



For Immediate Release

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Local YMCAs Merge

Brantford, ON – Two local charities in Southern Ontario have come together in an historic merger. The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington and The YMCA of Brantford have both voted to join together as one YMCA serving the region. This decision was approved at the December 8th Meeting of the Voting Members at the Brantford YMCA.

“This step positions our YMCA to build on our 156 years of providing caring, responsive and relevant services to our community. I am proud and thankful to the YMCA of Brantford Board, staff and volunteers for their thoughtful leadership and vision which resulted in overwhelming support for this integration. I’m also thankful for thoughtful questions and unanimous support shown by the voting members of this important community charity”, said Brian Wood, Board Chair, YMCA of Brantford.

Brian Heagle, Board Chair, YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington, expressed his support for this merger indicating that “this is a tremendous opportunity for both YMCAs to come together and better serve our communities. It will enable us to be more effective, efficient and innovative. By building upon and sharing our individual strengths, we will launch new programs and offer a greater range of vital services across the region. The real benefit will be to the many thousands of people served by the YMCA.”

In December 2007, the YMCA Board of Directors of both the organizations agreed to work together as a means of leveraging resources, gaining efficiencies and to better serve our communities. Since then, both YMCAs have shared a President & CEO and senior leadership team, with the expectation of an eventual merger.

“One of the unique and exciting aspects of this merger is that it involves two extremely dynamic and vital organizations, with a common vision for serving our communities,” said Jim Commerford, President & CEO, YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford.

The Board’s decision aligns with a strong trend throughout Ontario, whereby YMCAs from neighbouring areas are collaborating to make better use of resources and enhance service to their communities.

In Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford, a new integrated YMCA will commit to:

- Planning for a new YMCA Centre with state-of-the-art facilities and services in Brantford
- Providing a greater range of valued and affordable programs
- Working with YMCA community partners to build capacity and expand programs like employment services, immigrant settlement services, community outreach and day camp
- Exposing YMCA staff to more professional opportunities within the YMCA and provide strong leadership across the region
- Building the YMCA’s capacity to strengthen volunteer and charitable contributions in support of the YMCA’s Mission to ensure access to YMCA programs for everyone regardless of their ability to pay

“The goal of integration is to do more – and to play a very meaningful role in our communities,” said Brian Wood.

As a values-based charity dedicated to healthy living and community building, the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford serves more than 120,000 people of all backgrounds, abilities and stages of life.

The YMCA is a charitable organization helping 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 and recreation; licensed child care; day and resident camping; academic assistance; employment counseling; newcomer services; community outreach; residence; leadership development and more.

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For more information, contact:

Brian Wood
Chair, Board of Directors
YMCA of Brantford
Office: 1 (800) 668-7473
bwood@concastpipe.com

Brian Heagle
Chair, Board of Directors
YMCA of Hamilton / Burlington
Office: (905) 631-3642
bheagle@fdhlawyers.com

Jim Commerford
President & CEO
YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford
Tel: 905-317-4919
jim_commerford@ymca.ca