

# THE YMCA REVIEW

## 2018/2019 represented an exciting year for our YMCA



YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka File Photo

A few of our YMCA Day Camp participants in Barrie enthusiastically show off their Y spirit.

**Andrew Lorriman, YMCA Board Chair  
&  
Rob Armstrong, YMCA CEO**

We are proud of our team's accomplishments and the role our Y is having as we work to inspire people to reach their full potential across Simcoe County and the Districts of Muskoka and Parry Sound.

### My Y Opens Doors:

We continued to grow our Leadership Institute in partnership with Lakehead University based at YMCA Geneva Park. To date, 205 community leaders have participated in this program, strengthening our partner organizations across the communities we serve.

Additionally, The YMCA of Simcoe/Mus-

koka launched a community-based cancer rehabilitation program, in partnership with the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Program at the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre. To date, 83 individuals have entered the program which focuses on restoring physical function for day-to-day tasks, supporting social and psychological well-being, and improving health and quality of life.

### My Y Inspires Youth and Strengthens Families:

We moved forward with the redevelopment of YMCA Geneva Park's Family Camp program. In partnership with the Endeavour Centre, we built a carbon positive environmentally sustainable two-unit cabin that will serve our family camp community for generations to come.

Furthermore, several exciting milestones were hit this past year with regards to building a new YMCA centre of community to serve children, youth and families in Barrie's growing downtown. Most significantly we signed an Agreement of Purchase and Sale for a portion of the Barrie Central Collegiate Institute - this will be the home of our new Y!

### My Y is Strong:

This year, our community contributed an incredible \$1.6 million towards the Y's Annual Campaign and Capital Campaigns for YMCA Geneva Park and our new Barrie Y. On top of that, another half a million was committed to YMCA Camp Kitchikewana's Endowment Fund. This level of generosity on behalf of our community is incredible - we cannot continue to build healthy communities without our donors. Thank you.

We have also moved forward with the investment and implementation of a new online portal that will allow us to better connect and serve our various members.

On top of all of these strategic achievements, we continued to grow our Health & Fitness membership base, served more children in Child Care, and expanded our community services (Immigrant Services, Employment Services, Literacy Services and Youth Services). Over 110,000 members from our community benefited from YMCA programs and services this year. On behalf of our Board and Senior Staff, we wish to thank all of our staff, volunteers, donors and community partners. Together, we are building a healthy community for all.

## Mental-health summit in Innisfil opens door for students to share ideas

**BarrieToday Staff**

Building on its success from last year, the Speak Your Mind - Simcoe/Muskoka Youth Mental Health Summit will be held on May 29, 2019 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Innisfil Recreational Complex. This event is for youth in grades 8 through 12, and offers guest speakers, workshops, educational sessions and much more.

"The idea here is to bring our young people together to provide them with that safe space where they can share their ideas," said Innisfil Mayor Lynn Dollin. "By doing so, we hope to give young people the tools they need to be the change that they want to see in their communities when it comes to mental health."

"We had so much interest in our first year so we knew it was a priority to have this event again," said Town of Innisfil Programs Coordinator, Jodi Longland. "Hearing some of the stories from the students and watching them take some of these issues into their own hands can be truly exciting."

The Speak Your Mind - Simcoe/Muskoka Youth Mental Health Summit is organized thanks to a partnership between the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka and the Town of Innisfil.

*Mental-health summit in Innisfil opens doors for students to share ideas. (2019, May 15). Barrie Today, retrieved from <https://www.barrietoday.com/>*

## YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka announces plan to build new facility in downtown Barrie

**Hannah Jackson**

A new YMCA facility could soon be coming to downtown Barrie. According to a press release issued by the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, the organization has entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with HIP Developments to secure space on the former Barrie Central Collegiate Institute and Prince of Wales properties in downtown Barrie. The MOU allows the organization to move forward with plans to build a new facility.

"Our staff and volunteers are very excited to be working with HIP Developments and the City of Barrie to create a unique gateway to our downtown on the former Barrie Central/Prince of Wales property. The mix of residential development and a new Y, along with the city's potential plans for the Fisher Auditorium, will be a huge economic stimulus to the west end of downtown and along Bradford Street," said Rob Armstrong, CEO of YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka in the release.

The release says the new facility will be



Artistic rendering of the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka's new Barrie Y located at Bradford St & Simcoe St

paid for using funds generated through the redevelopment and sale of the YMCA's property on Grove Street and a capital campaign scheduled to launch in the new year.

According to the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, the development of the new facility will be done in phases, and the existing location on Grove Street will remain in

operation for up to four years to allow the organization to relocate without business interruption.

*Jackson, H. (2018, November 12). YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka announces plan to build new facility in downtown Barrie. Global News, retrieved from <https://globalnews.ca/>*

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# YMCA's Move to Give raises double its goal



All 8 YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka Health, Fitness, and Aquatics centres hosted various activities for Move to Give. Participants in Midland took part in a Fire Truck Pull, with thanks to the Midland Fire Department.

Kim-Eden English / YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

## OrilliaMatters Staff

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka is pleased to announce that more than 1,770 people across Simcoe County, Muskoka, and Parry Sound took part in the fifth annual YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka "Move to Give" fundraising event. With the help of YMCA Child Care Centres and School Age Programs the event

raised over \$200,000, exceeding its goal of \$100,000. Each year Move to Give sets out to raise necessary funds to support the growing needs of the communities served across Simcoe County, Muskoka, and Parry Sound. On April 6, the event took place simultaneously in eight YMCAs within our region: Barrie, Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, Gravenhurst, Innisfil, Midland, Orillia and

Parry Sound and at 76 YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka Child Care Centres and School Age Programs on March 6. From running 5km to massive indoor cycling sessions, swimming challenges, fire truck pulls and more— participants challenged themselves physically while at the same time, gave back to their community. "From developing health initiatives that target diseases such as cancer and heart

disease, to improving childhood obesity, literacy, social isolation, youth outreach and more – the money raised through Move to Give directly translates into more resources in our community," said Brian Shelley, Vice President, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka. *YMCA's Move to Give raises double its goal. (2019, May 1). Orillia Matters, retrieved from https://www.orilliamatters.com/*

**To learn more about our supporters, visit: [FriendsOfTheY.ca](http://FriendsOfTheY.ca)**

## Collingwood YMCA staffer says financial support changed her life



John Edwards for Metroland

### John Edwards

If anyone knows the value of the YMCA's financial assistance program it's Grace Fisher. She currently works at the Collingwood YMCA, but she grew up in Welland in a single-parent home. Fisher said times were tough and they didn't have the means to get a membership at the YMCA or any other recreation opportunities. When she was about seven-years-old, Fisher said the YMCA approved the family

for a membership through the financial assistance program. This allowed her to participate in swimming lessons and other programs, which helped her come out of her shell. "I was a shy, weird, kid. It made it so I could talk to people," she said in an interview with Simcoe.com. "We were at the Y every single day, because we had nowhere else to go." On April 6, the Collingwood YMCA is raising money for this financial assistance program through its annual Move to Give event. The fundraiser takes place from 8 a.m. to noon and will see participants bike, do a yoga session or aquafit, all while collecting pledges for the organization. Jamie Berman, Sales and Membership Manager, said the Collingwood event raised \$56,000 in 2018 and since its inception 10 years ago, \$250,000 has been generated. Berman said the program supports 750 individuals in Collingwood alone and

about 2,000 in South Georgian Bay. "When times are tight and the purse strings are being pulled, one of the first things to get cut out of a family's life is recreation," Berman said. She said members not only have access to the gym and swimming lessons but other programs for adults and youth. Berman said those who need financial assistance just need to provide a notice of assessment. She said those who are on Ontario works and disability are pre-approved for some type of financial assistance. Berman said the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka helps thousands of citizens to the tune of more than \$1 million annually. "We never raise as much as we give out," she said. Berman said the Collingwood YMCA has more than 4,800 members and has partnerships with the Collingwood General and Marine Hospital and the Children's Treatment Network. Fisher said the assistance her family re-

ceived started a lifelong relationship with the YMCA. She said her mom started as a volunteer and now works as a general manager of a YMCA in Niagara Region. Fisher said she has worked for the YMCA since she was 16, and was a camp counselor when she was 20. She said both she and her mother met their future husbands at the YMCA. "It literally changed my life," she said. Things have come full circle as she is now part of the group that approves individuals for assistance. "They are coming to the desk and asking for assistance and I'm on the approving end of that," she said. "You just want to give those kids the same opportunity someone gave to me." *Edwards, J. (2019, March 30). Collingwood YMCA staffer says financial support changed her life. Collingwood Connection, retrieved from https://www.simcoe.com/*

## YMCA program helps Innisfil man get back on track after heart attack



Janis Ramsay for Metroland

'A lot of factors led up to this,' Rutledge said. 'I never anticipated having a heart attack.'

### Janis Ramsay

Innisfil's Barry Rutledge knew it likely wasn't just indigestion that was causing him pain before Christmas last year. Rutledge listened to his gut and checked into an emergency room in time to learn he was having a heart attack. Now more than six months later, Rutledge is exercising his way to better health. "A lot of factors led up to this," Rutledge said. "I never anticipated having a heart attack."

Rutledge was monitoring his blood pressure after his father died at age 64 from several strokes. Along with the genetic connection, Rutledge admits he was a heavy smoker as a teenager. And working shifts as a former OPP officer, with irregular mealtimes and lack of sleep didn't help his health, he added. The first warning was after a gathering for retired OPP officers last December. "Every year we have a few beers, chicken

wings and pizza," he said. "I had just finished a few beers and I got indigestion." That wasn't unusual for Rutledge. But two days later, the feeling returned. "It seemed different. I said to my wife Lynn, 'I don't think this is indigestion.' It didn't fit the pattern," he said. "I was very calm about it. I told her to drive me to the hospital." Friends gave him a hard time about making the drive himself, instead of calling 911. He suspected it was a heart attack and

within minutes of arrival, it was confirmed. "Other than the indigestion, I had no pain." He was transferred to Southlake Regional Health Centre, where he had two stents put into an artery. He returned home in time for a laid-back Christmas and he started the road to recovery in January. He joined the Innisfil YMCA's Healthy Hearts program for cardiovascular patients. Twice a week for three months, Rutledge did weight training and cardio exercises to build his endurance. "Healthy Hearts is for people who have a history of heart disease or who are at risk of having a heart ailment, or anything related to heart surgery," Innisfil YMCA Personal Trainer Amy Watts said. "The benefits are to make sure they increase their strength and endurance. They can minimize the risk of any heart injury again." Each session starts with measuring the participant's blood pressure before the workout. "Most people who join are scared to do too much," Watts said. "It's about giving them more trust. You are OK to work out. It's not an intense workout, they can go at their own pace and own fitness level." The Healthy Hearts program is available at the Barrie and Innisfil YMCA locations and only costs a small monthly membership fee. The participant's spouse can tag along for free. Rutledge said he feels better now and plans to continue working out and eating better. "I'm sleeping a lot better and I'm stronger. I have a granddaughter and could hardly hold her for five minutes before. Now, I'm lifting 20 pounds." *Ramsay, J. (2018, July 14). YMCA program helps Innisfil man get back on track after heart attack. Simcoe.com, retrieved from https://www.simcoe.com/*

## RVH, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka launch iCan cancer rehab program in Barrie

### Chris Simon

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka is helping Louanna Alexander muscle up in the fight against cancer. Alexander was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2017. The cancer is in remission now, but there was a time when she felt like the illness had taken control of her life. So she enrolled in the iCan Cancer Rehabilitation Program — an individualized 12-week fitness routine that runs at the Barrie and Innisfil Y branches — which kicked off in earnest in July. Alexander has completed the program and touts its merits now. "While you're recovering, you can't do the normal things you did," she said. "I had heard exercise was so good for cancer patients. You can do something for yourself. It helps you get some control back. I've been able to turn a negative situation into a positive one. I support this program and would highly recommend it." Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre and the Y officially launched the program during a ribbon-cutting ceremony Jan. 28. The program helps restore and improve physiological and psychological wellness for people dealing with cancer. More than 25 people have participated so far. Participants work to improve cardiovascular function, flexibility, range of motion, fatigue management, and muscular strength and endurance. "There is a definite need in our community," Y Rehabilitation and Fitness Supervisor Joel Seymour said. "Our program is not just about fitness and exercise. It's about instilling positive lifestyle changes."



Shelby Wise for the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

Cutting the ribbon to officially launch the iCan Cancer Rehabilitation Program at the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka facility in Barrie on Jan. 28, 2019 are, from left to right, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka CEO Rob Armstrong, Barrie Mayor Jeff Lehman, program participant Louanna Alexander, iCan specialist Joel Seymour, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre president and CEO Janice Skot, and Innisfil Mayor Lynn Dollin. Trainers are given cancer-specific education and equipped with strategies to encourage cancer survivors to exercise. The self-referral program also includes counseling and stress management elements. The cost of the program is included in a regular Y membership. "Enrolling in an exercise program following cancer treatment is extremely im-

portant for restoring physical function for daily activities," RVH Medical Oncologist Dr. Jason Yu said. "It is recommended that participants perform 150 minutes of exercise per week, but any safe amount of physical activity is better than none. We take the 'meet the people where they are' approach to exercise." *Simon, C. (2019, January 28). RVH, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka launch iCan cancer rehab program in Barrie. Simcoe.com, retrieved from https://www.simcoe.com/*

**Want to learn more about the iCan program? Visit [YMCAiCan.ca](http://YMCAiCan.ca)**



YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka File Photo

## Summer camp can help a child's development

Simcoe.com

To many people, summer camp might appear like nothing more than fun and games.

However, in 2012, the University of Waterloo embarked on a six-year study — the Canadian Summer Camp Research Project — in order to discover how camps across Canada may contribute to youth development.

The results of this study support what camp directors have been saying for decades — camp is a setting for positive youth development, where invaluable life skills are acquired and nurtured.

Here are five critical life skills that are fostered at camp:

**1. Emotional Intelligence (EI)** — Within the Canadian Summer Camp Research Project, the highest rate of positive growth was found in the area of emotional intelligence. At camp, children learn how to cope with others in various social situations. Talk to any camp alumni and you'll likely hear how some of their most meaningful friendships and lessons on how to get along with others came from camp.

**2. Personal Development** — According to the 2015 ParticipACTION Report Card, over-supervising kids or keeping them indoors to ensure their safety may set them up to be less resilient and active. Camp pro-

vides a safe environment, allowing children to freely learn how to take risks, overcome challenges, and develop and grow their capabilities.

**3. Increased physical activity** — A 10-year Statistics Canada study found that only seven percent of children and youth in Canada get the recommended 60 minutes per day of exercise. Summer camp is a great way for kids to stay active all summer and ensure they are surrounded with great role models and supportive friends.

**4. Self-confidence** — Camp pushes children out of their comfort zone and exposes them to new activities and experiences. Campers gain confidence by exploring different activities and discovering new hobbies and passions.

**5. Independence** — At camp, children learn the responsibility of making their own decisions with the safety net of insightful counsellors in a safe environment. Camp provides peer support that allows children to discover new facets of themselves and overcome their need for constant parental dependency.

YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka. (2019, April 26). Summer camp can help a child's development. Simcoe.com, retrieved from <https://www.simcoe.com/>

## Reader's favourite: summer camp/child care

GoodLife Magazine

The YMCA has been in Barrie for over 100 years offering a wealth of programs and services tailored to meet the unique needs of children and families in our community.

The YMCA is the largest provider of licensed child care programs in Simcoe/Muskoka. With nearly 80 licensed Child Care facilities across our region, the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka provides exceptional programs focused on children between the ages of birth and twelve years of age. In Barrie, the Y has long-standing partnerships with the Simcoe County District School

gnette, Vice President, Child Development and Family Support Programs at the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka.

In addition to licensed child care and before & after school care, the YMCA also operates a wide variety of summer camps. As an accredited member of the Ontario Camps Association, the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka day and overnight camps are a great way for children and teens to get outside and get active while surrounded with great role models and supportive friends.

Y camps are a place where kids can stay active and learn invaluable life skills. Through programs that focus on the arts, sports, leadership and outdoor education,

Camp has had a profound influence on my life and I am so thankful for the YMCA.

Board and Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board that allow for high-quality before and after school programming in 18 schools; the Y also operates eight all-day Child Care Centres, including one located at Georgian College. Through a nationally recognized curriculum, the Y takes the holistic approach to the development of young children by supporting early literacy and healthy habits through "play". Just as importantly, the YMCA focuses on making sure that children and parents alike feel welcomed and cared for — a home away from home.

The YMCA integrates these early learning techniques into all YMCA children's programs, such as summer camps, Y Kids and drop-in child minding services. The YMCA's mission is to improve the health and well-being of even their youngest Y members in body, mind and spirit.

"We understand how important it is for parents to trust that their children are in the hands of a team that cared as much as they do in an environment where they can learn, grow and thrive." — Fiona Casca-

children learn how to build important life skills such as cooperation, listening, and problem solving.

"Camp taught me to be a confident, strong and independent person. It taught me to respect the natural world, others and myself. And, it gave me the ability to lead others. Camp has had a profound influence on my life and I am so thankful for the YMCA." said Jake, a YMCA Camp Kitchikewana alumnus.

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka Child Care and camp programs represent the best of what research and common sense tell us kids need — healthy beginnings, positive interaction with caring adults, age-appropriate learning activities, and plenty of time for fun and making friends. Helping kids and families thrive is at the heart of the YMCA.

YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka — Supporting the healthy development of children for over 100 years. (2018, October 24). GoodLife Magazine — Simcoe County, retrieved from <https://issuu.com/>



Kim-Eden English for the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

## 100th anniversary for YMCA Camp Kitchikewana coming in 2019

YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

For 100 years, YMCA Camp Kitchikewana has been offering traditional summer camp programs for youth of all ages. Today, it continues to offer overnight camp programs for youth as well as canoe trips, a high school credit program, school group outdoor education and volunteer programs. After 100 years, Camp Kitchikewana's mission remains the same — to challenge youth to be the very best they can be. Through a variety of outdoor and skill-building activities, campers are encouraged to challenge themselves while building self-confidence, having fun, and creating lasting friendships.

As part of the 100th celebration, Camp Kitchikewana alumni in partnership with the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka and the Huronia Community Foundation have established an endowment fund to ensure the

continuation of high-quality camp experiences for generations to come. Generous Camp Kitchikewana alumnus, Paul Lawrence, has offered to match every donation up to \$1,000,000. The goal of the endowment fund is to reach \$2,000,000.

"We have been fortunate to have many people step forward and donate to the endowment fund because of what the Camp Kitchikewana experience did for them," said Gord Dunlop, General Manager, Camping and Outdoor Education, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka. "Community heroes like Paul Lawrence know how meaningful camp can be for a child and we are so thankful for his support and for the support of all our camp family and friends."

Proceeds from the 100th Anniversary Endowment Fund will be used to enhance the camper experience including replenishing, replacing and repairing program equipment and facilities used by the campers.

**Interested in contributing to the YMCA Camp Kitchikewana 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Endowment Fund?**

For more information and to donate, please visit: [smym.ca/kitchikewana](http://smym.ca/kitchikewana)

## Local YMCA aims to build Canada's most environmentally friendly cottage community

YMCA Geneva Park plans to replace all cottages at Ramara site with environmentally sustainable alternatives as part of \$12-15 million investment.



Nathan Taylor for OrilliaMatters

Gord Ball, left, of Sustainable Orillia, Brian Shelley, centre, Vice President, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, and Chris Magwood, of the Endeavour Sustainable Building School, are shown outside a new cottage that was built at YMCA Geneva Park in Ramara Township.

Nathan Taylor

A local attraction that has been around for more than a century has an ambitious plan for the future.

YMCA Geneva Park in Ramara Township is in a rejuvenation process, and replacing its dozens of rustic cottages is a big part of it.

The organization teamed up with Peterborough's Endeavour Sustainable Building School for the project, which started with the construction of a new cottage that will serve as a model for future projects on the 150-acre property on the shores of Lake Couchiching.

Before Endeavour got involved, a new cottage was built in 2018, using as many renewable and reused products as possible, but Geneva Park volunteers and donors wanted to see it taken a step further.

"They pressed us, knowing we could do better," said Brian Shelley, Vice President, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka.

The cottage built in 2018 "is good, but this is a spaceship," he said, referring to the new duplex cottage that was completed at the end of July.

"The coolest part is it doesn't look like a spaceship," Shelley said.

It has a rustic feel — part of the appeal for those who stay at Geneva Park — but what went into its design and construction is anything but antiquated.

Wood framing and dense-packed cellulose insulation were used, along with locally sourced, formaldehyde-free wood and hempcrete and hemp batt insulation, as well as linseed-oil paint.

"There's more carbon stored in the building than was emitted in the making of it," said Chris Magwood, co-founder of Endeavour, noting the cottage stores 100 kilograms of carbon per square metre. "With every aspect, we did the research to see what would be the best things to use to make this environmentally sustainable."

It is now the only four-season cottage on site.

The project was completed with the help of the Endeavour school's student apprentices. Many are already involved with the trades, architecture and engineering, and

attend Endeavour to learn more about sustainable construction.

"They got to be the hands-on crew for a project like this from start to finish," Magwood said.

That was attractive to YMCA Geneva Park and its donors, as education is a big part of the organization's mandate.

Their reaction to the finished product was "spectacular," Shelley said.

"They see a state-of-the-art, environmentally sustainable building," he said, adding it didn't hurt that it came together "on time and under budget."

The connection between Geneva Park and Endeavour was made by Gord Ball, a member of the Sustainable Orillia task force who is also on the steering committee for the YMCA Geneva Park's capital campaign.

"It's a model for what we think developers and home builders should do," Ball said.

He also wants to see municipalities, including Orillia, look at their building codes and find ways to include incentives for builders.

Ball is passionate about sustainability, but also about Geneva Park. His family has been cottaging there since 1943.

"This place means more to me than probably any other place in my life. I care about it deeply, and my grandkids are now hooked," he said.

Making the cottage environmentally friendly and sustainable "is paying it forward to future generations of Geneva Park cottagers," he added.

There are 43 cottages at Geneva Park. "We'd like them all to be built to this level," Shelley said. "We have a 100-year history of leadership and we want another 100 years of environmental sustainability. This one building is the beginning of a \$12- to \$15-million investment."

The goal is to replace all of the cottages and "rejuvenate" the conference centre over the next 15 to 20 years.

Taylor, N. (2019, September 21). Rustic cottage that feels like a spaceship is environmentally sustainable. Collingwood Today, retrieved from <https://www.collingwoodtoday.ca/>

## Last year, over 110,000 people benefitted from YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka Programming

**1,400+**  
Staff  
**600+**  
Volunteers  
**3,600+**  
Donors

Improved the well-being of over **110,000** people

Which leads to:

- Greater **longevity**
- Decreased risk** of disease
- Better **immune function**
- Increased likelihood of **volunteering**



**Healthy communities** across Simcoe, Muskoka, and Parry Sound

# This man's key to longevity is strength of mind and body

People of Collingwood: Harold Zukerman, active volunteer with the Collingwood YMCA and Collingwood General Marine Hospital



Doug Burlock for the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

## He's 92 and still going strong.

Jessica Owen

For this week's edition of People of Collingwood we sat down with Harold Zukerman, an active volunteer with the Collingwood YMCA and Collingwood General and Marine Hospital who pioneered the On the Move senior fitness classes at the YMCA.

**Q:** Can you give me a little background on you?

**A:** I've lived in Collingwood since 2002. I used to be a skier. I started when I was 42, and I loved it. I bought a place at Rob Roy (southwest of Collingwood). I loved it so much that I decided that I would work hard for 10 years, retire at 60 and retire there. My wife just loved it.

Sure enough, to the day, we moved to Rob Roy. Somebody said to me, "But Harold, what are you going to do when you retire?"

I didn't know. I thought I might just laze around, do some gardening, do some reading.

My wife said, "Oh, no." Within a week, she took me down to the YMCA and got me a membership, and got one for herself. It had been open for about five or six months (at that time). One day as I was leaving, there was a sign that said there was a course for people who wanted to volunteer. I wasn't sure if I wanted to volunteer but I thought it would be nice to take the course to know why I'm exercising. I took the course in May of 1986. In the summer, my wife and I were talking and we thought it would be great if there were some kind of exercise course for seniors.

In September, I was asked to start a class for seniors as a leader. It was funny because my wife, Joyce and I had just talked about it, so I said sure.

I think we signed up 13 or 14 people. I think about 10 showed up.

We started having it once a week, then we decided to have it twice a week. We had about three or four people coming to a session.

Then, it started to grow. One time, in attendance, we had over 60 people in one session.

**Q:** What kind of exercise was it?

It's a lot of stretching with weights, a rod or balls. I do it three times a week. Sometimes I get five or six (participants), sometimes close to 20. It depends on the weather and time of year.

**Q:** You've been at the Collingwood YMCA volunteering since 1986. What kinds of changes have you seen here over that time?



Doug Burlock for the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

When I first started (at the Collingwood Y), we were hoping to get 2,000 members. Now, we're over 4,000.

**A:** Aerobic exercises. Some stretching. Mainly for heart, lungs, legs and core.

(Eventually) we had six or seven instructors. We took turns, which was great. We would learn from and support each other. It also meant if we went on holidays, someone could take over.

There was a time when my classes went down (in attendance) but others would go up. I thought, they're telling me something. (laughs)

There was another class going on, which was called Chair Yoga. This was about three years ago. I decided to take over that.

**A:** Tremendous changes. When I first started, we were hoping to get 2,000 members. Now, we're over 4,000. That's one big change. The building has been added on, which is great.

I was on the board twice. We used to be independent. Then, we voted to become part of the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka and that's a tremendous help because we get support from them. We're not so isolated. It's great.

**Q:** You do other volunteering as well, like with the hospital. Do you want to talk about that?

**A:** I spend more time there than I do here. (laughs)

Six or seven years ago, one of the nurses at the hospital approached me.

She said they had a room that they'd like to use to have patients come in for exercise. They asked if maybe I could do some exercises with them.

I said sure. So, once a week, from about 2 p.m. until about 4 p.m. they had patients come in who were in wheelchairs, or people who could walk with canes to do exercise.

Then, they closed that because they needed the room for beds.

In the meantime, one of the ladies that I play bridge with told me they needed someone to help with the meals and asked me if I'd be interested.

I said sure. So I help with the meals. Some people have to be fed. Some need help with water, magazines, or just someone to spend some time with them. While I was doing that, one of the nurses who was taking yoga here asked me if I'd be interested in doing exercises with people who are on dialysis.

He explained that people who come in for dialysis are there for four hours, three times a week. They're just sitting there. They can move their legs and arms a bit, but they're sitting in a chair for hours.

I said sure. The first time I went, nobody wanted to do the exercises. (laughs) The second time, almost everybody wanted exercises, and the third time too.

Each person gets individual attention and about 20 minutes of exercises. There's usually about six or seven people there. Some of them are quite lonely and want to talk, and some of them are quite spiritual. So, I took a course in spiritual care. Sometimes I read to them from spiritual books, or prayers... whatever their religion is.

**Q:** Do you find that helps?

**A:** For them? Yeah. Last week I spent a whole hour with one lady. She wanted to talk and she has strong faith, she wanted to express it. There's another lady who is in the hospital for the third time – she's very depressed. I read something encouraging to her. Sometimes I just listen. So that's what I do. (laughs)

**Q:** What makes you choose to volunteer with these causes specifically? Is there something about physical activity that calls out to you?

**A:** I'll tell you. What draws me is the support I get from the staff here. They'll help out to set up the room and such. That encourages me.

The people who participate, we have lots of fun. We talk, I tell them jokes.

At the hospital, I also get lots of support. I'm also on the patient-family advisory committee at the hospital.

The other thing is... I have a DVD on happiness.

An interviewer talked to a person who worked with Mother Teresa. He gave up a good job at a bank to volunteer with Mother Teresa.

When he was interviewed, the reason he said he was doing it is, he considered his life a loan from God, and now he was repaying that loan with a little bit of interest by helping people.

That's the way to look at it.

Owen, J. (2018, December 1). This man's key to longevity is strength of mind and body. Collingwood Today, retrieved from <https://www.collingwoodtoday.ca/>



Cole Bennett for the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

# Hundreds of young people will receive training and gain employability skills

## News Review Media

Building a strong middle class means giving youth the tools they need to find and keep good jobs. The federal government recently announced funding that will help young Canadians develop their skills and get hands-on work experience.

YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka will receive funding for its Youth Quest project through the Skills Link program. Over the 24 months of the project, up to 600 young people will receive training and gain employability skills through work experience in the Bradford, Wasaga Beach, Huntsville, Barrie and Orillia areas. During their work experience, they will be placed in such fields as construction, manufacturing, retail/wholesale, accommodation and food service and general office/customer service.

Skills Link supports projects that help young people who face more barriers to employment than others get employability skills and gain valuable job experience,

which, in turn, helps them make a successful transition into the workforce or go back to school. That could include youth who have not completed high school, single parents, Indigenous youth, youth with disabilities, newcomers or youth living in rural or remote areas.

"The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka is committed to improving the lives of youth in our communities," said Rob Armstrong, Simcoe/Muskoka YMCA CEO. "Through the Youth Quest program, our local youth are given the guidance and skills needed to succeed in the job market. This funding from Skills Link will allow us to continue to offer these life-changing opportunities to our youth and open doors to their future. We are very thankful to receive this support."

Hundreds of young people will receive training and gain employability skills. (2018, November 18). Simcoe Review, retrieved from <https://simcoereview.com/>

# Choir of refugee children comes to Orillia for benefit concert

## OrilliaMatters Staff

The Orillia Vocal Ensemble (OVE) and Nai Children's Choir (Nai) presented a special concert featuring a variety of Syrian and Canadian patriotic music with guest performers from the Orillia Music Centre.

A fundraiser for the YMCA Skid Watson Fund, the concert was held on Feb. 24, 2019 in St. Paul's Centre Great Hall, 62 Peter St. N., Orillia.

Admission was a free-will donation. The OVE, a well-known local community choir founded by choral director Roy Menagh, has a special relationship with Nai, a choir for refugee children based in Toronto. The relationship dates back to the time when the whole nation was mobilized to welcome more than 50,000 refugees from Syria.

In September 2016, YMCA Geneva Park in Orillia generously agreed to provide choristers and families of this newly-formed choir with free room and board for a weekend at its picturesque resort on Lake Couchiching.

The retreat could also provide an important opportunity to start preparing the Choir for upcoming performances – however, no teachers were able to go to Orillia. Fei Tang, Founder and General Manager of Nai, reached out to Menagh.

At the time, many OVE members were already involved in welcoming Syrian newcomers into their community, and some had personally sponsored Syrian families. They responded to Nai's request enthusiastically.

Over the years, YMCA Geneva Park has continued to subsidize Nai Choir's overnight retreats, while OVE lends their support in different ways.

As Nai has grown and become more stabilized, a key goal is to give back to those that have paid it forward. Nai proposed the



Kate Meeks for the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

idea of a collaborative concert to OVE to help raise funds for the local YMCA.

The idea was warmly embraced, and the YMCA Skid Watson Fund that assists children, single parents and adults with membership and program costs was designated the beneficiary.

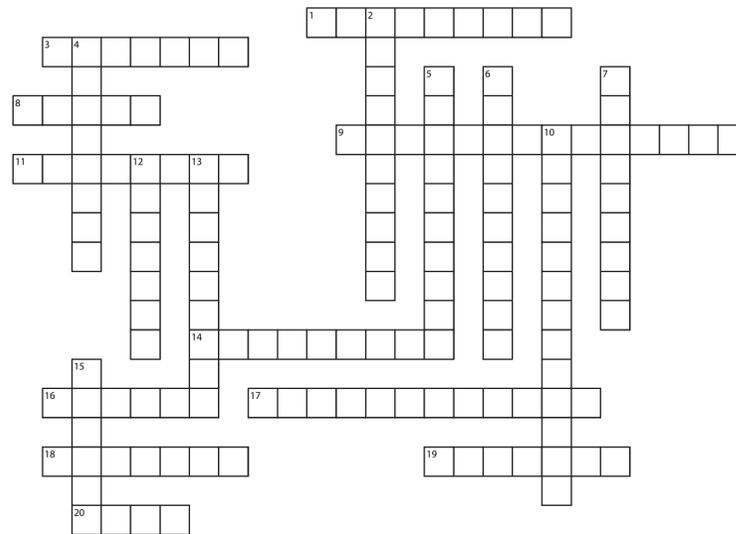
More than 100 young singers led by Gayle Wells from the Orillia Music Centre, were also invited to perform at this special concert.

"We are excited about providing the kinds of opportunities to other children that Nai Choir benefitted from when they first came to Canada," says Tang. "Having been deprived of childhood fun and opportunities in the Syrian war, our choristers and their families are aware of the significant impact a peaceful and caring community can have on a child."

"We could not be happier to give back to such a community by participating in this special charity concert with our old friends."

Choir of refugee children coming to Orillia for benefit concert. (2019, February 13). Orillia Matters, retrieved from <https://www.orilliamatters.com/>

# Diversions



- Across**
- Hundreds of people \_\_\_\_\_ their time to the YMCA to build healthier communities.
  - The Y offers summer \_\_\_\_\_ for children and youth in 9 communities across Simcoe/Muskoka. (2 words)
  - YMCA \_\_\_\_\_ Services provides young people with employment, education and leadership skills training.
  - The fifth YMCA value; My Y keeps its promise and does what it believes is right.
  - YMCA \_\_\_\_\_ Services helps users improve reading, writing, math, and computer skills.
  - YMCA \_\_\_\_\_ Services offers support for newcomers to Canada.
  - The YMCA has programs and activities for your whole \_\_\_\_\_.
  - This YMCA overnight camp celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2019.
  - The YMCA offers hundreds of health and \_\_\_\_\_ programs.
  - The second YMCA value; My Y promotes integrity and trustworthiness.
  - YMCA annual fundraising event, Move to \_\_\_\_\_.

- Down**
- The YMCA, in partnership with Lakehead University, offers a Not-For-Profit \_\_\_\_\_ Development Program.
  - Water-based programs including swim lessons and lifeguard training.
  - YMCA \_\_\_\_\_ Services offers assistance to job seekers and employers.
  - YMCA facility on Lake Couchiching offering retreats, conference services, and outdoor education. (2 words)
  - The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka operates 74 licensed \_\_\_\_\_ facilities, offering play-based learning programs for children. (2 words)
  - The third YMCA value; My Y welcomes and fosters a sense of belonging for all.
  - The fourth YMCA value; My Y treats all persons with dignity and acceptance.
  - The YMCA has proudly served our \_\_\_\_\_ for over 150 years.
  - The first YMCA value; My Y commits to building relationships and demonstrates compassion towards others.

Answer key: [smym.ca/Crossword](http://smym.ca/Crossword)

## Find us online:

- Facebook @YMCAofSimcoeMuskoka
- Instagram @YMCASM
- Website YMCAofSimcoeMuskoka.ca
- Twitter @YMCASM

YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, 22 Grove St W, Barrie, ON L4N 1M7

## A New Machine At The Gym



Used with permission from Joe Michael K and TheMuseStand.com

## Our Mission, Our Vision, Our Values

My Y is dedicated to the growth of all persons in spirit, mind and body, and to their sense of belonging to each other and the global community.

### The YMCA Vision

My Y inspires people to reach their full potential.

### The YMCA Values

**Caring** - MyY builds relationships and demonstrates compassion towards others.

**Honesty** - MyY promotes integrity and trustworthiness.

**Inclusiveness** - MyY welcomes and fosters a sense of belonging for all.

**Respect** - MyY treats all persons with dignity and acceptance.

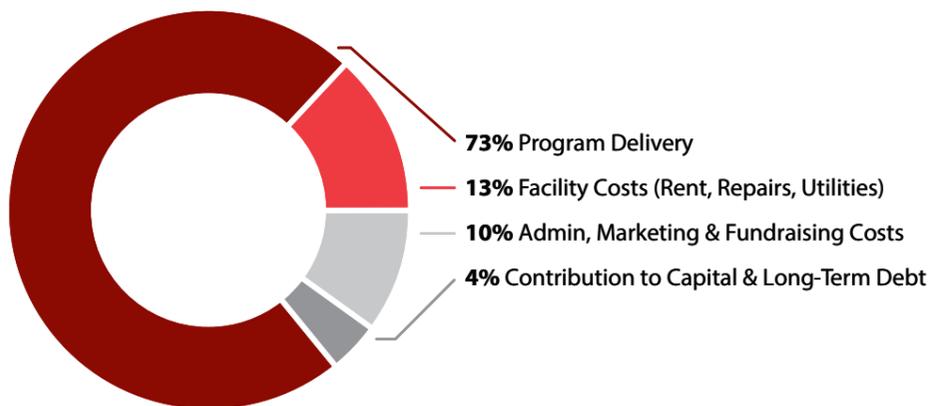
**Responsibility** - MyY keeps its promise and does what it believes is right.

## Financials

### Fiscal Year 2019 (in thousands)

Sources of Funding	\$50,690
Financial Assistance Given by the Y	\$913
Net Revenue	\$49,777
Expenses	\$47,625
Contribution to Debt and Assets	\$2,152
Revenue Growth	9%
Contribution to Development as % of Revenue	4%

### Expenses as % of Revenue



Charitable # 119215119RR0001

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka's entire, audited financial statements can be found online at [ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca/charitable-information/](http://ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca/charitable-information/)

## Leadership

Successful and committed charities require an equally successful and committed board of directors. The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka has 13 unique, committed and remarkable people, all volunteers, drawn from the communities we serve. Each work to ensure our Y fulfills its mission and achieves its work for our constituent communities and for the regions of Simcoe County, Muskoka, and Parry Sound. As a volunteer board, the directors determine the vision and strategy for the organization, set policy as well as provide guidance and direction for our Association.

### Senior Staff

**Rob Armstrong**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Fiona Cascagnette**  
Vice President

**Lianne Gorbell**  
Manager of Executive & Association Services

**Karen Pulla**  
Vice President

**Brian Shelley**  
Vice President

**Shirley Smith**  
Vice President

**Kate Venn**  
Vice President

**Diana Vangelisti, Past Chair**  
Registered Professional Planner

**Caitlin Foisy**  
Account Manager

**Jocelyn Hay**  
Service Administrator

**Norah Holder**  
President & Chief Executive Officer

**Kevin MacLeod**  
Certified Human Resources Leader

**Stephanie Pereira**  
Youth Probation Officer

**Dylan Scott**  
Lawyer

**Lynn Strachan**  
Project Manager

**Brian Tamblyn**  
Management Consultant

### Board of Directors

**Andrew Lorriman, Chair**  
Wealth Management Advisor / Branch Manager

**Pat Hurley, Vice Chair**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Kirby Wagg**  
Business Owner

**Todd Young**  
Business Owner

## Recognizing YMCA volunteers in Simcoe County

Simcoe.com

National Volunteer Week (April 7-13) is a time to recognize and celebrate the generous contributions made by volunteers across our country. Last year at the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, more than 600 volunteers donated their time in the areas of fitness, child care, camp, employment services, immigration services, operations, child and youth programs, philanthropy and on the board of directors.

YMCA volunteers come from all backgrounds, ages and stages of life including students looking to gain work experience and retirees who have volunteered for over 30 years. With the help of their dedicated volunteers, the YMCA is able to strengthen the community and provide a safe and inclusive place for everyone to thrive.

YMCA volunteer Jamal Ismail is a great example of an individual who gives her time, resources and talents to help improve the lives of others while enhancing her own life through the Y.

Escaping the civil war in Lebanon, Ismail immigrated to Barrie in January 1990 with her husband and two young children. Not knowing the language or how to survive the January climate, she felt very isolated, lonely and depressed.



Adam Brown for the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

The YMCA's immigration services made a huge impact on her life by providing her with a place where she could belong, be accepted and grow. English language classes and a YMCA family membership connected her to other families in the community, where she made friends, learned how to read and write in English and acquired the right skills to enter the job market.

Today, Ismail spends much of her time supporting other immigrants who have recently moved to Barrie. Translating, filing paperwork, making appointments and supporting families are some of the many ways she provides support to newcomers. Her compassion and gratitude is the foundation behind her over 20 years of volunteer service at the Y. "When you volunteer at a place like the YMCA, you feel more confident, you feel lifted, and you lift others," she said. "It's a great way to give back to your community."

YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka. (2019, April 5). Recognizing YMCA volunteers in Simcoe County. Simcoe.com, retrieved from <https://www.simcoe.com/>

## Imagine Canada accreditation builds trust and confidence in charities



The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka has been an Imagine Canada Accredited charity since 2014 and was the first YMCA in Canada to achieve this accreditation.

Accreditation is given to charities and nonprofits that demonstrate excellence and leadership in five key areas of operation: board governance, financial accountability and transparency, fundraising, staff management, and volunteer involvement. The Trustmark is a symbol of credibility in the charitable sector and demonstrates our commitment to operate at the highest level of transparency and accountability.



Do you want to learn more about the new Barrie Y?

100REASONS.Y.CA