



Contact:
Doug Bishop
Greater Burlington YMCA
802-734-4295
dbishop@gbymca.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Matching gift propels YMCA building project into the final stretch

Greater Burlington YMCA has raised approximately \$14.5 million of \$15 million goal

February 28, 2018 – Burlington, VT – The Greater Burlington YMCA today announced that its fundraising campaign to build a new home in Burlington has raised approximately \$14.5 million of its \$15 million goal. With \$500,000 left to raise, the Y also announced a new challenge that will match the first \$100,000 in new gifts dollar-for-dollar as the Y launches the community phase of its campaign to take it across the finish line.

With the end of fundraising in sight, the Y expects to begin construction on the new facility in summer or fall of this year and to celebrate the opening of a new Y early in 2020.

“Thanks to a generous community, we’re on the threshold of a new era for the Y—and it’s an accomplishment people have been anxiously awaiting for a long time,” said Y President & CEO Kyle Dodson. “Two years ago, people were wondering if we’d ever achieve our dream of a new home. Today, I’m here to tell you that we need just a little more help to get the fundraising done and then it’s on to construction.”

Significant help toward that final \$500,000 comes in the form of a challenge gift from Laura and David Stiller of Burlington, who have offered a dollar-for-dollar match for the first \$100,000 in new gifts to the campaign. The Stillers are making their gift through a fund at the Vermont Community Foundation.

“We are thrilled to join the effort to help the Y complete its Staying in the Heart campaign,” the Stillers said in a prepared statement. “For Dave as a Y kindergarten student, and for Laura more recently as a Y camp counselor, we have each experienced firsthand the Y’s important role in our community. Because of our passion around social equity and opportunity, we see this project as a critical investment—for all of us—one that addresses a multitude of issues and needs in our community. We hope this gift can encourage others to join in giving a gift, large or small, to complete this campaign and build this amazing new community resource.”

The Y hopes to raise the final \$500,000 by summer and to begin construction soon thereafter. The first step will be the demolition of the current building – the Y Annex, former home of the Ethan Allen Club – on the site where the Y will build its new facility at 298 College Street. The Y expects to continue to use its historic site at 266 College Street until the new facility is constructed just 150 steps away.

The building

Dating back to at least 2001, the Y’s search for a new home has included exploration of sites on the Burlington waterfront and elsewhere in the area. Along the way, surveys of Y members, child care families, and the community have repeatedly shown overwhelming support for keeping the Y in the heart of Burlington—where the local Y was founded in 1866.

The need for the building and the Staying in the Heart campaign is simple: Built in a bygone era for a different set of community needs, the Y's current home is outdated and tired.

"Our job is to grow with the community, and to provide common ground for people from all around the community to improve their lives—whether through physical fitness and wellness, through learning to swim and be safe in the water, or through access to the very highest quality child care," said Dodson. "Our old facility is not only an impediment to all of these things, but it's also inefficient and because it has so many stairs and no elevators, it's inaccessible to many people. We want to do better for our community. We need to do better for our community."

The new facility will offer approximately 60,000 square feet of new fitness and aquatics space, a modern and secure early childhood learning center specially designed for that purpose, and community spaces to build common ground.

The facility is expected to open early in 2020.

The campaign

Launched in 2010, the Staying in the Heart Campaign had raised approximately \$5 million by summer, 2016. In the 18 months since then, donors have committed more than \$9.5 million to the project.

Additional funding to support the project's estimated total cost of \$22 million – which includes acquisition of the Ethan Allen site – will come from the sale of the Y's current building and anticipated funds from a federal community development program called New Markets Tax Credits.

"The Y and our community have waited a long time for this," said Staying in the Heart Campaign Co-Chair Lisa Ventriss. "We are enormously grateful to our generous donors for bringing us so close to this goal—and how we hope that more members of the community will join us. Let's build it."

The Y is introducing this campaign to the community through a newly launched website, www.stayingintheheart.org, which offers updates on the project and a secure portal for donations.

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About the Y

The Greater Burlington YMCA is a non-profit organization with a mission to build a strong community by involving youth, adults, and families in programs and activities that develop spirit, mind and body. Last year, the Y awarded \$520,000 in financial assistance so everyone could access the Y's life-enriching programs.