



News release

For Immediate Release

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YMCA Strengthening Community Campaign to develop Sarnia-Lambton's future leaders

Sarnia, ON – Helping youth gain important leadership skills, supporting newcomers to the community and giving children a safe haven are some of the areas being supported by the YMCA's Strengthening Community Campaign. To-date, the Y has raised over \$310,000 of its \$1.5 million goal.

"We are excited about the support we have received from the Sarnia-Lambton community," says CEO Jim Janzen, YMCAs Across Southwestern Ontario. "This campaign is focusing on the learning and career work of the YMCA in helping develop our youth and supporting our vulnerable citizens."

In addition to facility improvements at the YMCA Learning and Career Centre at 660 Oakdale Avenue, the Y will create a Leadership and Challenge Centre at this site. The centre, scheduled to open in May 2012, will include an outdoor facility with a high-ropes course, low-ropes course and climbing tower as well as an indoor bouldering wall.

"In looking at how we can strengthen our community we identified a real need for leadership development, particularly amongst our youth," explains Barry M. Hogan, Strengthening Community Campaign Chair. "While there are a number of great organizations working with youth, there is no place for these groups to take youth to develop important leadership skills."

"I am very pleased to present \$71,000 on behalf of the Ontario Trillium Foundation to the YMCA's Strengthening Community Campaign," said Sarnia-Lambton MPP Bob Bailey. "This initiative by our local YMCA will help to provide a safe environment for young people in our community to gain self-confidence, self-esteem, integrity and good communication skills which are important leadership qualities."

"The YMCA by developing leadership and learning skills through the Leadership and Challenge Centre will help develop the next generation of Sarnia-Lambton leaders," says Mayor Mike Bradley. "The centre will provide a new unique opportunity for youth from throughout Sarnia-Lambton to develop the skills needed to be successful in any career and life direction they choose. Everyone wins."

The campaign has received \$71,000 in funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Significant donations have also been received from Gamble Insurance (\$25,000), Kel-Gor Limited (\$25,000), RBC Royal Bank (\$25,000), Freedom 55 Financial, a division of London Life Insurance Company (\$25,000), Dominion of Canada (\$25,000), Economical Insurance (\$25,000), Gore Insurance (\$10,000), Steeves and Rozema (\$10,000), Intact Insurance (\$10,000) as well as from YMCA family and friends.

About the YMCA

The Y is a charitable organization dedicated to serving our community through the development of all people in spirit, mind and body, regardless of their ability to pay. The Y reaches out to children and families throughout the community to provide opportunities they might otherwise never have. Through programs and services, the Y provides the recreational, learning and life-enriching experiences that build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

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