



*For immediate release*

## **Canadians from coast to coast jump in to interactive YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge**

*Canada 150 signature project celebrated the shared history of the YMCA and Canada's railways*

Toronto, ON – Sept. 27, 2017 – Ever heard of a Railway YMCA? Thanks to the YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge, thousands of Canadians can answer “yes” to that question—and a few of them are enjoying some amazing prizes, too.

The YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge was a Canada 150 signature project designed to encourage Canadians to embrace healthy, active lifestyles. In the process of completing weekly online challenges as well as live events, participants also learned about a little-known group of Ys known as Railway YMCAs, which supported the builders of our national railway and the communities that grew around them.

Using the hashtag #ymcalocalmotion on Twitter and Instagram, Canadians shared snapshots from their lives, building an online community in the process.

“We learned about everything from Canadians’ favourite swimming holes and summer camp memories, to our Indigenous roots, and the people, places and events that make our communities proud,” says Peter Dinsdale, President and CEO of YMCA Canada. “We’ve even seen people share some great dance moves! It’s been a whole lot of fun.”

Free, LocalMOTION Live events held across Canada as part of YMCA Healthy Kids Day featured obstacle courses that simulated a cross-Canada journey to discover the unique landscapes of our country.

Sponsored by the Government of Canada, ecentricarts and VIA Rail Canada in celebration of Canada’s 150th anniversary of Confederation, the YMCA LocalMOTION Challenge also awarded some incredible prizes: A total of 10 monthly prizes consisting of a \$1,000 VIA Rail travel voucher good for rail travel anywhere in Canada, plus two grand prizes, each consisting of a trip for four on board VIA Rail’s The Canadian train, travelling between Toronto and Vancouver (valued at \$13,500).

Grand prize winner Sharon D. from Saskatchewan says, “I had no idea of the YMCA’s railway history. Growing up in Moose Jaw, it was a railway town and both my father and uncle worked for the railway. I’ve travelled west by rail in the past, so we are looking forward to travelling east – it will be wonderful!”

If you’d like to learn more about the YMCA Railway Story or to hear broadcaster Lloyd Robertson’s five-minute rendition of this unique and special part of our nation’s history, visit the YMCA Canada website at [ymca.ca/localmotion](http://ymca.ca/localmotion).

**For more information, contact:**

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**About the YMCA in Canada**

YMCA Canada is the national office providing support to a federation of 47 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 or to locate the Y near you, please visit [www.ymca.ca](http://www.ymca.ca).