



MEDIA RELEASE

YMCA of Greater Toronto's Cooper Koo Family YMCA brings vital health programs to more people

New Centre of Community Opening Weekend celebrations set for May 28 & 29

TORONTO – May 26, 2016 – The YMCA of Greater Toronto was joined by government and community partners, donors, employees and volunteers to inaugurate the charity's newest Centre of Community, the [Cooper Koo Family Cherry St. YMCA Centre](#).

The new facility officially opens its doors on May 30. This marks another milestone for the YMCA. The Cooper Koo Family YMCA is the second centre to open as part of the charity's strategic focus to make a real difference in the health of residents across the Greater Toronto Area by building new Centres of Community.

"Through a collaborative effort with our partners, the YMCA of Greater Toronto is working toward building healthy communities across the GTA," explains Diane Sinhuber, Chair of the Board, YMCA of Greater Toronto. "Our new YMCA will provide a welcoming and safe space where everyone can have access to programs and services that will help them build their health and build community. This centre is a leading example of healthy infrastructure – that's exciting because it means it's designed and operated to promote community health. This is a big day for our community."

The 82,000 sq. ft. YMCA was built in partnership with Waterfront Toronto and the Province of Ontario as a legacy building of the Toronto 2015 Pan/Parapan Am Games. The facility, used for training during the Games, will now allow more than 8,000 children, youth and families access to much-needed YMCA services and programs.

The naming donors, Michael Cooper and Krystal Koo, believe in providing the Canary District and the wider West Don Lands neighbourhood a place where residents feel they belong, can find support and stay healthy.

"We believe – and now have witnessed – the good the YMCA can do for the communities they are located in and the people who they help," says Krystal Koo. "I hope the [Cooper Koo Family YMCA] will help change someone's life, no matter how big or small."

The Cooper Koo Family YMCA, which features a youth zone, two-quad gymnasium, swimming pools, fitness studios and exercise areas, will help community members lead active lives. Additionally, spaces for community activities, such as meetings, are open to the public.

"I am very proud to have the Cooper Koo Family YMCA located in Toronto Centre as a strong community ally," says MPP Glen Murray, Toronto Centre. "This new and accessible facility will

be a great addition and a focal point for healthy lifestyles in the neighbourhood. I look forward to continuing our partnership in servicing the vibrant and diverse communities of Toronto Centre.”

Built to LEED (Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design) and AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) standards, this state-of-the-art facility includes a 30,000 sq. ft. publically-accessible green roof, numerous accessibility features and the City of Toronto’s first community microgrid. As master developer of the West Don Lands, Waterfront Toronto planned an inclusive, sustainable and people-focused neighbourhood, and set the stage for delivering this vital element of community infrastructure.

“A successful neighbourhood is the product of the total experience of the community,” says Will Fleissig, President and CEO of Waterfront Toronto. “How we live, how we work and how we play influences how we connect with one another. The YMCA is a vital amenity for all members of this community and will have a profound impact on the overall health and success of the neighbourhood.”

This new YMCA Centre of Community will provide services and programs to support a neighbourhood whose population is projected to increase 13.5% by 2020. As the driving force of healthy living in the area, the Cooper Koo Family YMCA will help advance the YMCA’s vision of being home to the healthiest children, teens and young adults.

Being at the heart of the new Canary District, and the wider West Don Lands neighbourhood, the YMCA of Greater Toronto will give the community a **Strong Start** to a **Great Future!** [Opening Weekend celebrations](#) are taking place Saturday, May 28 and Sunday, May 29.

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About the YMCA of Greater Toronto

For well over a century we’ve provided leadership and worked with partners solving complex social problems to create real, measurable outcomes that have strengthened the social health and fabric of communities. As a charity, the YMCA offers a variety of programs responding to the needs of the community, including education and training, employment and immigrant services, family and youth services, health and fitness programs, childcare and camps. Serving the population of the GTA, Durham, Peel, York, Halton Region and Dufferin County, last year the YMCA connected with more than 497,000 people across 370 locations. The YMCA plans to build new centres across the GTA to help bring more of these programs to more people. Our Strong Start, Great Future Campaign will help raise the philanthropic funds to make it happen. www.ymcagta.org