



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Strengthening Communities Through Small Business Support**

*The YMCA of Greater Vancouver's Self-Employment Programs offer support and solutions for more people to become small business owners.*

**October 17, 2022 (Vancouver, BC)** — Small Business Week is an opportunity to celebrate entrepreneurs and spark innovation. However, not everyone has the same access to the tools and resources to get their idea off the ground. The YMCA's Self-Employment Programs bridge this gap.

“Our programs offer specialized support for unemployed and under-employed people who have decided to take on a small business operation as their next career step. Eligible participants receive one-on-one guidance from our highly skilled business advisors and translate business concepts into a comprehensive plan to launch their business by course completion,” said Kirsty Peterson, Director of Employment & Training, YMCA of Greater Vancouver. “Thousands of people have accessed our services in the 36 years of delivering Self-Employment Programs, and we know that with the right framework and support, people can build successful and sustainable careers.”

As we enter Small Business Week, unemployment numbers continue to be low, with many returning to work post-pandemic, though some remain unemployed or underemployed due to a myriad of disruptions in the economy. Through the pandemic, many have re-evaluated what they want for their career. Self Employment provides an option to those who may need flexible work hours, to take care of their family and themselves.

Ian Lee is one of hundreds of people who joined our Self Employment Program in late 2019 and was just getting started when the pandemic drastically changed economic conditions. “The [Self-Employment] program showed me how to build a business, get



financing, and reach my target market,” said Ian Lee, former program participant.  
“Luckily the YMCA has free self-employment programs that help people just like me.”

The YMCA’s Self Employment program is a free, 48-week, online program which includes living supports up to \$638 per week while in the program and gives you the tools to launch your own business. The next intake starts December 5, 2022. Those interested can visit [gv.ymca.ca/self-employment](http://gv.ymca.ca/self-employment) to register for an Information Session or take a short eligibility quiz to learn if the program is right for them.

-30-

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Sarah Vopni  
Manager, Marketing and Communications – Community Operations  
YMCA of Greater Vancouver  
647-309-3725  
[Sarah.Vopni@gv.ymca.ca](mailto:Sarah.Vopni@gv.ymca.ca)

**About the YMCA of Greater Vancouver:**

The YMCA is a community-based charity powered by people with a shared commitment: to strengthen community. We accomplish this goal by helping children and families thrive, promoting healthy living and fostering connection and belonging. Each year, the YMCA helps more than 120,000 children, youth, adults, families and seniors become stronger through life-enhancing programs and services. The YMCA of Greater Vancouver has been serving the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley and Sunshine Coast for 136 years and currently offers programs at more than 270 locations. [www.gv.ymca.ca](http://www.gv.ymca.ca)