



MEDIA RELEASE

YMCA of Greater Toronto officially breaks ground on The McDonald Family YMCA

New Centre of Community will bring vital programs and services to Queen-Spadina neighbourhood

TORONTO – October 5, 2017 – Today, members of the community including Mayor John Tory, Councillor Joe Cressy, and MPP Han Dong, along with Medhat Mahdy, President & CEO of the [YMCA of Greater Toronto](#) and donors Jenifer and Steve McDonald, officially broke ground on The McDonald Family YMCA.

Located in the historic Waterworks building at 505 Richmond Street West, this 54,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art YMCA facility will feature a pool, track, gymnasium, conditioning room, fitness studios, and community rooms.

“We aren’t doing this critical work alone. We’re making this transformative change happen together, which is why we’re so deeply grateful to everyone who has rallied around this new YMCA Centre of Community,” said Medhat Mahdy, President & CEO of YMCA GTA. “It’s a significant next step in fuelling our vision of being home to the healthiest children, teens, and young adults.

The YMCA’s newest Centre of Community is being made possible through a unique partnership with the City of Toronto that will see important services delivered in a fast growing neighbourhood; the population is expected to grow by 8% to 384,861 people by 2020 when the new Centre will open its doors. The City of Toronto is showing tremendous leadership by contributing more than \$21 million towards The McDonald Family YMCA.

“We are committed to improving the health of our communities, and that starts with our families,” said Mayor John Tory. “We’re thrilled to support this new centre, which will provide a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment where everyone is welcome.”

The project is also being funded in part thanks to a generous gift from Steve and Jenifer McDonald. The McDonalds donated \$3 million to support the YMCA’s strategic plan to connect more people in more communities by opening 10 new Centres of Community across the GTA.

“The McDonald Family YMCA’s carefully thought-out decentralized service model will help meet the unique needs of this neighbourhood by being accessible to – and collaborative with – nearby YMCA spaces, programs, and other local community organizations,” said Steve McDonald.



"Knowing that the Y has the power to transform every individual, whether it's through their fitness programs, employment and newcomer services, or the opportunity to connect with likeminded people, fulfills our belief in their mission; we see firsthand the benefits of its essential programs and services to building great cities and healthy individuals," added Jenifer McDonald.

The McDonalds' gift is the largest received to-date toward [Strong Start, Great Future](#)—the YMCA of Greater Toronto's capital campaign to help create transformative change in the health and well-being of communities across the GTA, with a goal to raise \$100 million in philanthropic donations.

The McDonald Family YMCA is being developed as part of the [Waterworks Revitalization](#) project. Spearheaded by City Councillor Joe Cressy, it includes affordable housing units, a 299-unit residential development, and a public food hall. It will also include an improved St. Andrew's Playground.

"Our downtown neighbourhoods are growing rapidly and we must work together to ensure that we are building a complete and healthy community," said Councillor Cressy. "When you live in a condo, apartment, or townhouse, then the local park becomes your backyard, and The McDonald Family YMCA will be your living room. The City of Toronto is contributing two-thirds of the capital cost to this partnership because the YMCA of Greater Toronto has a proven track record of high quality services and programming that will help to foster healthy individuals, families, and community."

The McDonald Family YMCA will serve the Alexandra Park community and its surrounding neighbourhoods, including Kensington Market, Chinatown, Queen West and the Fashion District.

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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



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services, family and youth services, health and fitness programs, child care and camps. Serving the population of Toronto, Durham, Peel, York, Halton and Dufferin County, last year the YMCA connected with more than 557,000 people across 438 locations. www.ymcagta.org