



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## THE YMCA EXPANDS TRADES PROGRAM FOR NEWCOMERS ACROSS ONTARIO

**OTTAWA, September 7, 2022** – The YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region (YNCR) is pleased to announce that Power of Trades, a program that prepares immigrants for opportunities in Ontario’s skilled trades, will soon be expanded and available through Ys in five additional regions across the Province.

The Power of Trades program was created by the YNCR in 2011 to connect new Canadians with the information they need to consider a career in the trades, along with help accessing the skills training required to take the next step in their career path. Power of Trades is offered at no cost to participants, thanks to funding from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, and in the Ottawa region, additional support is received from the United Way.

“Canada continues to be a destination of choice for diverse individuals who are looking for a new place to work, study and build their lives,” says Marie-France Lalonde, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. “When newcomers successfully integrate into our communities and the Canadian job market, all of us share in the benefits. This is why organizations like the Y play an important role, and I am confident the expansion of the Power of Trades program will have a positive impact filling critical labour market shortages and giving newcomers new opportunities. I’d like to thank the YMCA for its continued dedication towards helping newcomers successfully integrate and succeed in Canada.”

“The skilled trades provide well-paying and rewarding careers that are vital for our economy,” says Katie Sexton, Vice President, Employment and Newcomer Services at the YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region. “Power of Trades has worked to bridge the skills gap by promoting the sector and addressing barriers faced by newcomers. We are thrilled to be partnering with other YMCAs across the province to expand this important work”

Since its inception, Power of Trades has successfully graduated 536 participants in the National Capital Region, served over 1000 clients through individual consultations, and has averaged an 86.6% employed rate year over year. With such promising results, new funding from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada will allow the YNCR to lead the expansion of the program through five additional Y’s across the province, including the YMCAs of Greater Toronto, Niagara, Hamilton|Burlington|Brantford, Southwestern Ontario, and Three Rivers, Waterloo.

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"We are excited to partner with the YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region and other YMCAs across the province to bring the Power of Trades program to Hamilton and the surrounding area," says Lily Lumden, Senior Regional Manager, Employment and Immigrant Services, with the YMCA of Hamilton|Burlington|Brantford. "This program will make great connections between newcomers interested in the trades and local employers."

Power of trades includes 4-6 weeks of classroom training covering a wide range of topics including information about the skilled trades and apprenticeships, Ontario labour laws and regulations, accessing certifications and academic upgrades, resume and interview preparation, and connection to hands on skills training programs. The first intake of participants in these new regions will begin in January, 2023.

For more information about the Power of Trades program, please contact the Y in each participating region, or email [poweroftrades@ymcaywca.ca](mailto:poweroftrades@ymcaywca.ca).

#### **About the YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region**

Founded in 1867, the YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region is a registered charity dedicated to building healthy communities. The organization is committed to nurturing the potential of children, teens and young adults, promoting healthy living and supporting vulnerable people within the community. The Y serves thousands of people across the Ottawa region each year. A focus on inclusiveness and accessibility means people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are served through all stages of life; and through its financial assistance programs, the Y is accessible to all. To learn more visit [ymcaywca.ca](http://ymcaywca.ca).

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