

# YMCA



Strong Foundations Strong Communities Capital Campaign

COMMUNITY UPDATE :: SPRING 2007

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YMCA

We build strong kids,  
strong families, strong communities.



## The New Downtown YMCA Building Community in our City Centre

The doors to the Downtown YMCA may be temporarily closed as construction begins on the modern new facility set to rise behind the familiar brick façade on Burrard, but the spirit of friendship and community that has made it such a special place continues to grow.

The Downtown YMCA has had a positive impact on thousands of people over the years: local office workers in for a swim or a stretch on their lunch breaks, seniors improving their health while connecting with others, young people developing skills to get their first real jobs, immigrants connecting with their new country and community members. From health, fitness and recreation to community services and international development, a huge amount of activity took place there to benefit several generations.

The important role our city-centre YMCA has played in so many lives was evident in the sadness felt when closing day finally came on December 31, 2006. But with the

farewells came a sense of anticipation of the new building opening by the end of 2009. Our new Downtown YMCA will certainly retain the feeling of connection that was such a strong part of the old facility. Many long-time members, some with the YMCA for decades, have spoken of the lifelong friendships they found there and will never lose.

People like these, along with members and program participants who haven't been around quite as long, have always given back to the YMCA by becoming a true part of it, as valued volunteers, financial supporters or 'just part of the gang.' During the construction closure, our 'Downtown' annual and capital campaign teams are staying active to encourage others to keep investing in our association and the over 60,000 people we serve throughout the Lower Mainland.

An inspiration to them and to all of us, well-known local businessman and philanthropist Dr. Tong Louie was a YMCA member for over 65

years. Before his death in 1998, he visited the Downtown YMCA almost every day, not only for the health benefits but to enjoy the company of the many friends he made there. In recognition of the importance of the YMCA in his life, over the years the entire Louie family has shown generous support for our mission, values and projects to provide needed services to more people than ever before.

Carrying on the spirit of philanthropy that led to the success of our Surrey facility, the Tong and Geraldine Louie Family Foundation recently pledged \$500,000 to Strong Foundations Strong Communities, designating their gift to the new Downtown YMCA. Their generosity has brought our campaign to over \$7.9 million on a \$9.5 million Phase I goal, strong motivation to keep working on our goal of a new 'centre of community' for our changing and growing downtown and better health for all communities, for generations to come.



Health

# A Brighter Future for Vancouver Families

As our population continues to grow, so does the need for high-quality child care. While over 70% of BC mothers are in the workforce, licensed child care spaces serve less than 20% of the province's children. As the largest not-for-profit child care provider in BC, the YMCA of Greater Vancouver realizes how important it is for families to know their children are being cared for by qualified, nurturing staff in an environment that promotes early childhood learning and healthy development.

As in all of our 56 child care centres throughout Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley, these principles are core to two new projects in development, thanks to our capital campaign: downtown Vancouver's YMCA Child Care and Family Development Centre and Mount Pleasant's YMCA Nanook House: An Early Childhood and Family Centre. Both of these facilities will serve areas where child care spaces and programs are in high demand: a rapidly densifying city centre and a vibrant but economically challenged east-side neighbourhood.

With high-quality, licensed child care as the cornerstone, each centre will be a friendly,

*A recent \$500,000 gift to YMCA Nanook House: An Early Childhood and Family Centre, from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, brings us closer to our vision of a safe, nurturing and supportive place for vulnerable children and families.*



nurturing community resource where families can come to meet others and obtain the support, skills and services they need to raise healthy children and become more independent.

Two of the six floors comprising the new Downtown YMCA will be devoted to young children and their families, with full-day licensed care for 49 children from infancy up to five years of age and a part-time preschool program for 20 children. The YMCA Family Development Centre will also offer parent/child drop-ins, parenting and early childhood development classes, educational and literacy resources and a toy lending library.

Similarly, the rebuilt YMCA Nanook House will provide care for 37 infants, toddlers, and children, and space for family enrichment programs such as those downtown. At Nanook, there will also be meeting space for staff, counselors and other specialists to work one-on-one with families and the many children identified here as needing extra support because of developmental delays, health issues or behavioural challenges.

With programs that facilitate learning, build relationships, and support the home environment, these new YMCA centres will help our community's youngest members grow into their potential.



## Growing Together with the YMCA

For the past year, the YMCA has been a source of support and opportunity for Wanetta Hunt and her young family.

Last February, Wanetta's three-year-old son, Carlos, started attending Nanook YMCA Child Care, giving Wanetta the time she needed to upgrade her employment skills through the YMCA Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program (YIP), offered through YMCA Community Services.

Both Wanetta and Carlos have experienced positive changes since they started with the YMCA. Carlos is thriving at Nanook. He loves going there each day, and although he wasn't talking much when he first started attending Nanook, within two months his verbal abilities saw significant development.

Wanetta improved her computer skills and learned about money management, interpersonal relationships and resume-writing during the training portion of the YIP program, and now is ready to begin her nine-month

internship with a federal government department. After years as a stay-at-home mom and community volunteer, she's looking forward to her first-ever paid employment and is excited about where it might lead.

The support Wanetta has received from the YMCA has been invaluable. Throughout YIP, YMCA staff and volunteers have been on hand to help her make it through the program. Nanook child care staff members have always been there for her, too, providing parenting advice, help with personal issues and gift certificates for groceries when things were a bit tight.

"They've provided me with more than child care," says Wanetta. "They've really had an impact on my life."

*The YMCA Children and Youth Endowment Fund will help families like Wanetta's benefit from access to high-quality child care and give young people opportunities for healthy development.*

*"YMCA staff are always there for me, giving support when I need it most."*  
Wanetta Hunt, pictured here with son Carlos

# Looking Back, Moving Forward

## Celebrating 100 Summers at YMCA Camps

At the YMCA, we like to say that a summer at camp creates a lifetime of memories. Just imagine the impact of 100 summers at camp!

Since the first tents were pitched in 1907 on the Sunshine Coast, thousands of young people have benefited from the character-building experiences that form the basis of YMCA Camps programming. Along with memories and friendships to last a lifetime, campers and counselors throughout the years have gained confidence and self-esteem in an environment that fosters positive values and an appreciation of nature.

A century of helping children and youth find their way in the world is a significant milestone, and to celebrate the YMCA is holding several anniversary events, all of them with the sense of community, involvement and fun that characterizes a YMCA Camps experience.

Celebrations kick off with a Youth Leadership Jamboree at YMCA Camp Elphinstone May 20-21, where young leaders from BC, Washington and Oregon will gather to share experiences and enhance their leadership abilities. Some of these youth leaders will join us in the near future as YMCA camp counselors, and the skills they develop will help them become positive role models and mentors on their return home.

On Saturday, June 2, YMCA Camps Elphinstone and Howdy will join Vancouver and Surrey in hosting YMCA Healthy Kids Day, a fun event for the whole family that demonstrates how easy it can be to stay active and healthy. This new, free day of events for our Sunshine Coast and Tri-Cities communities is sure to be a day well spent by local families.

Anniversary celebrations are also booked for the weekend of September 14-16, after the summer camping season comes to a close. Friday through Sunday morning, YMCA Camps alumni will gather at Elphinstone for their annual retreat, including a commemorative outdoor chapel service Sunday morning. In true camp tradition, there'll be lots of time to apply some sweat equity, share stories with old friends and new and greet day visitors who'll be dropping by on Saturday. Saturday also features a Centennial Regatta, so see you on the ferry or at the Elphinstone dock for a full day of fun and reminiscing.

A full day is also planned for Sunday, September 16 back in Vancouver. In the afternoon, campers past and present, families and friends are invited to a 'Family Day with Camps' at Kitsilano Beach. There, everyone can picnic, enjoy family-oriented activities and cheer on the competitors in a VIP canoe race in our heritage craft, the *Nootka* and the *Haida*.

Sunday evening marks the culmination of celebrations, with a '100 Faces of Camp' Gala Dinner at Villa Amato, alongside False Creek Southeast. This is yet another opportunity to reflect upon the past 100 summers of camping, all that our YMCA has achieved over the years and what we plan to do for 'another 100', as we kick off Phase II of our capital campaign. Please join us for 2007, shaping up as a year of celebration to honour our past and build excitement for supporting many more years of helping kids grow into confident, independent healthy adults.

Find out more at [www.100summersatcamp.org](http://www.100summersatcamp.org)



# 100 Summers AT CAMP



## Total SFSC Campaign Goal \$13.5 million

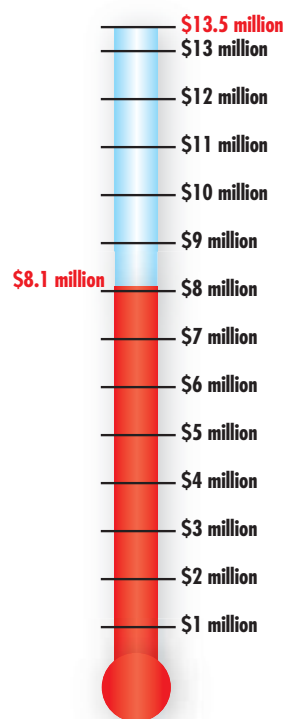
Thank you to all of our supporters for helping the YMCA to build strong foundations and strong communities.

With your commitment, so far we've reached \$8 million for Phase 1 of the campaign (2004-2007), which has an overall goal of \$9.5 million. Phase 1 focuses on the expansion of the Tong Louie Family YMCA, the replacement of the Nanook YMCA Child Care Centre and the redevelopment of the Downtown YMCA.

**Phase I Total Goal: \$9.5 million**

Phase II (2007-2010), which officially kicks off at our '100 Summers at Camp' centennial gala in September 2007, focuses on the redevelopment of YMCA Camp Elphinstone and the establishment of the YMCA Child and Youth Endowment Fund. Over \$111,000 has already been raised for these projects.

**Phase II Total Goal: \$4 million**



### OUR MISSION

The YMCA is a charitable association dedicated to the development of people in spirit, mind and body as well as the improvement of local, national and international communities.

### CORE VALUES

Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.

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[www.vanymca.org](http://www.vanymca.org)

