



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**YOUTH CHALLENGE FUND ANNOUNCES \$46.6M IN TOTAL INVESTMENT FOR TORONTO YOUTH**  
*Funds support youth-driven approach to community change in the 13 priority neighbourhoods*

**TORONTO** – Toronto’s Youth Challenge Fund (YCF) today announced its last round of funding, bringing the total investment to \$46.6 million for 111 initiatives led by youth in Toronto’s priority neighbourhoods. This final round of funding, providing \$27.6 million for 17 initiatives, aims to leave a lasting legacy in the community, ensuring the work of YCF lives on through the physical spaces created, and through the partnerships established between youth and community organizations across the city.

“From the beginning, YCF has challenged us to embrace the ideas of young people and empower them to create youth-led solutions to the challenges confronting our community,” said Frances Lankin, President and CEO, United Way Toronto. “YCF is a fundamental part of a wider movement for systemic change that calls for a youth-driven and coordinated effort to better serve our young people.”

Lankin said the YCF approach is transforming the way young people and the community work with each other.

“Before I got involved with YCF, I didn’t know I could affect my community,” said Michael Kerr, member of the Dorset Park Youth Council (DPYC). “But now, we’re working alongside the City to create two new spaces for youth. This will allow young people to come together and address the cultural segregation that exists here in Dorset Park, but we’re also encouraging other young people to work together and get involved. Youth have influenced the planning and design from day one, and these new spaces will reflect our true needs.”

Michael Clemons, the Fund’s Chair, explained what’s most important about YCF’s work is the lasting legacy it will have in the city.

“The future health of our city rests in hands of today’s young people,” said Clemons. “I am so proud to say that long after the YCF closes its doors, its work will continue on in the hearts and minds of the powerful young leaders it has helped create. Their hard work and dedication will continue to transform our city, and help balance the scales of equality, access, and opportunity for youth growing up in the most under-served neighbourhoods.”

The Youth Challenge Fund is an innovative public and private sector partnership of the Government of Ontario and United Way Toronto. YCF makes investments in youth-driven initiatives that provide positive opportunities for youth in Toronto’s priority neighbourhoods.

United Way Toronto exceeded its commitment to raise \$15 million for YCF thanks to the generosity of donors like the Slaight Family Foundation whose gift of \$5 million will go a long way to improving the lives of young people. The Province of Ontario has matched the \$15.6

million raised, which combined with its original \$15 million investment amounts to \$46.6 million for 111 initiatives.

“The Slaight Family Foundation is proud to support youth-led initiatives through the Youth Challenge Fund,” said donor Gary Slaight, on behalf of the Slaight Family. “It’s not every day that families can support a grassroots process that builds the knowledge and ability of our young people. The YCF provides youth with opportunities to do great things with their lives, and affect real change in their communities.”

The Youth Challenge Fund invests in youth-driven initiatives that use creative, collaborative approaches to engage and provide opportunities for young people in Toronto’s 13 priority neighbourhoods. Initiated by the Government of Ontario, the Youth Challenge fund is governed by a community board made up of a broad cross-section of community leaders. United Toronto is YCF’s trustee, providing allocations and fund development support.

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