



Bob Chan-Kent (centre) is joined by members of his family, YMCA of Greater Vancouver Board Chair Greg D'Avignon (far left) and President & CEO Heidi Worthington (far right) in a ribbon-cutting to unveil the Bob Chan-Kent Family YMCA on Oct. 2.

## Bob Chan-Kent Family YMCA unveiled in Chilliwack

A new chapter of the YMCA's long history in the Fraser Valley has begun, as the centre of community in Chilliwack has a new name to honour one of the Y's most dedicated and longest-serving patrons.

The facility is now officially known as the Bob Chan-Kent Family YMCA, which will continue to deliver the crucial services, recreational opportunities and programming that area residents are accustomed to at the former Chilliwack YMCA. The new name was unveiled during a small ceremony on Oct. 2 that included Chan-Kent, wife Linda-Mae and their four daughters, and other guests invited to mark the occasion.

Chan-Kent is known to many as a YMCA ambassador and champion of our values over many years. First inspired by an initial visit to the Robert Lee YMCA downtown five decades ago, he has been an enthusiastic and influential YMCA proponent, volunteer and donor in the years that have followed.

"This is really the pinnacle of my volunteerism in the YMCA," Chan-Kent said. "I never dreamed that I would have the opportunity to have my name—and that of my family—associated with the Y in such a manner.

"Throughout my 40 years of volunteerism, I have come to appreciate, better understand and greatly admire the work of the YMCA, so I am thrilled by this special affiliation."

Among his wide-ranging service to the YMCA of Greater Vancouver, Chan-Kent has spent the past 15 years as a key member of our volunteer governance leadership team. His presence on the Board of Directors has coincided with key milestones for the Chilliwack YMCA, including its expansion and renewal completed in 2019.

"Chilliwack holds a special place for me," said Chan-Kent. "It's an incredible community that has long stood for strong family values and a commitment to caring for each other.

*continued on next page...*



## Message from the Chair

**It's nice to be together again.** Following two years of hiatus, it was wonderful to see so many of you at our Heritage Club Luncheon this past June—our first opportunity to reconnect and reflect on the impact the YMCA has made through the pandemic and how the Foundation's support is ensuring the Y continues to show up for community today.

YMCA Camp Elphinstone, meanwhile, was another place that we were thrilled to see bustling with activity this summer after a long wait. With visitors arriving for the first time since 2019, our beautiful Sunshine Coast facility welcomed 2,300 day, overnight and family campers in July and August. Like us, we're sure you'll be delighted to see the smiling faces of campers again in the pages that follow.

At our June AGM, I was pleased to report that the Foundation once again found itself in a strong financial position at the fiscal year's close. With its combined assets and properties experiencing further growth in 2021, the Foundation was able to invest more than \$2.7 million into YMCA of Greater Vancouver initiatives.

By the time the next issue of Newsworthy is published in time for the holiday season, we'll be a few steps closer to being known as the YMCA BC Foundation as work to complete our unification with the YMCA of Northern BC

and the YMCA-YWCA of Kamloops continues. We'll also have celebrated the grand opening of our brand-new Bettie Allard YMCA in Coquitlam, which is just weeks away from welcoming its first visitors, thanks in large part to the generosity of Foundation donors.

We look forward to these exciting developments with the knowledge that we are stronger together and poised to help even more children and families thrive across the province.

Melinda McKie,  
Chair, YMCA of Greater  
Vancouver Foundation



Read our 2021  
YGV Foundation annual  
report online at  
[gv.ymca.ca/about-us](http://gv.ymca.ca/about-us)

### **Bob Chan-Kent Family YMCA unveiled in Chilliwack continued...**

"To be connected to the community of Chilliwack in such a way speaks not only to my belief in the amazing future of the YMCA there, but of the opportunity to be of service no matter where we live."

The facility's renaming comes on the heels of an expanded YMCA presence in the Chilliwack community. The City of Chilliwack recently selected the Y to operate its two existing leisure centres and the outdoor Rotary Pool, with the YMCA effectively taking over stewardship of the city amenities in mid-September.

As a true believer in expanding the Y's reach to benefit communities the world over, Chan-Kent's impact has also been felt at the national and international levels as a past

member of the Boards of Directors for both YMCA Canada and the World Alliance of YMCAs. His tireless dedication resulted in him receiving a YMCA Fellowship of Honour Medal—an accolade presented to a select few individuals across Canada over the past 40 years—in 2017.

Reflecting on his legacy with the YMCA, Chan-Kent said he hopes he can inspire others to think about how they can give back to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those around them.

"There's so much need right now and each of us will have our chance to do our own part in the way that best reflects our ability and beliefs," he said. "But it's so important to take that first step."

## Collaboration is key for Ellen Bell Scholarship recipient

Tamiya Kabatoff began their marketing studies at BCIT without much certainty about what their path forward in the field may take.

"I knew I was good at making connections with humans," said the 27-year-old. "I didn't know what that would look like in marketing, but I knew I wanted to connect with people."

That commitment to bringing people together is among the reasons why Kabatoff was selected as the 2022 recipient of the Ellen Bell YMCA Memorial Scholarship, awarded annually to a female student pursuing a career in marketing or advertising who embodies Bell's values.

A dedicated YMCA volunteer who valued giving back to her community, Bell was highly regarded in BC's advertising and marketing industry before her passing more than 30 years ago. Bell's friends and family, led by Shirley Broadfoot and Nick Vos, founded the scholarship in her honour to support other remarkable young women like Kabatoff who have similar career aspirations.

Kabatoff recently completed BCIT's two-year Marketing Management program, but first created a unique program aimed at making connections between student cohorts. Kabatoff and a classmate founded the Marketing Management Mentorship Program, which pairs first-year pupils with second-year student volunteer mentors who provide support for their mentees in various capacities through monthly meetings. The initiative was an instant success, with 22 first-year mentees receiving guidance from 11 of Kabatoff's second-year peers.

The spirit of collaboration and learning from each other's viewpoints that served as the program's basis is ultimately where Kabatoff said they have focused their "strategic lens" as they've grown into their marketing career.

"What I've learned is that the most successful marketers and agencies come from this level of humbleness and an ability to look at the world and know that they don't know everything about it. I think that's what's so great about collaboration," said Kabatoff. "I think it's very important to hear other peoples' stories as much as possible. I think that's where the great insights and marketing happens in the world."



*Tamiya Kabatoff (left) and Helen Su, the two most recent recipients of the Ellen Bell YMCA Memorial Scholarship, were jointly recognized for their achievements during a spring gathering.*

Since completing their Marketing Management studies, Kabatoff has been working as a social-media strategist for AntiSocial Solutions, a Vancouver-based digital agency. They're also preparing to continue their education via BCIT's Bachelor of Business Administration program in 2023.

"I'd been wanting to do my BBA but it was something I had to think, financially, if it made sense," they said. "I look forward to being able to access that now because of the scholarship."

Having worked previously in a child and youth care role in their hometown of Surrey, Kabatoff said they appreciate the YMCA's mission of helping young people and families thrive within our communities. They're grateful for the Foundation's support and to be acknowledged as someone embodying the values of the award's namesake.

"Ellen was obviously super impactful on so many people's lives," said Kabatoff. "I think she left a legacy of kindness, hard work and a spirit that carries on in the people around her."

## The advantages of planned philanthropy

There are myriad reasons why we are motivated to support organizations, charities and causes that are near and dear to our hearts and make a difference in our communities, whether through donations, volunteerism or other good deeds to pay it forward.



Although most Canadians—more than three-quarters of those aged 15 and older—do make some form of charitable donation over the course of the year, giving typically tends to be more reactionary and sporadic in nature. Most individuals generally don't incorporate giving into their overall wealth or estate planning.

But if you take a step back and consider why you choose to give and what drives your charitable endeavours, the answer may be that it provides an opportunity to support causes you believe in and express your values in an impactful way. For those seeking to strengthen and preserve their values and beliefs over the course of their lifetime—and potentially after their passing, too—this is where it becomes important to consider the benefits that advanced and structured planning around charitable giving can offer.

While the tendency is often to think of wealth transfer primarily in the sense of passing down assets to the next generation of family and loved ones—regardless of whether your intentions are to do so during your lifetime, through your will or a mixture of both—building giving into your wealth-transfer plans creates the ability to streamline your giving to meet individual and family intentions, offers potential tax benefits and may greatly contribute to creating an enduring legacy.

Giving can take on many forms but generally exists within two main categories. On one end of the spectrum is on-

demand charitable giving, such as contributions that are completely spontaneous or in response to an immediate need, opportunity or request. This may also include regular donations made monthly, annually or perhaps at a specific time of year, such as the holidays. On the other end of the spectrum is strategic philanthropy, which is a more structured and targeted approach to giving.

Instead of being more responsive and unplanned, philanthropy is proactive and establishes a long-term plan for giving. This lets individuals map out their giving in a way that may better reflect their beliefs and values. It also allows them to organize how and when they give—and through what means—creating the ability to generate a lasting impact both during one's lifetime and after.

Regardless of the causes you support or the level of emphasis you place on giving in your life, there are several ways to incorporate philanthropic giving into your wealth-transfer plans. And beyond the tax advantages it may offer, a more strategic approach can also result in more meaningful giving for the donor and create a greater, longer-lasting impact on society.

**Eddy Mejlholm is a Portfolio Manager & Wealth Advisor with RBC Dominion Securities and YMCA of Greater Vancouver Foundation volunteer.**

---

*Disclaimer: The YMCA of Greater Vancouver Foundation has published this material as a source of general information only. It should not be considered as a formal offering of financial, estate-planning, tax or investment advice. Please consult with a professional before acting upon any information contained within.*

## Foundation-funded garden sparks growth in young minds

Make a visit to the Cascade Heights YMCA Child Care Centre and you'll find the seemingly unthinkable: A group of preschoolers with endless enthusiasm for vegetables. That excitement level for greens—plus a few fruits, flowers, herbs and more—is thanks to the generosity of donors to the YMCA of Greater Vancouver Foundation.

When the brand-new Cascade Heights facility opened in Burnaby in the spring of 2021, it came with a swath of land behind the building filled with nothing but sand and dirt.

"It was a bit bleak," said Christy Tones, Manager, Early Years and Family Development, "but it was also a blank canvas with so much potential. We just thought we needed to do something with it and might as well make it a useful and viable community space."

Tones, who oversees multiple YMCA child care sites in several Lower Mainland communities, had previously seen kids take to gardening at Richmond's Seasong Child Care Centre with amazing results.

"We watched the children get really excited about growth and development and caring for something," said Tones. "They learned to care for plants and they learned to care for each other. It was a really beautiful social change."

Hoping to bring an expanded version of the same concept to Cascade Heights, Tones applied successfully for a \$5,000 grant from the YMCA's 2021 Innovation Fund intake to turn the empty space into a community garden. The Innovation Fund is supported entirely by the Foundation and encourages YMCA employees to submit proposals to enhance existing programs or launch new ones.

The project officially got off the ground this spring. Kids in care at Cascade Heights helped set up several planter boxes to grow a wide variety of produce—tomatoes, pumpkins, cucumbers and berries, just to name a few—right outside their back door. The youth are involved at every step from planting to harvesting. Tones said the garden has "changed the program for the better" and that she's thankful for the unique experience it provides.

"They planted everything in there," said Tones, moments before being surrounded by a half-dozen youngsters eager to check on the progress of their zucchini plants. "They're right



*Christy Tones, Manager, Early Years and Family Development, with some eager helpers in the community garden at Cascade Heights YMCA Child Care Centre.*

in there wanting to help and asking, 'What are we doing in the garden today?'

"Most children living in urban environments don't see a garden this large or see where their food comes from. To introduce these ideas at an early age promotes lifelong healthy food habits and an understanding of food sustainability, nature and climate."

Moving forward, the intent is for the garden to truly become a community amenity by donating its harvested produce to food banks, using the space to engage further child care families, opening further garden plots for area residents to participate, and welcoming primary-grade students at Cascade Heights Elementary School into the garden as part of their studies in life cycles.

"We've been able to transform a space for not just the YMCA program participants but hopefully for the community at large," said Tones, who hopes the success of the project can be duplicated at other Y locations where feasible. "It is a minimal investment, considering what's possible."

## An enduring connection to YMCA Camp Elphinstone



*(L) Stephanie Nesbitt and daughter Paige enjoy time on the water together, putting skills they've both learned at Camp Elphinstone to good use. (R) Stephanie prepares to sail during her time as a Camp Elphinstone counsellor.*

YMCA Camp Elphinstone leaves a lasting impression on all who stroll its shores, no matter how much time one has spent at the serene Sunshine Coast property. For Stephanie Nesbitt's family, experiencing the magic of camp is a tradition that spans generations.

As the keynote speaker at the Foundation's Heritage Club Luncheon in June, Stephanie detailed her family's enduring ties to Camp Elphinstone, which began when her father, Gavin Hume, took a summer job at camp 65 years ago.

"Little did anyone realize this would be the beginning of the Hume family legacy," she told the dozens in attendance at the luncheon.

That legacy extends far beyond memorable visits made to camp by Gavin, Stephanie, her siblings and cousins in their youth, and now her own daughter. It's also a story of how one special place became woven into the family's fabric and continues to touch their lives regularly.

Thirty years after Gavin's initial stint as a counsellor, an eight-year-old Stephanie made her first pilgrimage to Camp

Elphinstone alongside her cousin "with enthusiasm and hesitation," she said. It became the first of her nine consecutive summers as an Elphinstone camper or counsellor.

"When you get that early experience of independence, you realize what you're capable of as an individual," she said. "You learn all these skills on your own without the support network that you're used to having around you."

Beyond the personal growth and key life lessons it instilled, Camp Elphinstone has also been a place of remembrance, celebration and reflection for Stephanie and her extended family.

The Mark Hume Waterfront and Leadership Centre overlooking the camp's shoreline was dedicated in honour of Stephanie's brother, who tragically passed away in a 2007 traffic accident one day before he was to depart for camp to serve as a counsellor for the summer. A year later, Stephanie and husband Damian were married at Elphinstone—"the only place that made sense," she said. They returned to camp to celebrate their 10th anniversary in 2018 and plan to do the same to mark their 20th year of marriage.

"It was important for us to be at a place where my brother felt near," Stephanie said of their wedding celebrations. "We really wanted to have an extended experience of something that our family loves with the most important people in our lives."

Though Stephanie and her family continue to enjoy the activities she participated in at Elphinstone like canoeing and out-tripping, the impact of camp has revealed itself in other, unexpected ways. When trying to comfort her newborn daughter after becoming a parent for the first time in 2012, she found herself instinctively singing campfire songs from her youth in place of lullabies.

"Memorable as these songs were at camp for me as a child, they were now tools in my parenting backpack," she said. "As a camper and a counsellor, I was learning skills that would allow me—20-plus years later—to be a supportive and connected parent."

Stephanie's daughter Paige, now aged nine, is a two-time Elphinstone camper who has her heart set on returning for a multi-week visit in 2023, while seven-year-old son, Evan, will likely enjoy his first camp experience in summers to come.

Now that she's a Foundation Trustee alongside Gavin, Stephanie cherishes her role in helping youths' lives to be shaped by Camp Elphinstone in the same way as her own.

"Camp not only provided me experience in the outdoors but it taught me the skills needed to be a leader within my community," she said. "Trusting oneself and the people around you is fundamental to your time at camp. Through group activities, the ropes courses and personal growth you learn how to both lead and support those around you.

"I feel fortunate to have this continued connection to the Y and confident in the strong foundation that the Y is providing to children and youth today."

## YMCA Camp Elphinstone back in action

For the first time since 2019, YMCA Camp Elphinstone welcomed campers back for a full summer of programming. Check out some scenes from the season below!



## Bettie Allard YMCA nears completion

As we have progressed through the summer, extensive work has been completed on the Bettie Allard YMCA, bringing us that much closer to opening our new centre of community serving the Tri-Cities.

Significant milestones were reached in the facility's build-out in recent months, including the completion of the gymnasium floor and running-track surface, waterproofing and tiling of the pool area and the installation of fixtures and equipment that will be enjoyed by future members.

Some further finishing touches are to come in the weeks ahead that will keep us on track to celebrate the facility's grand opening. The Y is actively recruiting the first cohort of Bettie Allard YMCA staff and the excitement is palpable as we get set to welcome visitors from the community.

Sadly, we will be marking the building's delivery with heavy hearts due to the recent loss of Peter A. Allard, a passionate and longtime supporter of the YMCA who passed away in June.



Peter A. Allard

We regret that Peter didn't have the opportunity to see the centre of community named in honour of his mother at its completion but are heartened to know his altruism and compassion won't be forgotten. His legacy lives on through the many children and families in our community whose lives have been strengthened through his generous support.

### YMCA Foundation Trustees

- Melinda McKie (Chair)
- Katerina Anastasiadis
- Virginia Bird
- Gavin Hume, K.C.
- Ameet Johal
- Dallas Leung (Vice-Chair)
- Hugh Matthews
- Stephanie Nesbitt
- Farzin Remtulla
- Angela Spanjers
- Heidi Worthington (Secretary)

### YMCA Foundation Staff Support

- Darlene Hepburn
- Heather Duross

## The YGV Foundation gives thanks

Thanksgiving is a time to enjoy the company of loved ones, count our blessings and reflect upon all things for which we are grateful.

Here at the YMCA of Greater Vancouver Foundation, our gratitude is extended to each of our generous donors and champions who make it possible for us to invest in our



communities and support the delivery of crucial Y programs that help children and families thrive.

From all of us at the Foundation, we hope you and your family had a chance to celebrate a safe and happy Thanksgiving, and wish you a wonderful fall season.

### To learn more:

Phone 604.622.4958 | Email at [giving@gv.ymca.ca](mailto:giving@gv.ymca.ca)

10-620 Royal Ave, New Westminster, BC V3M 1J2

Charitable registration: 803976471 RR0001

Would you rather receive Newsworthy by email? Let us know at [giving@gv.ymca.ca](mailto:giving@gv.ymca.ca)

Printed on paper with 10% post-consumer recycled content.

