim instructor. Her empathy and understanding of water-related fears turned her role into a platform to instill confidence in others. Through this work, she saved enough to become the first in her family to attend university, marking another

milestone with support from her Y community.

After a brief time away during her studies at Brock University, Connie reconnected with the YMCA through the Grantham Branch. Completing her Recreation and Leisure Studies degree, she took on roles that would eventually lead to a pioneering project—introducing rolling registration in aquatics.

Connie's YMCA story deepened further with her son's

Driven to support the organization in new ways, Connie returned to school for a diploma in Human Resource Management. Her commitment to safety and well-being in aquatics translated seamlessly into her administrative role, where today, she serves as the Manager of Human Resources for the YMCA of Niagara.

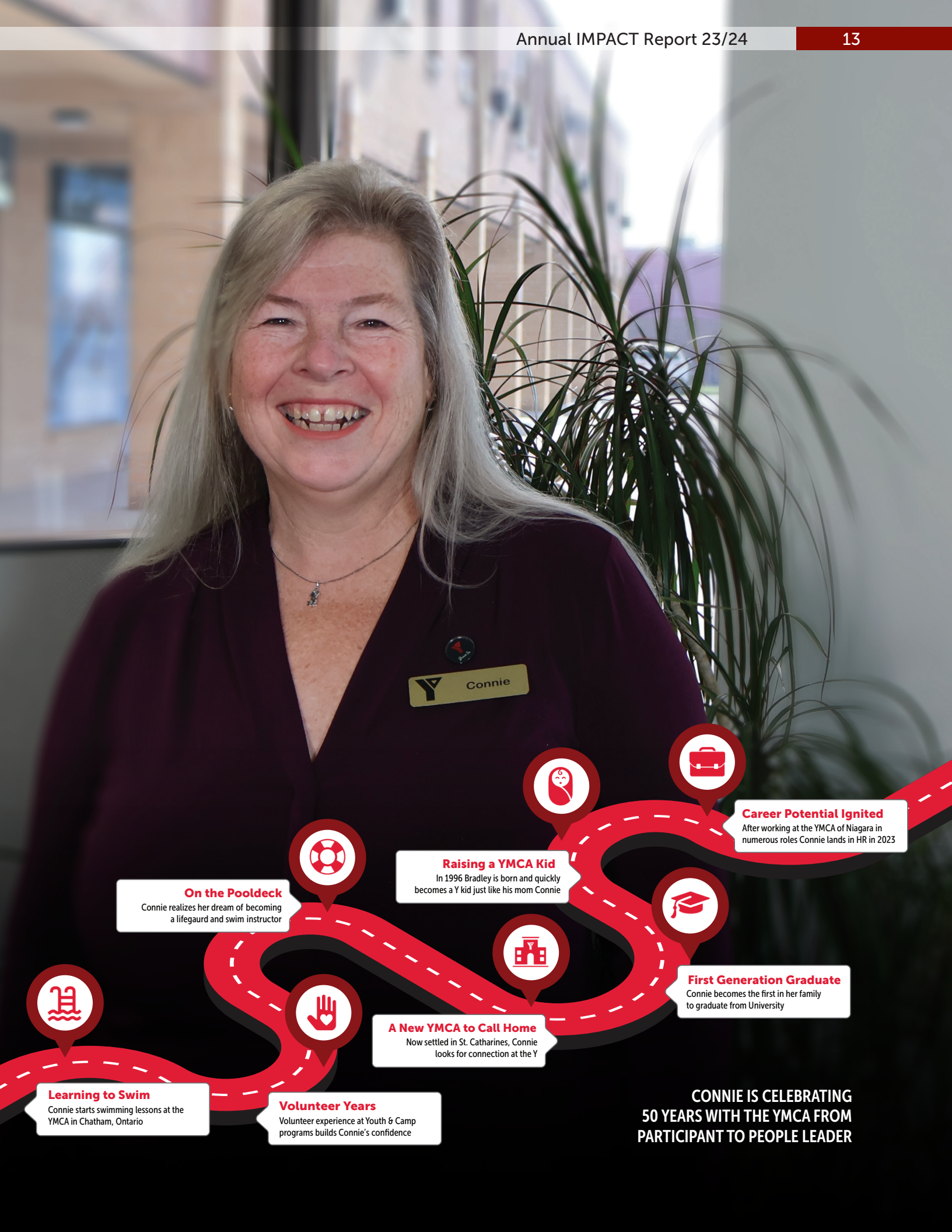
Through every chapter (good and bad), the YMCA has been more than a place of employment or a source of

“Through all of the ‘ups’, and also life’s many challenges—my YMCA family has been there, encouraging, mentoring, and supporting me.”

—Connie Mack, Manager of Human Resources

involvement. As he thrived in Y child care and swimming programs, Connie found the YMCA became a second home for her family. Her career expanded through various opportunities, from facility management to overseeing aquatics programs and ProKids, an initiative that reduced barriers for families much like her own seeking recreation.

personal growth—it has been a constant presence, supporting Connie's journey and inspiring her dedication. For Connie, the YMCA represents more than a destination; it's been her life's journey, filled with challenges and achievements, and a source of strength that's always guided her forward.



Y Connie



**CONNIE IS CELEBRATING
50 YEARS WITH THE YMCA FROM
PARTICIPANT TO PEOPLE LEADER**

Thank you to our Generous 2023-24 Donors

Your Gifts Ignited the Potential in People in Our Niagara Community

- A.C. McCallum - Branch 479
 - Royal Canadian Legion
 - Susan Adamyk
 - Parveen Afif
 - Vanessa Agbonwaneten
 - Sharon Alakas
 - Yvette Amor
 - Andrew, Allison, Steven & Sydney
 - Rusty Baillie
 - Sue Baillie
 - Keith Becker
 - Dr. Amanda Bell
 - Gary Berg
 - Denisse Betancourt
 - Boles Family
 - Delia Boom
 - Craig & Lori Boyd
 - Lauri & Brian Brady
 - Marian Bredin
 - Claudia & Dante Brema
 - Jean Brohman
 - Dale & Nancy Brown
 - The Brown Family
 - Rudo Buhera
 - The Burns Family
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 - CAA Niagara
 - Martine Caraguel-O'Brien
 - Judith Carroll
 - Yves Chen
 - Vanessa Cheropita
 - Michael Cherwonogrodzky
 - Chippawa Lions Club
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 - Laura & Sandra Drapeau
 - Patti Dueckman
 - Lillian Dunn
 - John Duquette
 - Edward J. Freeland Foundation
 - Mary Jane & Bryan Ferrell
 - First Ontario Credit Union
 - Tricia Flynn
 - Kenny and Alexia Forstinger
 - Aishe Fortune
 - Galajda Family
 - Garden City Lions Club
 - Garden City Psychology
 - Mariam Gibbons
 - Jay & Stefanie Hamilton
 - Seoreong Han
 - Kimberley Hannah
 - In Honour of Port Colborne Staff Team
 - In Honour of the HR department of Niagara Health
 - Jeff's atWork Office Furniture
 - Nora Jenter
 - Geraldine Kelter
 - Leena Khasnobish
 - Vivian Kinnaird
 - Kinplus Kinesiology Services
 - Kiwanis Club of St. Catharines Inc. - Project
 - Kiwanis Club of Stamford
 - Kiwanis Club of Welland
 - Loretta Kooter and family
 - Jessica Krasovec
 - John Kwekkeboom
 - Eleanor & Cohen L.
 - Jocelyn Lallouet
 - Amanda Lamb
 - Jennifer, Dan, Alexandria & Meaghan Lancione
 - Leaders for Leaders Inc.
 - Kelly Lennox
 - Roxane Lewis
 - Lions Club of Merritton Inc.
 - Lions Club of Port Dalhousie
 - Irene Lis
 - Loblaws Inc.
 - Lori & Jonathan Lowry
 - The Lunch Lady
 - Connie Mack & Bradley Winslade
 - Andrew MacLellan
 - Mandarin Charitable Foundation
 - Sharon Mannella
 - Susan Maracle
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 - Jordan McCarthy
 - Jennifer McCreath
 - Ben McDermott
 - Allysa McLean
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 - Mountainview Homes (Niagara) Ltd.
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 - Melanie N.
 - Sue Napper
 - Stephanie Neale
 - Niagara Health
 - Niagara IceDogs Hockey Club
 - Niagara River Lions
 - Aurora Notarianni
 - Chris O'Connor
 - Kirsten O'Neil
 - Hannah Osborne
 - Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School - Grimsby
 - Gillian Pagnotta
 - Peter Patchet
 - Rosa Petitti
 - AJ Phillips
 - Port Colborne Lions Club
 - Emily, Jason, Melanie & Nicole Poulin
 - The Printing House Ltd.
 - ProfessioNail Roofing
 - Johny Ramirez
 - Reniel & Jazz
 - Donna & Archie Reynolds
 - Susan Robbins
 - Angel & Chase Robitaille
 - Kerri Rogers
 - Julie Rorison
 - Rotary Club of Welland
 - Royal Canadian Legion Branch 4
 - Royal Canadian Legion Branch 127
 - Trish Rybski
 - Scotiabank
 - Heather Scott
 - Senator Gibson Public School
 - Jyoti Sethi
 - Sheehan Family
 - Janet St. Amand & Doug Herod
 - St. Andrew's United Church
 - Stamford Lions Club
 - George Stephenson
 - The Suchorab Family
 - Terry & Carol Suess
 - Graham Sweeting
 - Sasha Swift
 - Elizabeth Taylor
 - Steve Taylor
 - Tepperman's Furniture Store
 - Myriam Thomas
 - Janette Thorpe
 - Toronto-Dominion Bank
 - Hope Townson & Family
 - Verna and Maurice Walker Fund at Niagara Community Foundation
 - Pat Weasner
 - Welland Jackfish
 - The Welland Lions Club
 - Steve Wideman
 - Melissa Wolfrath
 - Christian Wulff
 - Alex Zambakkides
- MEMORIAL GIFTS**
- Edmund Neil Patte
 - Jane Quinlan
 - Patrick Robson
 - Patricia Southern
 - Cyril Warren

We would also like to acknowledge the many special event donations and anonymous gifts received between September 1, 2023, and August 31, 2024.

With Gratitude to our Funding Partners

Recognizing the Impactful Difference Your Support Made in 2023-24

- The Branscombe Family Foundation
- Canadian Career Development Foundation
- Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities
- City of Port Colborne
- City of Welland
- Community Services Recovery Fund
- Fedcap Canada
- Government of Canada
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- McCall MacBain Foundation
- Niagara Community Foundation
- Niagara Region
- Niagara Workforce Planning Board
- Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture
- Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Rotary Club of St. Catharines
- United Way Niagara
- YMCA of Greater Toronto
- YMCA National Capital

Financial Highlights

Year Ending August 31, 2024

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

Statement of Financial Position	2024	2023
	(000's) \$	(000's) \$
Assets		
Current Assets	6,958	7,817
Cash Internally Restricted Fund	1,000	1,000
Long Term Investments	12,492	8,860
	<u>20,450</u>	<u>17,677</u>
Long Term Investments	1,639	1,514
Capital Assets	15,752	16,661
Total Assets	<u>37,841</u>	<u>35,852</u>
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	5,240	5,189
Due to related parties	229	379
Deferred Capital Contributions	10,267	11,117
Total Liabilities	<u>15,736</u>	<u>16,685</u>
Fund Balances		
Endowment Fund	3,763	3,499
Internally Restricted Fund	1,000	1,000
General Fund and other	17,342	14,668
Total Fund Balances	<u>22,105</u>	<u>19,167</u>
	<u>37,841</u>	<u>35,852</u>

Statement of Operations

Year Ending August 31, 2024

Statement of Operations	2024	2023
	(000's) \$	(000's) \$
Revenue		
Grant Revenue	13,913	12,621
Programs & Services	14,991	12,469
Others	1,144	871
Donations	222	109
Gain on Disposal of Capital Assets	0	4
	<u>30,270</u>	<u>26,074</u>
Financial Assistance	(300)	(205)
Total	<u>29,970</u>	<u>25,869</u>
Expenses		
Wages and Benefits	19,785	17,231
Occupancy and Facility Maintenance	3,585	2,950
Program and Support Costs	2,698	2,344
Participant Wage Subsidies and Training Supports	787	967
	<u>26,855</u>	<u>23,492</u>
Excess of Revenue over Expenses before Net Amortization	3,115	2,377
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	1,106	1,078
Amortization of capital assets	(1,547)	(1,693)
Excess (deficit) of Revenue over Expenses	<u>2,674</u>	<u>1,762</u>

Elevating Niagara: The Mission, Vision & Values That Guide Us

At the YMCA of Niagara, our Mission, Vision, and Values guide everything we do. As we look to the future, these principles not only define who we are but also inspire us to elevate the potential of individuals and families across Niagara.



MISSION

The YMCA of Niagara is a charity, serving all, providing transformational opportunities for individuals and their community.



VISION

Inspiring lifelong personal growth, well-being, and community connection.



VALUES

We believe that living by our values builds healthy self-esteem, personal happiness, and prosperous communities for all.

Values reflect who we are, how we live, and treat others.

The core values we share at the YMCA are:

Advocacy: We are focused on the future; we are leaders, bold in our support of others.

Caring: Acting with compassion and concern for the well-being of oneself and others.

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

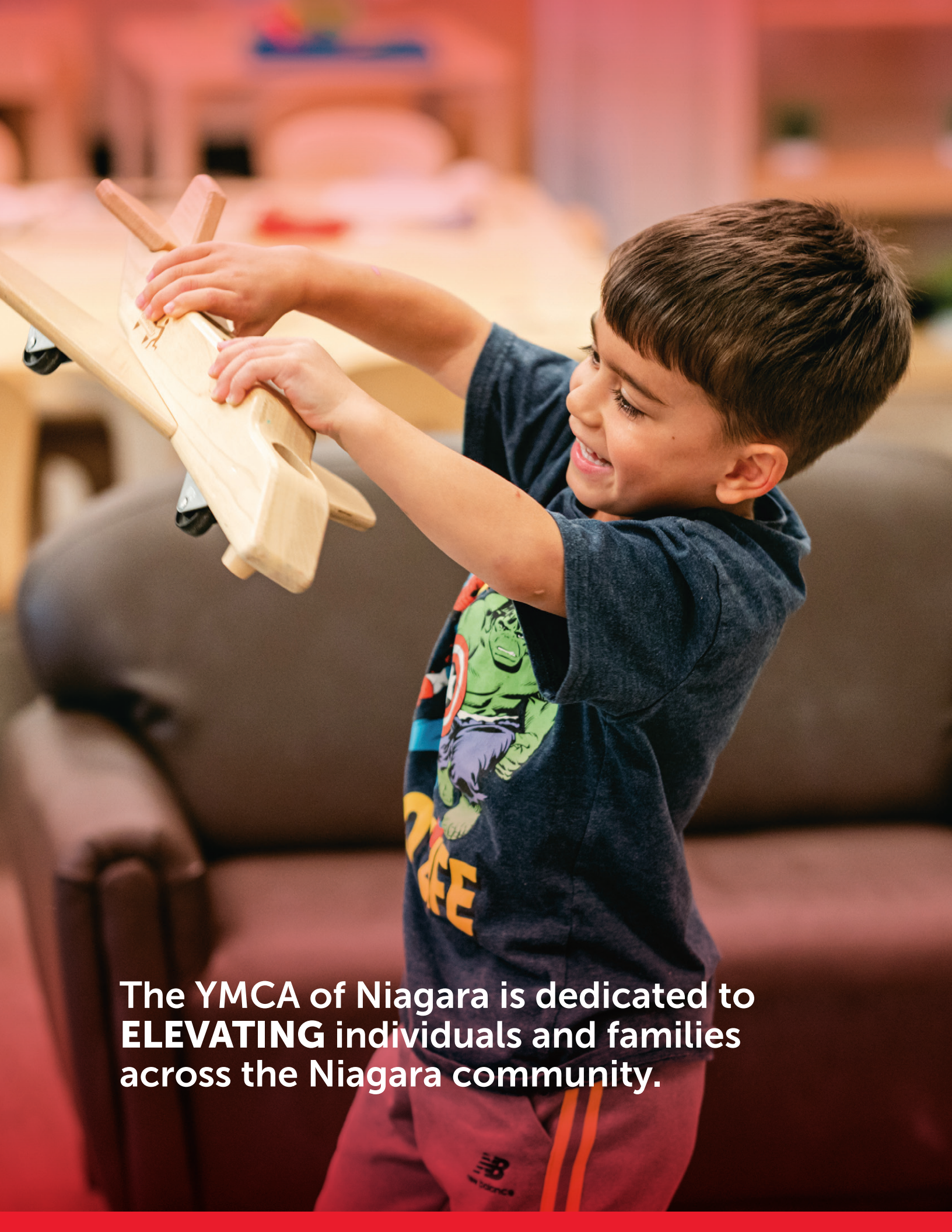
Honesty: Demonstrating integrity and trustworthiness, in all its forms.

Inclusiveness: Appreciating and respecting diversity as we strive to be open to all.

We seek to understand the uniqueness of others and to create welcoming spaces.

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

Responsibility: Being dependable and accountable for choices, actions, and commitments.



The YMCA of Niagara is dedicated to **ELEVATING** individuals and families across the Niagara community.



Shine On

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ymcaofniagara.org



Charitable Registration
#11930 7064 RR0001