



For immediate release

YMCA Canada launches interactive LocalMOTION Challenge

Canada 150 signature project includes weekly online challenges and live events

Toronto, ON - February 21, 2017 - In celebration of the country's sesquicentennial, YMCA Canada - one of Canada's longest standing charities, has launched a Canada 150 signature project called the YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge to encourage Canadians to adopt a healthy, active lifestyle.

The YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge is an interactive campaign that encourages Canadians to participate in online activities and in-person events across Canada from February to July 2017 for the chance to win a number of prizes including the Grand Prize; [VIA Rail's The Canadian Trip](#) (scenic travel experience between Toronto and Vancouver).

Railway YMCAs were opened in partnership with the railway companies, providing recreation, literacy programs, reading rooms and accommodation to railway workers while they built out the . Growing from six associations in 1900 to nineteen in 1920, several Canadian YMCAs active today can trace their roots back to a railway YMCA.

"The Canada 150 celebrations represent a unique opportunity to engage our communities in order to help them grow in good health," said the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage. "This year, YMCA Canada will promote the benefits of physical activity and community involvement by posing a challenge to Canadians. Thanks to the different activities available to them, communities will also be able to learn about the YMCA's historic role in the development of Canada's railways. I invite everyone to sign up for the YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge."

"The YMCA in Canada has been building healthy communities since before confederation so we're excited to be part of the sesquicentennial celebrations," said Peter Dinsdale President & CEO YMCA Canada. "The YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge celebrates our contribution to nation-building by telling the railway YMCA story while offering a fun way for Canadians of all ages and abilities to get active, connect to their communities, and learn new skills."

"This year, VIA Rail invites travellers to get onboard for Canada's 150th anniversary celebrations," said Yves Desjardins-Siciliano, President and Chief Executive Officer of VIA Rail Canada. "Our participation in YMCA's LocalMOTION Challenge is part of our involvement in major initiatives organized across Canada that strengthen the pride and sense of belonging to our country. The activities organized by the YMCA as part of this contest will promote our country's culture, bring people together and foster cultural diversity through the YMCA's approach to building stronger communities."

Canadians can register online now to get involved in the YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge. Local YMCAs and project partners will also hold events from March to July 2017 to encourage Canadians to take part in activities that Railway YMCAs would once have engaged in.

For more information, visit www.ymca.ca/LocalMOTION. Follow YMCA on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#), [#YMCALocalMOTION](#), to show your support.



ABOUT THE YMCA

About the YMCA in Canada

YMCA Canada is the national office providing support to a federation of 48 independent YMCA Associations that collectively represent one of Canada's longest standing and largest charitable networks. We serve more than 2.1 million people annually, with a special focus on children, teens and young adults. The YMCA's mandate is to advance the health and well-being of Canadians in spirit, mind and body. Across the country, YMCA Member Associations are providing vital community services that are having a positive impact on some of Canada's most pressing issues including chronic disease, unemployment, early childhood education, social isolation, poverty, inequality and more.

We offer wrap around programs that help Canadians become physically active, better connected to their communities, and equipped with the skills needed to achieve success in work and life. By addressing the social determinants of health, we are playing an essential role in the building of a healthier Canada today and for generations to come.

For more information, please visit www.ymca.ca.

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