

GREATER TOGETHER

Belonging in Action



Southwestern
Ontario

Shine On

Annual Report

2025

Our Mission:

A charity that ignites growth and belonging for people of all backgrounds, beliefs, and abilities.

Our Vision:

Thriving communities where everyone's potential can shine.

Our Values:

Inclusiveness, Honesty,
Responsibility, Respect, Caring

Belonging: The Spark That Starts Everything

Reflecting on a year of connection, impact, and community coming together with purpose

Dear Friends of YMCA of Southwestern Ontario,

As I reflect on 2025, what I am most proud of is the clarity of intention behind our work – and how that intention showed up in moments when people felt truly welcomed. Again and again, we saw how **connection can change a trajectory or open a door**. This is **belonging in action**, built through thoughtful decisions, inclusive programs, and a commitment to meeting each community where they are.

Throughout this report, you will see that intention reflected in the stories, investments, and outcomes we share.

Across YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, when people experience belonging, they move forward with confidence, hope, and a stronger sense of what's possible. In 2025, that came to life across our work, **supporting more than 206,000 individuals** throughout the region.

In our child care spaces, educators created safe, nurturing environments where children felt seen and families felt supported – including the opening of new YMCA child care and before-school and after-school programs across Southwestern Ontario, **expanding access** where it's needed most. In Employment and Newcomer Services, individuals navigating change found **guidance, encouragement, and renewed confidence** as they built new beginnings.

We saw this same spirit in our Health, Fitness and Aquatics programs, where members were supported on their wellness journeys by caring staff and a community that reminds us **no one walks alone**. For youth facing barriers, programs like **Back on Track** created space to reflect, rebuild, and rediscover potential – proving that **support at the right moment can make all the difference**.

None of this impact happens in isolation. It is powered by generosity. In 2025, donors, partners, volunteers, and participants helped raise **more than \$2.8 million**, ensuring access to YMCA programs and services across our region.

This year also marked the launch of **Greater Together**, a national YMCA movement rooted in the belief that connection fuels opportunity. More than a campaign, it reflects our ongoing commitment to building welcoming spaces where people can thrive.

Thank you for walking alongside us – together, we are shaping a YMCA grounded in belonging, connection, and possibility for the communities we serve, today and for generations to come.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Lockie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew Lockie
CEO
YMCA of Southwestern Ontario

Stewards of Possibility

Listening, investing, and planning for what communities need next

Dear YMCA Community,

As Board Chair, I have the privilege of supporting our YMCA from a place of stewardship: listening closely to our communities, guiding long-term vision, and ensuring the Y remains strong, responsive, and sustainable for the future.

In 2025 we expanded access to child care for families while continuing to plan for future growth. We stood alongside young people, offering support during moments of challenge and helping them move forward with confidence. We looked ahead, engaging our London community in the Reimagining Centre Branch YMCA initiative to ensure this vital downtown space remains welcoming, and relevant for generations to come.

At YMCA Camp Queen Elizabeth, the ongoing CQE Elevate initiative reflects thoughtful investment in safety, accessibility, and long-term sustainability to protect a place where belonging has shaped lives for more than 70 years.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you to our donors, partners, volunteers, and supporters. Your trust allows the Y to remain a place of connection and possibility. As we look ahead, we do so with confidence knowing that when we work greater together, our communities are stronger and our future is bright.



Alison Ewart
Board Chair
YMCA of Southwestern Ontario

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & COMMUNITY LEADERS

2025 Board of Directors

Alison Ewart, Board Chair
Carlos Henriquez, Vice-Chair
Kristina Shaw
Gillian Heisz
Hoda Chehab
Kara Heddle
Katie Osborne
Ken Whiteford

Jodi Younger
Tolu Edunjobi
Michael Oates
Silvia Di Cicco
Steve Kay
Tony Jacobs
Zach Weese

2025 Board Committee Community Members

Casey Dockendorff
Michael Herbert

Michael Noh
Abe Oudshoorn

Where Every Child's Journey Begins with Belonging

In early learning spaces filled with care and curiosity, belonging becomes the spark that shapes bright futures.

At YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, child care is more than early learning – it's where belonging takes root. Every day, our educators create safe, welcoming environments where children feel seen, supported, and free to be themselves. It's in these moments of connection that confidence grows, curiosity thrives, and lifelong learning begins.

In 2025, we proudly expanded our child care footprint by opening YMCA child care and before-school and after-school programs at St. Anne Catholic School in London, as well as at Dr. David Suzuki and Forest Glade public schools in Windsor. These new centres strengthen community connections and ensure more families have access to high-quality, inclusive care close to home – because when children belong, families thrive.

Our momentum continues into 2026. Having already celebrated the opening of John Paul II YMCA Child Care in London and Turtle Island in Woodstock, we are excited to open three additional child care and before-school and after-school centres this year across London, St. Thomas, and Windsor, supporting more than 300 additional children.

Behind every child's experience is a caring educator who brings heart, purpose, and passion to their work. As one YMCA child care staff member shared:

"Every day at the Y reminds me that through care, compassion, and connection, we can help children grow, and flourish. Serving children and their families is not just my job – it's my calling."

– Amel, School Age Educator

Together, we are growing with the communities we serve where children feel they belong – and where brighter futures begin.



GRAND OPENING OF YMCA CHILD CARE AT ST. ANNE CATHOLIC SCHOOL.
L-R: Robin Jones (Child Care Director, St. Anne London Child Care, YSWO), Lori Gower (Regional Manager of EarlyON and Family Centres, YSWO), Andrew Lockie (CEO, YSWO), Andrew Canham (VP, Children's Educational Services, YSWO)

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Where Belonging Ignites New Beginnings

Through connection, coaching, and care, YMCA Employment Services help people find hope, confidence, and a place to shine.

At the heart of YMCA Employment Services is a simple belief: when people feel supported and connected, opportunity begins to shine – it's about igniting potential and creating pathways where people feel they belong and possibility sparks into action.

For newcomers, job seekers, and those navigating change, YMCA Employment Services offers guidance, practical training, and unwavering belief. It's here that confidence is rebuilt, skills are strengthened, and hope is renewed – together.

Saber's story reflects this impact in action. Arriving in Canada in 2024 with strong education and professional experience, Saber was eager to build a meaningful career but faced unexpected barriers navigating the Canadian job market. Through YMCA Employment Services, he found personalized support, hands-on coaching, and a team that recognized his potential.

With one-on-one guidance, workshops, and access to required certifications, Saber gained the tools and confidence he needed to move forward. In 2025, that journey led to full-time, permanent employment – a milestone that brought stability, pride, and a renewed sense of purpose.

As Saber shared:

"YMCA helped me understand the job market, strengthen my resume, and prepare with confidence. Their encouragement and belief in me made all the difference. I'm truly grateful for the support I received."

Stories like Saber's remind us what's possible when people are supported to belong and empowered to succeed. Together, we are helping individuals build brighter futures – strengthening families, workplaces, and communities along the way.



NEWCOMER SERVICES

New Beginnings, Brighter Tomorrows Vanessa's Y Story

Together, we ignite confidence, connection, and belonging – helping newcomers find their place and thrive.

When I arrived in a new country, I was focused on caring for my children and finding my footing – but I didn't yet realize how important belonging would be for me, too. YMCA became more than a place to learn or participate; it became a space where I could grow as a woman, a friend, a creative person, and a newcomer finding her voice.

At first, I was afraid to speak English in class. My teacher encouraged me to volunteer, and that simple suggestion sparked a turning point. Through YMCA Newcomer and Community Services, I found my first volunteer opportunity – and from my very first experience, I felt welcomed, supported, and truly included in this multicultural community.

Since then, I've volunteered at community events, presentations, wellness activities, and celebrations. Along the way, I met people with stories like mine – newcomers navigating change, building confidence, and supporting one another. That sense of connection gave me courage, joy, and hope. It reminded me that I belong.

One of the most meaningful parts of my journey has been encouraging others to participate, too. Seeing friends grow more confident, feel included, and discover their own sense of belonging has been incredibly fulfilling.

Through volunteering, I am gaining Canadian experience, improving my English, and building confidence for my future career. But more than that, I am part of a community that believes in potential and lifts people up.

Helping others has not only supported their journey – it has transformed mine. Together, we are stronger. Together, we belong.



Where Community Becomes Our Strength

Belonging is at the heart of every wellness journey – and at the Y, no one walks that path alone.



Across our Health, Fitness and Aquatics spaces, passionate staff create welcoming environments where encouragement is constant, progress is celebrated, and every member is supported to thrive.

For **Candice**, that support was transformative. When she first joined the Learn to Run program at the Strathroy-Caradoc Family YMCA, her goal was simply to try something new.

What followed was a journey fueled by dedicated staff, the guidance of her amazing instructor Michelle, and a run group that believed in her potential from day one. With every stride, confidence ignited – leading Candice from her first run to proudly crossing the finish line of a marathon.

“Watching Candice’s journey alongside Michelle was truly inspiring. The encouragement, guidance, and genuine care Michelle and the Y staff brought to every step created a space where Candice felt supported and believed in. That sense of community is what helps members achieve things they once thought were impossible.”

– Kari-Anne, Health, Fitness and Aquatics Manager

Krista’s story reflects another powerful form of support. What began as swim lessons and play time for her children became a space for her own healing and growth. With access to fitness programs, aquatics, and compassionate staff who understood the importance of balance and self care, Krista rediscovered her strength – physically and mentally.

“At first, I came for my kids – but eventually, I started coming for myself. Little by little, I began to feel stronger, happier, and more confident. The Y gave me the space and support I needed.”

– Krista, Proud Sarnia-Lambton Y Member

Different paths. Shared purpose. Through Health, Fitness and Aquatics, YMCA staff spark potential, nurture belonging, and walk alongside every member’s journey – because when people are supported with care and commitment, they shine.

Reimagining Centre Branch YMCA

Together, we are sparking new possibilities – creating a place where community, connection, and well-being can shine.



At the Y, belonging is built together – through listening, learning, and imagining what’s possible when a community comes together with purpose. That belief is guiding Reimagining Centre Branch YMCA, an initiative focused on renewing this vital downtown London space to serve today’s needs while preparing for the future.

Our Centre Branch Y has long been a welcoming hub for health, fitness, aquatics, and connection in the heart of London. As our community continues to evolve, we recognized an opportunity to thoughtfully re-envision how this space can better support well-being, accessibility, and inclusion – not only for current members, but for downtown London and the broader community.

Earlier this year we formally began the Reimagining Centre Branch process, engaging design experts and inviting members, staff, volunteers, and community partners to share their insights.

Since then, engagement sessions and an online survey have helped us better understand what the community values most and what matters in a revitalized Centre Branch. This input is shaping a shared vision rooted in inclusion, vitality, and opportunity.



WHAT’S NEXT

Guided by community voices, Reimagining Centre Branch is moving into a thoughtful planning and design phase focused on safety, accessibility, and long-term sustainability – while honouring the branch’s role as a place of belonging. This work is centered on establishing clear priorities and a shared roadmap, laying the groundwork for a vibrant, inclusive community hub that will support health, wellness, and connection in downtown London for decades to come.

Together, we are reimagining what’s possible – because when we plan with our community, we are truly greater together.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Young Voices, Endless Potential

Belonging lights the path – helping youth discover who they are, what they can do, and the spark that ignites their future.

When young people feel supported, understood, and connected, setbacks can become turning points. Through YMCA Youth Engagement programs, belonging becomes the spark that ignites confidence, resilience, and hope.

Launched in 2025 in Chatham-Kent, **Back on Track by the YMCA** was created to support youth facing academic suspension – helping them stay connected to learning while strengthening well-being and life skills. Delivered in partnership with local schools, and made possible by the incredible generosity of The Joyce Family Foundation, the program provides a safe, caring space where youth are encouraged to reflect, rebuild, and move forward with purpose.



MEET LINDSAY ROSE, YMCA YOUTH SUPPORT WORKER, SHOWN HERE IN OUR BACK ON TRACK SPACE AT THE CHATHAM-KENT YMCA.

At the heart of Back on Track is individualized support. Each young person receives a customized plan that addresses their unique challenges, builds decision-making and social skills, and reinforces a sense of belonging. Youth support workers engage closely with families and schools, ensuring every participant feels seen, supported, and empowered to shine.

The impact is felt not only by youth, but by families as well. One parent shared:

“Although my son was skeptical at first, he ended up really enjoying his time in the program. I’ve seen real growth in his reasoning and decision-making, and he rated his experience a 10 out of 10. I’m confident he will take so much from this program.”

Back on Track is a powerful example of what’s possible when communities come together to support young people through challenge and change. By igniting potential and creating spaces where youth belong, the Y is helping young voices rise – and brighter futures take shape.

Greater Together: A Movement That Sparks Us All

A national movement rooted in community – where connection ignites potential and everyone can thrive.

Last fall, YMCA launched Greater Together, a national campaign that celebrates the power of belonging and the impact created when people come together with purpose. Rolled out across the country, the campaign reflects a core YMCA belief: we are stronger, braver, and more resilient when we lift one another up.

Greater Together highlights the Y as a place where people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities feel welcome – and where potential is never out of reach. It also reinforces the importance of access, ensuring financial assistance and community support remain central to our mission so everyone can participate, grow, and belong.



Watch the Greater Together campaign video: <https://youtu.be/EorAf7hLrHY>

Greater Together in action

Across our YMCA, this vision is lived through everyday moments of care, teamwork, and compassion. For YMCA staff member **Megan Wales**, this is what Greater Together looks like in action.

“Every day in our Care for Newcomer Children program, I see what it truly means to be greater together. We welcome newcomer families with open hearts, understanding the courage it takes to start fresh in a new place. Even on challenging days, patience, kindness, and care help families feel safe, supported, and that they belong.

To give our best to children and families, we lift each other up too. We rely on one another’s strengths and step in without hesitation – that spirit of teamwork is what makes us strong. One of the most inspiring moments for me is seeing a former newcomer and program participant return as a volunteer. She’s gaining experience, building confidence, and finding true belonging as part of our team. At the Y, these connections remind me that together, we grow stronger and reach further than we ever could alone.”

Greater Together is both a promise and a call to action – that the Y will continue creating spaces where connection sparks hope, community fuels growth, and belonging is put into action, together.



Celebrating Women Who Lead and Inspire

Forty years of YMCA Women of Excellence



FROM LEFT: SAIDAT ABARI, DR. TREENA ORCHARD, DR. JANET COLLINS, CASS BAYLEY, LYNNE LIVINGSTONE, DR. SARAH WOODRUFF, AND DR. SUSAN MCNAIR

Every two years, the Y honours the women in our community who shine brightly as leaders, changemakers, and innovators in their fields – women whose passion and purpose strengthen our community and inspire others to rise. We were delighted to celebrate with honorees past and present at the 2025 YMCA Women of Excellence Awards presented by BMO – a powerful celebration of connection, legacy, and impact.

The incredible women honoured at our May 2025 celebration include:

SAIDAT ABARI Arts, Culture, Education, and Training	DR. SUSAN MCNAIR Health, Science, and Technology
DR. JANET COLLINS Breaking Barriers	DR. TREENA ORCHARD Social Justice
LYNNE LIVINGSTONE Business and Professions	DR. SARAH WOODRUFF Sport, Fitness, and Recreation
CASS BAYLEY Entrepreneurs	

Together with our generous sponsors and attendees, we raised more than **\$180,000** to support access to life-changing Y programs and services – helping ensure that people of all backgrounds, beliefs, and abilities can experience everything the Y has to offer.

From our very first YMCA Women of Excellence in 1985, to this 40-year milestone, we celebrate not only the women we honour – but the community that stands beside them. When we recognize leadership and lift one another up, we're truly greater together.

We look forward to continuing this tradition when the YMCA Women of Excellence Awards returns on **May 13, 2027!**

Generosity That Ignites Change

Every gift becomes a spark – opening doors, lifting barriers, and helping our communities thrive together.

To everyone who participated in a Y event, sponsored an initiative, or made a donation in 2025, THANK YOU. With your support, **we raised more than \$2.8 million** for access to YMCA programs and services – igniting growth and belonging for people across Southwestern Ontario.

We truly are greater together! A big thank you to:

- The 1,100+ people who ran, walked, rolled, or poled at Jordan’s Run The Runway (London, Chatham, Sarnia, and St. Thomas).
- The 1,000+ event sponsors, attendees, and volunteers who celebrated our incredible honorees at the 2025 YMCA Women of Excellence Awards.
- The 750+ individuals and businesses who contributed to YMCA Fill the Bus (including Push the Bus), helping children in need experience fun and adventure at the Y.
- The 650+ family members and friends who supported YMCA Move-a-Thon, a special themed day at our child care and school-age sites.
- The 30+ individuals and families who’ve supported the revitalization of YMCA Camp Queen Elizabeth (to date) through the CQE Elevate campaign.



Investing in Belonging, Preserving a Legacy

At YMCA Camp Queen Elizabeth, confidence is sparked today and carried forward for generations.

For more than 70 years, YMCA Camp Queen Elizabeth (CQE) has been a place where young people discover who they are and what they're capable of becoming. Along its trails, by the campfire, and on the water, belonging takes root – building confidence that lasts long after summer ends.

As CQE approaches its 75th anniversary in 2028, the Y is investing with intention to ensure this extraordinary place continues to serve future generations. Through CQE Elevate, a multi-year rejuvenation initiative, we are working toward a \$1 million investment in essential infrastructure improvements that will strengthen safety, sustainability, and the overall camper experience. This work is about stewardship – protecting what makes CQE special while ensuring it remains welcoming and inspiring.

This vision is already coming to life. New waterfront docks have been completed, enhancing accessibility and igniting new opportunities for adventure on the bay.

The true impact of this investment is best understood through the voices of those whose lives were shaped by CQE. Kathleen's story is one of them.

“When I look back on my time at Camp Queen Elizabeth, what stands out most is how welcoming and accepting everyone was. I was a shy, awkward kid with very little confidence. At CQE, I was encouraged to try new things and staff would cheer me on. For the first time in my life, I felt like I could achieve something and be successful. I am so proud that my daughter now loves her time at CQE. The self-confidence instilled in me at Camp Queen Elizabeth has stayed with me to this day. Thank you for continuing on the tradition.”

Kathleen's story is a powerful reminder of what happens when young people feel they truly belong. Together, through CQE Elevate, we're protecting moments like these – because when we invest in belonging, its impact shines across generations.



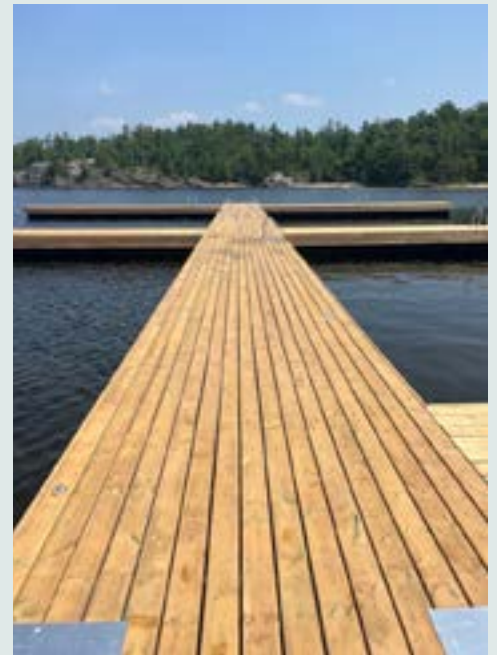
AVERY & KATHLEEN

YMCA CAMP QUEEN ELIZABETH

Awesome Donors Ignite CQE Elevate Campaign

Thank you so much to those who've already contributed to revitalizing our cherished camp by making a gift to the CQE Elevate campaign. **We've raised more than \$300,000 to date!**

We're grateful to you – the camp alumni, the families who've given through their family funds, the current and former YMCA board members, the staff donors, and those who've given in memory of a loved one – and we can't wait to celebrate CQE's 75th birthday with you in 2028!



METRICS

Impact We Are Making Greater Together

Behind every number is a story – showing how connection, access, and support ignite thriving communities.



206,000

individuals supported across our region



83

school-age programs



31

preschool child care programs



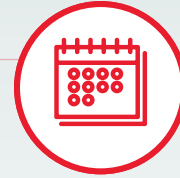
2,413

children in child care programs



4,290

children in before- and after-school programs



12,121

weeks of summer day camp



862

campers attending overnight camp



86%

overnight camper satisfaction



\$62K+

in financial assistance
for overnight camp



23

employees trained in
mental health first aid



79%

employee
engagement score



502,930

unique visitors to
www.ymcaswo.ca



\$2.3M+

in financial assistance
provided for access to our Y



39%

of participants accessed
HFA programs & services
with financial assistance



31,430

health & fitness
members



1,574,151

health & fitness
member card swipes



425

Lifeguard, First Aid, Swim
Instructor certifications



87%

member satisfaction



4,986

newcomers connected
to Y services

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Summary Statement of Financial Position

	2025	2024
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	11,021,353	6,724,655
Accounts receivable – net of allowance of \$150,000 (2024 – \$200,000)	3,895,704	5,786,164
Prepaid expenses and supplies	475,103	618,298
Short-term investments	3,056,397	3,102,781
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	18,448,557	16,231,898
Investments	14,969,515	10,850,430
Property, plant and equipment	18,208,154	20,184,014
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	51,626,226	47,266,342
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	10,061,122	9,381,639
Unearned revenues	10,398,864	7,818,160
Current portion of capital lease obligation	6,479	6,061
Current portion of long-term debt	806,723	806,723
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	21,273,188	18,012,583
Capital lease obligation	16,254	22,733
Long-term debt	11,764,706	12,571,429
Deferred capital contributions	11,436,515	12,712,329
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	44,490,663	43,319,074
Fund Balances		
Capital asset reserve	4,608,963	3,646,678
Child care reserve	2,994,526	3,000,000
Operating	(6,566,653)	(8,459,920)
Endowment and restricted	6,098,727	5,760,510
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	7,135,563	3,947,268
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	51,626,226	47,266,342

The above is excerpted from the audited financial statements of YMCA of Southwestern Ontario. Audited financial statements are available upon request from the office of the SVP, Finance.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

	2025	2024
Revenue		
Child care	54,111,658	46,177,638
Memberships	14,910,612	14,142,854
Camp and youth	4,731,367	4,695,534
Immigrant services	9,929,321	11,165,792
Youth engagement and employment	2,490,524	1,755,625
Program service fees	3,571,191	3,740,158
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	2,395,884	2,489,209
Donations and fundraising	2,566,030	2,626,804
Ancillary revenue	1,282,063	1,065,625
United Way	163,971	163,791
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL REVENUES	96,152,621	88,023,030
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	67,722,311	60,662,778
Facility	8,988,295	8,042,478
Amortization of property, plant and equipment	3,773,467	3,801,210
Program costs	9,448,621	7,982,842
Bank, professional and other fees	1,188,813	1,462,819
Travel and development	959,590	891,035
Office	1,080,671	1,207,805
Other operating expense	69,013	220,202
Association dues	1,000,131	858,108
Promotion	582,724	583,335
HST rebate	(794,249)	(753,749)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL EXPENSES	94,019,387	84,958,863
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,133,234	3,064,167
Realized and unrealized gains on investments		
Net unrealized gain on investments	49,469	198,869
Net realized gain on investments	189,095	232,656
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	(8,276)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	230,288	431,525
	<hr/>	<hr/>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR	2,363,522	3,495,692

The above is excerpted from the audited financial statements of YMCA of Southwestern Ontario. Audited financial statements are available upon request from the office of the SVP, Finance.



Shine On

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