



For Immediate Release

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The future role of the YMCA in Canada discussed at national gathering

(Hamilton, Ontario) – The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington participated in a national dialogue at YMCA Canada’s annual general meeting held this past weekend, attended by some 200 senior volunteer and staff leaders representing 47 YMCAs and 8 YMCA-YWCAs nationwide. The dialogue centered on the future role of the YMCA in Canadian society, and the world, given the challenges and trends ahead.

“This national dialogue was about identifying the critical questions we need to consider for the future of the YMCA in Canada,” says Michael Weil, President and CEO of YMCA Canada. “It’s about understanding demographic changes and social trends to meet the emerging needs of Canadians and communities. The stimulating ideas and concepts exchanged at this meeting will form the basis of a more comprehensive national dialogue being planned in Winnipeg in 2009,” he says.

To set the stage for some thought-provoking conversations was keynote speaker Glen Murray, CEO & President of the Canadian Urban Institute. Mr. Murray challenged YMCA leaders to find the big ideas that will truly make a difference in creating a sense of place in our communities. “Collective groups like the YMCA are uniquely positioned to change the world. You’ve always had great citizenship and have always worked for social inclusion and for keeping people healthy and safe,” said Mr. Murray.

Mr. Murray also spoke about today’s key urban issues such as the environment, diversity, inclusion, finding ways to keep citizens, especially seniors, connected, involved and active. The YMCA will be looking to see how it can make a bigger difference in communities nationwide.

“The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington is excited about participating with other YMCAs and YMCA-YWCAs in a bold new vision for the YMCA in Canada,” says Jim Commerford, President & CEO. “We are motivated by the possibilities of having a greater impact on the health and wellbeing of more Canadians.”

YMCA Canada will continue to consult with associations over the next two years to set the future collective YMCA vision for 2012, and to represent the interests of YMCAs and YMCA-YWCAs in Canada.

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Charitable Registration # 10808 3825 RR0001

As a values-based charity dedicated to health promotion and healthy living, the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington serves 107,589 women and men, children and families of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, in all stages of life. The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington's mission is to help people achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body through participation and service to the community. The YMCA offers many diverse programs including: Health Fitness & Recreation, Child Care, Day and Resident Camping, Outdoor Education, Employment Training, Academic Assistance, Community Outreach, Leadership Development, Volunteerism and Residence for Men.

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