



For Immediate Release

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Business Man, Philanthropist gives \$500,000 to new YMCA building and helps organization get to kids that can't get to YMCA

Hamilton, ON – Local business man and philanthropist, Mischa Weisz, is bringing the YMCA Campaign for the building of the Les Chater Family YMCA, over the top, with a \$500,000 donation, which will also establish a YMCA Endowment Fund for children's community outreach programs.

The \$19 million facility located at Turner Park on Rymal Road East will be part of a multi-centre complex which includes a library, police station, YMCA and skate park. Half of Weisz's gift has helped the YMCA surpass its campaign goal for the building slated to open April 2009. The remaining \$250,000 will establish the *Mischa Weisz YMCA Endowment Fund*, in support of YMCA Community Outreach programs to ensure that YMCA programs are available to those children who can't get to a YMCA facility.

Mischa Weisz, founder and owner of TNS Smart Network Inc., a national white-label ATM operator, was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer in September 2007. Given only 6 months to live, Weisz took an aggressive and balanced approach to western and eastern medicine and has surpassed the expectations of his doctors and medical experts, living a full life and maintaining a positive outlook.

Life wasn't always like this for the 52 year old, father of two young adults. Weisz raised his children as a penniless single father until the founding of his company in 1996. Now a multi-millionaire and facing an illness that will surely end his life, Weisz's passion has turned to the needs of the community. "These are uncertain economic times and more families will need the benefit of health and wellness programs of the YMCA," says Weisz. "I not only want to help get this new YMCA built but I want to make sure that the YMCA can bring programs to local children who might not ever get to a YMCA."

"Depending on a few estate planning issues, I hope to double or triple my gift to the YMCA," says Mischa Weisz. "Having been there myself, I can appreciate what low-income parents go through. I didn't have the support of the YMCA. If we can get more children involved in the health, leadership and skill-building programs of the YMCA, think of the futures we could be building for children."

"The YMCA Endowment Fund named for Mischa will provide a stable source of funding for many children in the Virtual YMCA programs currently operating within inner-city schools in Hamilton," says Jim Commerford, President & CEO. The program offers elementary school students literacy, recreation, social values education and homework assistance in Hamilton's lowest-income neighbourhoods. The Virtual YMCA is serving approximately 320 children at a cost of \$1,000 per child per school year. "The program is completely free to participants and is fully funded by donations. Mischa's generosity has provided the YMCA with increased program stability and the possibility of expanding the program into other schools that have been asking for the program," says Commerford.

As a values-based charity dedicated to health promotion and healthy living, the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford serves 117,000 women and men, children and families of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, in all stages of life. The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford's mission is to help people achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body through participation

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YMCA of Hamilton / Burlington / Brantford

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and service to the community. The YMCA offers a wide variety of programs including: Health Fitness & Recreation, Child Care, Day and Resident Camping, Outdoor Education, Employment Training, Academic Assistance, Newcomer Services, Community Outreach, Leadership Development, Volunteerism and Residence for Men.

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Charitable Mission

The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford is a charitable organization helping people achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body through participation and service to the community.

Vision

Creating healthy communities in which individuals and families have opportunities to reach their potential.