



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020

**The Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation officially launched operations.
Reaffirms commitment to supporting young people throughout the National Capital Region.**

OTTAWA – The [Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation \(OGYF\)](#) officially launched this morning at 8:15 a.m. with a 30-minute, power-packed, bilingual presentation, sponsored by Accora Village, featuring several prominent business leaders, politicians and well-loved NHL players from the region.

After more than two decades as the Ottawa Senators Foundation, the Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation is launching with a new name, but with the same commitment it has always had as registered charitable organization in supporting young people in the National Capital Region by investing the funds it raises in activities to empower them and provide opportunities.

“Today is not only an inspiring day, it is an opportunity to reflect on the unwavering commitment from the community to carry on the legacy of our Foundation’s work, which began 22 years ago under Rod Bryden and a group of community leaders associated with the city’s hockey club,” said Ian Sherman, Chair of the Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation. “We launched this reimagined Foundation to ensure that the important work that started more than two decades ago would continue, and also expand it to include a focus on social justice activities for youth.”

“I am very honoured to Chair the Board of Directors and, along with our community, owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our outgoing Chair, Goldy Hyder,” added Sherman. “Our core values and strategic priorities as an organization are well established and the Foundation will not disappoint this great Ottawa-Gatineau community.”

At today’s launch, the Foundation shared bilingual promotional videos, and unveiled its new logo, mission and vision. Members of the Foundation’s newly-elected Board of Directors were also announced and, Cyril Leeder, CEO of the Myers Automotive Group, kicked off the Foundation’s first official fundraising campaign. Called the Driving Forward for Youth Raffle, the campaign’s grand prize includes a Buick Encore GX Essence package, valued at more than \$40,000. The winner’s name will be drawn on Dec. 18., 2020.

The Foundation also issued a call for applications from young people between the ages of 16 and 22, living in Ottawa and Gatineau, interested in forming its inaugural Youth Leadership Council.

“As we reimagined what the future of the Foundation could look like we were determined to have young people at the centre of what we do”, said Barbara Crook, Vice Chair of the OGYF Board of Directors. “The Youth Leadership Council will help the OGYF staff and its board members identify the

needs of young people throughout the region as well as help to champion local causes and determine some of the granting decisions being made in the areas of physical wellness, mental wellness, and social justice”.

The Foundation’s launch generated tremendous support from the community, including from a group of business leaders who played a key role in the original Foundation’s creation 22 years ago. Cyril Leeder along with Bruce Firestone, Rod Bryden, and Randy Sexton shared the following statement for today’s launch:

“As the original group of local business leaders who brought the Foundation to life, we’ve been so pleased and impressed by its accomplishments to date. For over 22 years, thousands of young people throughout the region have benefited from the tens of millions of dollars that the Foundation has invested in hundreds of community organizations, partners and programs to break down barriers and to provide inclusive opportunities. We stand with the newly-named Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation, its volunteer board of directors and the staff as they embark on their new journey. We wish them many more years of continued success with their vision of creating empowerment and opportunity for young people throughout the community – an ongoing vision that we support with enormous pride”.

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson and the Mayor of Gatineau, Maxime Pedneaud-Jobin, also encouraged residents of the two cities to get involved with the newly-named Foundation. Both cited the long-standing relationship each municipality has had with the Foundation and its ability to create meaningful and successful partnerships for the betterment of young people in their communities.

Former Ottawa Senators Mark Borowiecki, currently with the Nashville Predators, and J.G. Pageau, currently playing for the New York Islanders, expressed their support for the Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation, citing it as a great way for their families to give back while staying connected to their home town communities. Both expressed gratitude for the type of opportunities they were afforded as young people living within the region and mentioned the importance of ensuring young people today are provided with the same kinds of opportunities.

People looking to watch the Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation launch presentation and/or to learn more about the organization can visit www.ogyf.ca. Tickets for the Driving Forward for Youth Raffle as well as the online application for the Youth Leadership Council are also available on the website.

About the Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation:

The Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation empowers young people to realize their full potential with engagement in physical & mental wellness activities, post-secondary education studies, and opportunities to lead social justice actions within their communities. The Foundation has a 22-year history and has granted more than \$35 million to nearly 400 charities in eastern Ontario and western Quebec.

For more information, please contact:

Danielle Robinson: robinsond@ogyf.ca | 613-408-7966

Caitlin Ridgeway: ridgewayc@ogyf.ca | 613-986-2682

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