



## Bettie Allard YMCA welcomes first visitors

With a years-long vision for the Y to establish a centre of community in the Tri-Cities now realized, the Bettie Allard YMCA was packed with visitors for the first time during a Grand Opening Celebration last month that provided an initial glimpse of the Coquitlam facility.

A gathering to thank donors, key stakeholders and project partners, the Nov. 26 event welcomed dozens of community members, Y ambassadors and dignitaries who have played a crucial role in making the undertaking possible.

"As today brings to a close years of planning, relationship-building and raising of funds, the team is beyond thrilled to enter the Bettie Allard YMCA's next chapter—opening our doors to community," Heidi Worthington, YMCA of Greater Vancouver President & CEO, told the crowd assembled in the pristine new gymnasium after a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"The Bettie Allard YMCA will be a place to come together, to connect and to grow. It will be a place for people to truly belong, reach their full potential and build a healthy Coquitlam together."

Those sentiments were echoed by Coquitlam Mayor Richard Stewart, who noted in his remarks that the Burquitlam neighborhood has never previously had a community centre of its own, praising the "innovative" partnership between the city, Concert Properties and the Y in bringing the project to fruition.

The day's festivities began with an earlier reception for donors in the facility's third-floor Spraggs Family Development Centre. With photos of Bettie Allard from throughout her lifetime decorating the room and multiple generations of her family on hand, speakers took a moment to honour the woman whose name will grace the building for years to come.

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## Message from the Chair

**As the year draws to a close and we prepare to flip the calendar over to 2023, we are also about to turn the page to embark on an important new chapter for the YMCA.**

After many years of planning, fundraising and building, it is so wonderful to see the Bettie Allard YMCA's doors

open and the brand-new Coquitlam facility now bustling with activity. I was delighted to be in attendance for the Grand Opening Celebration on Nov. 26 and deliver a few remarks on behalf of the Foundation.

Although excitement has been building for our newest centre of community for some time, having a chance to see it first-hand was a special experience. It is heartening to know the Bettie Allard YMCA will be here to serve the Tri-Cities for generations to come, thanks in large part to the generosity of Foundation donors.

Another significant development is due to follow in January when our unification process is finalized and we officially become YMCA BC and the YMCA BC Foundation. Much work has been taking place behind

the scenes to bring the YMCA of Greater Vancouver, YMCA of Northern BC and Kamloops Community YMCA-YWCA together, and we will proudly move forward as one unified Y in the first week of the new year.

We'll share more about what this means for the Foundation in a future Newsworthy, but please know our mission remains as vital as ever and our efforts will continue to make a lasting difference in our local communities.

We're excited for what our future holds and grateful for your support at each step along the way.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Melinda McKie,  
Chair, YMCA of Greater  
Vancouver Foundation

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

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### ***Bettie Allard YMCA welcomes first visitors continued...***

"This beautiful Bettie Allard YMCA has such a story to tell already because of its namesake," Foundation Chair Melinda McKie said in her reception address. "We are very proud that it is the first YMCA named solely after a woman and for that woman to be Bettie Allard."

As the program progressed into the afternoon's main assembly, there was further opportunity to reflect on the impact of both Bettie and her late son, Peter A. Allard, who sadly passed away earlier in 2022 but provided a transformational gift that helped make the facility a reality. The YMCA was fortunate to have recorded an interview with Peter prior to his passing—a portion of which was included

in a video presentation for attendees—where he discussed his mother's "indomitable spirit" and her values that aligned with those of the Y.

"It's heartwarming that we were able to capture (Peter's) words and what this donation in honour of his mother meant to him," Robert King, Bettie's grandson and Peter's nephew, told the crowd following the video on behalf of the Allard family. "We are so happy that his foundation will be part of funding this incredible facility."

Construction crews are continuing to put the finishing touches on the building as it prepares to begin welcoming Bettie Allard YMCA members inside this January.



## A look inside the Bettie Allard YMCA

**The Bettie Allard YMCA is a state-of-the-art facility that will offer a wide variety of amenities, community spaces and crucial programming to help children, families and seniors thrive in the Tri-Cities.**

As a charity, the YMCA is proud to establish this centre of community in a growing, densifying area to serve people of all backgrounds, beliefs, ages and stages.

The 55,000-square-foot centre of community includes:

- A gymnasium with premier cardio and strength-training equipment, walking track, studios for fitness and cycling classes, and zones for strength and conditioning
- A five-lane pool and accessible aquatic area that features a warm-water tank for family activity, swimming lessons, physical therapy and more
- Social spaces such as a first-floor café, outdoor plazas and rooftop terraces allowing community members to make connections
- A dedicated Family Development Centre to help children grow and learn

The facility is a short walk from the Burquitlam Skytrain station and includes park-and-ride facilities to encourage transit use. The full complex will also include a Coquitlam RCMP Community Police Station, a park, and residential towers developed by Concert Properties that include up to 100 non-market rental units.

The Bettie Allard YMCA was also designed with several energy-efficient and sustainable approaches in mind to ensure minimal environmental impacts. Just a few examples of these include:

- A design optimizing natural light to reduce artificial lighting needs
- Heat recovery throughout the facility that is directed back into warming the pool, domestic hot water and the building's heating water system
- Green roofs that store, filter and retain storm water to reduce runoff pressure on the municipal system
- Recovery of pool water discharge and backwash, which is then treated and used to flush toilets and urinals

If you would like to book a tour of the Bettie Allard YMCA to see this beautiful facility first-hand and to learn more about how its many features will serve the community for generations to come, visit [www.bettieallardymca.ca](http://www.bettieallardymca.ca). To stay in the know about all the exciting things happening at the Bettie Allard YMCA, subscribe to our e-newsletter via the link above.



## Apply now for 2023 scholarship

A talented and creative individual who worked in the field of marketing and advertising, Ellen Bell was a committed volunteer at the YMCA of Greater Vancouver who made a difference in the lives of those who knew her. Ellen will be forever remembered for her boundless energy, intelligence, kindness, and willingness to commit herself to the betterment of her community.

In her memory, Ellen's friends and family created a scholarship valued at up to \$4,500 and granted to a deserving student annually. The successful applicant will be a woman embodying Ellen's values who is studying in a post-secondary academic program with plans to pursue a career in marketing and advertising.

To apply, email [giving@gv.ymca.ca](mailto:giving@gv.ymca.ca) with your name, address, contact information, grades (official transcripts are not required) and a letter (500 words or less) to the scholarship committee that demonstrates the above qualities. Applications should be supported by two reference letters.

The application deadline is Feb. 17, 2023. Candidates must also be available for a virtual interview on March 9 between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

## Ellen Bell Scholarship among tech exec's many successes

For decades, the Ellen Bell YMCA Memorial Scholarship has cemented its legacy of supporting young women with a burgeoning career in the field of marketing and advertising. Some 25 years after being named one of the award's recipients, Sandra Wear has built an impeccable legacy of her own.



Sandra Wear

Through her wide-ranging experience in the tech and software-as-a-service (SaaS) sectors, Wear has deservedly earned a reputation as one of the country's most impactful business mentors and leaders. Her boutique consulting firm, Sandra Smarts, specializes in digital marketing and bringing new products to market.

"I always had an interest in sciences and that kind of evolved into tech," said Wear. "I've parlayed those interests into working in tech around building and commercializing new products and innovations."

Early in her career, Wear co-founded DocSpace, a SaaS company that was acquired for \$568 million fewer than three years after launching, and was later co-founder and CEO of Atalum Wireless as it developed groundbreaking network software. A self-described "divergent thinker," Wear has provided her expertise to guide software and tech outfits to close financing or to acquire users and customers.

"I help business owners and founders either transform companies or get to commercialization and scalability," she said.

When she was selected to receive the Ellen Bell Scholarship in 1997, Wear was a student in BCIT's Marketing Management program who was both grateful for the financial assistance and moved by the "lovely experience" of learning more about Bell's values and character from those who were close to the award's namesake.

"I thought it was really special that (the presenters) actually knew Ellen Bell and could speak specifically about her impact," said Wear. "That made it about a lot more than just the money. You start thinking about that person's legacy and that made it real."

"I had received a couple of other grants or scholarships, but none have that same memory."

Embodying Bell's spirit of volunteerism, Wear has taken it upon herself to give back within the business world and the community at large in a variety of ways as a mentor, board member and fundraiser. In 2014, she co-founded Be Like Ada, a computer coding bootcamp for high-school girls, driven in part by her advocacy for gender equity.

"Ultimately, (gender disparity) is an economic and social problem. If we don't have all of the voices around the table talking, we're not going to have the best solutions," she said. "It's a topic I've been very passionate about, even when I was a kid. So, I look at where I can move the needle in a small way in the spaces I'm involved in."





## Bruce's (Healthy) Heart-felt connection to the Y

From learning to swim in a YMCA pool and serving as a staff member in his younger years, Bruce White has felt a lifelong connection to the Y and its positive impact on individuals, families and community. More recently, Bruce experienced that impact first-hand through the Y's Healthy Heart program—made possible by the generosity of YMCA of Greater Vancouver Foundation donors.

"It saved my life," Bruce said of Healthy Heart. "I'm alive at 91 now, a lot of because of that program."

Operating locally since 1976, the YMCA Healthy Heart program aids those like Bruce who have undergone heart surgery, or are living with some form of heart disease, in their recovery and rehabilitation. The program supports hundreds of Lower Mainland residents annually.

Bruce served many roles for the YMCA in his youth and young adulthood, working as a camp counsellor, teaching English to newcomers, lending support in an outreach program and eventually working as an Assistant Director at YMCA Camp Elphinstone.

He'd later enjoy a successful career as an educator, including 25 years spent teaching at the University of British Columbia and other stints with the University of Lethbridge, Government of Ontario and more. When Bruce retired from his extraordinary teaching career in his seventies, he returned to British Columbia and accepted a job as a security officer.

Walking home from work one day, Bruce felt a pain in his wrist and decided to bring it up with his doctor. After some investigation, it was discovered that Bruce had an arterial blockage. He had to undergo open-heart surgery.

To help with his recovery, Bruce's surgeon advised him about looking into the Healthy Heart program that the doctor's own father-in-law participated in as a cardiac patient.

"He said 'I suggest that once the open-heart surgery is over, you look into it. It's run by the YMCA,'" said Bruce, recalling his pleasant surprise at learning it was a Y program. "Lo and

behold, there they are!"

Bruce heeded his doctor's advice and joined the Healthy Heart program after his surgery, which helped him transition back to activity with a focus on rebuilding his cardiovascular fitness.

"It was an amazing program," he said. "We had an enthusiastic, delightful [Program Facilitator]."

Bruce also recalled—after a gentle reminder from his wife, Donna—that the Healthy Heart team was also present at his 80th birthday party, serenading him with the "Y.M.C.A." song made famous by the Village People.

"It was beautiful!" Bruce exclaimed with a huge smile.

Now, he gives to the YMCA Healthy Heart program to ensure it stays accessible to everyone.

"The YMCA has always been a place of welcome," he said. "I used to say that it's (waiting) in the wings but ... it's standing there with its arms out, ready."

Support from donors like Bruce and the Foundation was crucial to the program's continued operation through the pandemic, a time when many other community-based cardiac rehab programs were shut down and have yet to return.

Today, the YMCA is operating a *Healthy Heart at Home* program with five different virtual classes running twice weekly and a hybrid (virtual and in-person) cardiac rehab program model at the Port Moody Rec Centre. The program will look to support more participants through offerings at Tong Louie and Bettie Allard YMCAs in 2023.



## Giving motivated by personal beliefs and values

When considering any form of wealth transfer, whether it's passing down assets to heirs or incorporating charitable or philanthropic giving into your plans, it's crucial to thoroughly assess and prioritize your own potential and certain financial needs before making any planning decisions.

After carrying out detailed wealth planning, if you determine that this form of giving is something you can afford and want to pursue in a more strategic way, there is a range of options available.

An important starting point for all individuals is to reflect on their current approach to giving, their core beliefs and values, and what causes or organizations are important to them. For example, you or a loved one may have a personal history with a specific charitable organization, or you may have a strong commitment to a certain cause, such as preserving the environment or promoting the arts.

Thinking about these key priorities will help to form the basis of your planning and will provide clearer direction for structuring the most ideal timing and approach to achieve your objectives and express values in a way that balances personal, family and tax considerations.

It should be noted that, in order to ensure your specific needs and goals are properly accounted for, it's crucial to consult with qualified tax and estate planning advisors.

They can provide planning guidance around how charitable giving fits ideally into your overall financial and wealth-transfer picture, as well as the potential amounts, timing and type of your gift.

Did you know? Among Canadians, 49 per cent of donors give to charities in the social-services category and 36 per cent give to those in the health sector.

Whatever the motivations behind your giving may be, some important personal and strategic questions to examine include:

- How much time and/or financial support are you comfortable committing to a charitable endeavour now and over the long term?
- Do you feel strongly about continuing to support a cause or an organization not only during your lifetime, but after as well?
- What are the potential income-tax considerations associated with giving during your lifetime versus through your Will?

Achieving clarity on these considerations will help chart the best course forward for you and your family in determining a philanthropic plan.

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*Eddy Mejlholm is a Portfolio Manager & Wealth Advisor with RBC Dominion Securities.*

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## Youth Leadership Conference returns after three-year wait

After such a long wait, not even Mother Nature could disrupt the return of the Young Leaders Conference this fall – especially with a theme of “Better Together.”

The Nov. 4 to 6 gathering at YMCA Camp Elphinstone was marked by a nasty storm, fallen trees and power outages that couldn't deter 36 YMCA staff members from across the province from embracing a weekend full of important programming supported by the Foundation.

Held for the first time since 2019, the conference was open to any YMCA staff aged 19 to 32 throughout British Columbia and delivered on its theme by highlighting the importance of social connections, cross-organizational partnerships, and the need for in-person learning and sharing in a post-pandemic world. Attendees participated in a variety of team-building activities, workshops and panels to strengthen leadership skills, reflect on their personal journeys and make connections with peers.

“We were thrilled to return to Camp Elphinstone for the Young Leaders Conference after a three-year hiatus and offer young leaders across the province a unique space for



connection, sharing, and learning,” said in a joint statement from Young Leaders Council co-chairs Nicolas Tellez-España and Andy Tran.

“We are grateful for the ongoing generosity of the YGV Foundation for their financial support, the Young Leaders Council members who invested countless hours into this event, and all attendees for their engagement and genuine interest in fostering leadership development across the province's Ys.”

Tellez-España and Tran added that the Young Leaders Council is looking forward to the conference's return once again in 2023.

## Unified YMCA BC taking shape in early 2023

An important milestone for the Y will arrive early in 2023, when we'll complete our unification process and proudly introduce the YMCA BC and the YMCA BC Foundation.

On Jan. 3, the YMCA of Greater Vancouver, YMCA of Northern BC and Kamloops Community YMCA-YWCA will become one association with a shared mission to deepen our impact for communities across the province. Together, our combined strengths will allow us to achieve more with more, providing the Y with more resiliency—both today and for generations to come. That's the promise of our unified YMCA BC.

As one Y, we will build on our commitment to serve the members, participants and communities we all care so much about, in the best possible way, and integrate

our expertise and resources to enhance the member, participant and staff experience.

In preparation, our three YMCAs have focused on our internal structure, ensuring we have the best possible unified foundation on which to build and serve our communities. This process has cemented our joint vision and afforded us the confidence of knowing we will hit the ground running in 2023 to deliver on our mandate at a wider scale.

Once our unification is official, we'll be able to share further detail about the YMCA BC Foundation. In the meantime, be assured that your support remains as important as ever, and that your generosity will continue to provide crucial supports in your local community.



## The YMCA Holiday 50/50 Raffle is Back!



The YMCA Holiday Wishes 50/50 Raffle is on now! Y give? Every ticket purchased grows the jackpot and helps give the gift of a healthy future to kids, families, seniors and adults facing financial barriers.

As a charity, we have always been there for our community, adapting to the acute needs of those most

vulnerable. By entering our Holiday Wishes 50/50 Raffle, you help ensure that the YMCA of Greater Vancouver continues its important and impactful work.

**Scan the QR code**  
**or visit [ymca.rafflenexus.com](https://ymca.rafflenexus.com)**  
**to purchase tickets.**



Ticket options include:

- Single Ticket for \$10;
- 3-Ticket Pack for \$25;
- 10-Ticket Pack for \$50;
- 25-Ticket Pack for \$100

**Deadline to purchase:** Thursday, Dec. 29 at 11:59 p.m.

**Draw:** Friday, Dec. 30 at 11:00 a.m.

**Don't wait! Purchase tickets to for a chance to win half the jackpot and support a worthy cause.**

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## Happy Holidays from the Foundation

Throughout the year, the YMCA is here to help children, families, seniors and more thrive, realize their full potential and enjoy healthy, active living. The holiday season only serves to highlight the importance of providing the Y's crucial programming, supports and inclusive, welcoming spaces to those in need in our communities.

The approach of the winter months signifies a meaningful time of year for those who find that the greatest gift of all is giving back. We extend our sincere gratitude to our tremendous donors, whose generosity makes a significant difference across the Lower Mainland, and thank our champions for helping the Y build sustainable futures for all.

We hope your holidays are filled with joy, laughter and the company of loved ones as you ring in the new year. From all of us at the YMCA of Greater Vancouver Foundation, we wish you the best of the season and a wonderful 2023 ahead.

### To learn more:

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