

ADVERTISING FEATURE



Helping young people grow, thrive, lead and belong

- YMCA Calgary delivers programs and services for children and youth in more than 60 schools, churches and communities throughout the city. YMCA programs support immigrant youth, Aboriginal children and youth, and other young people by providing opportunities to grow, thrive, lead and belong.
- YMCA Calgary is a volunteer-driven organization with a volunteer board of directors. More than 900 volunteers help deliver programs at all YMCA branches.
- Operating in Calgary for 110 years, YMCA is a self-sustaining, community-based charity.
- YMCA seeks to promote the spiritual, mental, physical and social development of people of all ages, and to foster a sense of community responsibility.
- YMCA Calgary is part of a national federation of YMCAs across Canada and part of a worldwide YMCA network.
- YMCA Calgary operates Camp Chief Hector, located in the Rocky Mountains west of Calgary. "Camp Chief Hector gives kids a chance to go out into the mountains and experience sleeping in a tipi under the stars — it's unforgettable," says YMCA's capital campaign chair, Stephen Letwin.
- Everyone can participate in YMCA programs, regardless of financial circumstances. YMCA Calgary provides financial assistance to children and youth through its Strong Kids Campaign.

Our community's centre

New Saddletowne YMCA opens horizons for Calgarians

Great things will happen at the new Saddletowne YMCA — now open in the brand-new, spectacular Genesis Centre of Community Wellness in northeast Calgary.

YMCA Calgary is a partner in the Genesis Centre of Community Wellness, a 225,000-square-foot multi-purpose complex at 7556 Falconridge Blvd. N.E., built to enrich the health, wellness and unity of communities in northeast Calgary.

The centre is a tremendous resource for all of Calgary, and particularly the northeast quadrant.

Other partners in the Genesis Centre include the Calgary Public Library and the North East Centre of Community Society (NECCS), representing the communities of Taradale, Martindale and Saddleridge.

All levels of government contributed funding to build the \$120-million complex, a Gold LEED-certified building whose amenities include a regional branch of the Calgary Public Library, multiple indoor and outdoor soccer fields, community

multi-purpose rooms — and so much more.

"It's quite spectacular," says YMCA Calgary president and CEO Helene Weir.

"We are very excited to be in this new location in the northeast, in this amazing centre that will have a lot of great community resources. There are many wonderful things that will be happening there, plus human services programming supported by the United Way.

"It's a real community collaboration and partnership, with significant funding and leadership provided by the City of Calgary."

YMCA and its supporters raised \$17.5 million toward the cost of Saddletowne YMCA, which is designed to be a centre of community, providing health and wellness and community outreach programs for all ages.

"Thank you to our wonderful donors, who contributed to our portion of the funding," Weir says.

Saddletowne YMCA includes a training pool and 25-metre swimming pool, an indoor running track, gymnasium and multi-purpose studios, an indoor climbing wall, fitness and weightlifting equipment, steam rooms, an on-deck whirlpool, babysitting services, licensed child care and space for community

outreach programs.

"Northeast Calgary now has a facility that provides access for many children and adults who otherwise wouldn't have easy access to sports or recreational facilities," says IAMGOLD president and chief executive officer, Stephen Letwin, who chaired YMCA's capital campaign (at the time, Letwin was an executive vice-president at Enbridge, a major supporter of the capital campaign).

"In today's world, getting children in an environment where they can exercise is tremendous. Any time you can get them into a gym where they can play basketball, badminton or soccer and get in better shape adds not only to their health, but also to their character development. I'm just a huge fan of the Y because it reaches out to communities that are in need of those facilities."

Adds Jane Savidant, capital campaign vice-chair and past chair of YMCA Calgary's board of directors at the time: "YMCA is a wonderful place for health, fitness and recreation. As you get to know the Y, you start to realize

all the truly amazing things it does in the community."

YMCA's campaign, which took place from 2004 to 2007, raised funds not only for Saddletowne YMCA, but also for the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign; YMCA community outreach programs; a renovation and water system upgrade at Camp Chief Hector YMCA; and a renovation of Eau Claire YMCA.

"YMCA is more than 'gym and swim,'" notes Weir. "It's not just a fitness centre. The Y is here to enhance the quality of life in communities. We are there for all age groups; everyone is welcome at YMCA. And we provide assistance for those who can't afford the cost of membership."



The grand opening ceremony for the Genesis Centre of Community Wellness takes place tomorrow at 11 a.m., with celebrations ongoing throughout the weekend.

The YMCA Growing Strong Together Community Campaign allowed us to invest in communities and support the following programs, services, and facilities: community outreach programs in more than 60 locations; creating opportunities for all; building the new northeast Saddletowne YMCA; renewing existing YMCA facilities; and Camp Chief Hector YMCA redevelopment and expansion.

YMCA Calgary appreciates the generous support of our donors and wishes to recognize and thank all our donors who contributed to this campaign.

Our leadership gifts included the following donors:

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