



Y IMPACT

A twice-yearly update on how you're helping communities shine

Hello from YMCA of Southwestern Ontario!

If you're receiving this, it means you're one of the awesome donors igniting growth and belonging at the Y. We're very grateful.

We're also excited to introduce you to our 2025 YMCA Women of Excellence honourees:

- Saidat Abari
Arts, Culture, Education & Training
- Dr. Janet Collins
Breaking Barriers
- Lynne Livingstone
Business & Professions
- Cass Bayley
Entrepreneurs
- Dr. Susan McNair
Health, Science & Technology
- Dr. Treena Orchard
Social Justice
- Dr. Sarah Woodruff
Sport, Fitness & Recreation
- Ghallia Hashem, Young Woman of Excellence

To learn more, please visit: ymcaswo.ca/women-excellence

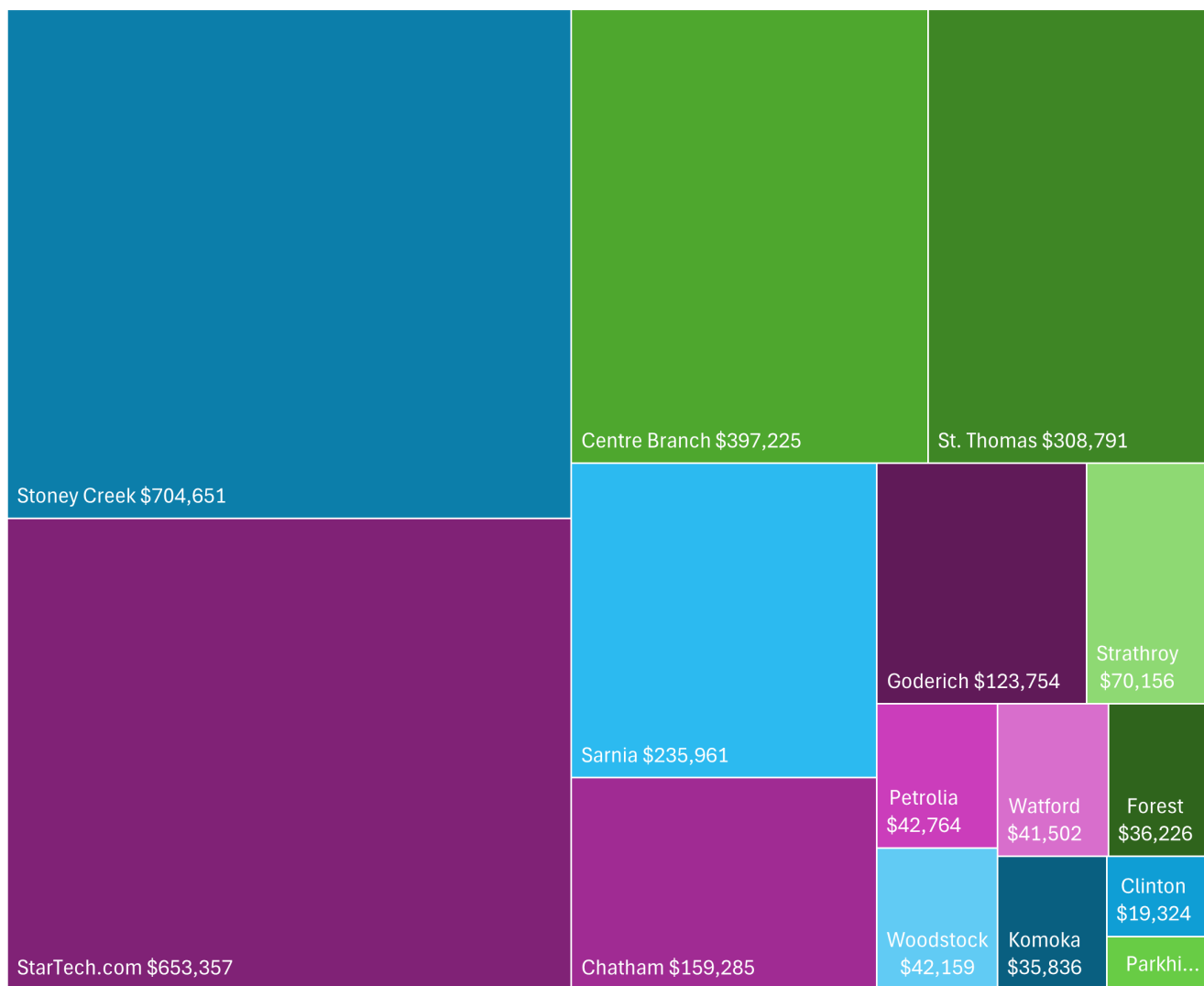
PHOTO: Four of our honourees, from left: Dr. Janet Collins, Dr. Susan McNair, Ghallia Hashem, and Lynne Livingstone

Your Impact: Financial Assistance by Community

With your support, Y members who need financial assistance have the opportunity to ignite growth and belonging at their local YMCA. In fact, more than one in three members rely on this assistance to take part.

Here's a snapshot, by community, of the \$2,883,975 in financial assistance (subsidies) provided for health, fitness, and aquatics memberships in 2024.

2024 YMCA Financial Assistance Provided



Centre Branch . . .	\$397,225	Komoka	\$35,836	StarTech.com . . .	\$653,357
Chatham	\$159,285	Parkhill (closed). . .	\$12,984	Stoney Creek . . .	\$704,651
Clinton	\$19,324	Petrolia	\$42,764	Strathroy	\$70,156
Forest	\$36,226	Sarnia	\$235,961	Watford	\$41,502
Goderich	\$123,754	St. Thomas	\$308,791	Woodstock	\$42,159

Honouring Ewald Bierbaum (1932-2017)

It was a snowy morning of celebration on January 8 as the Bierbaum family, friends, and the YMCA team gathered in the Bierbaum Family Community Kitchen. This newly dedicated space at the StarTech.com YMCA honours a remarkable journey that began in 1952 when Ewald Bierbaum arrived in Canada, from Germany, with just his tools and \$20 to his name.



PHOTO: The Bierbaum family

Ewald's first home was at the London Central YMCA, where he found shelter and a welcoming community. This pivotal moment laid the foundation for a 65-year career in building and development, including iconic projects such as Cherryhill Village and Westown Plaza Mall – contributing to the London skyline and community.

"The YMCA provided my father not just a place to stay but a sense of belonging," said Bernie Bierbaum. **"We're honoured to give back to the community that supported him, ensuring that newcomer children have the same opportunities for growth and connection that my father had."**

The Bierbaum Family Community Kitchen will serve as a vital hub where meals are shared, friendships are formed, and the community thrives. The family's generosity will also support newcomer children with access to YMCA Camp Queen Elizabeth and YMCA Camp Henry, fostering leadership, confidence, and lifelong friendships.

"This dedication is a testament to Ewald Bierbaum's incredible legacy," said Andrew Lockie, CEO of YMCA of Southwestern Ontario. **"His story is one of perseverance and giving back. The Bierbaum Family Community Kitchen will continue his legacy by supporting the next generation of newcomers, ensuring they feel as welcomed and supported as Ewald once did."**

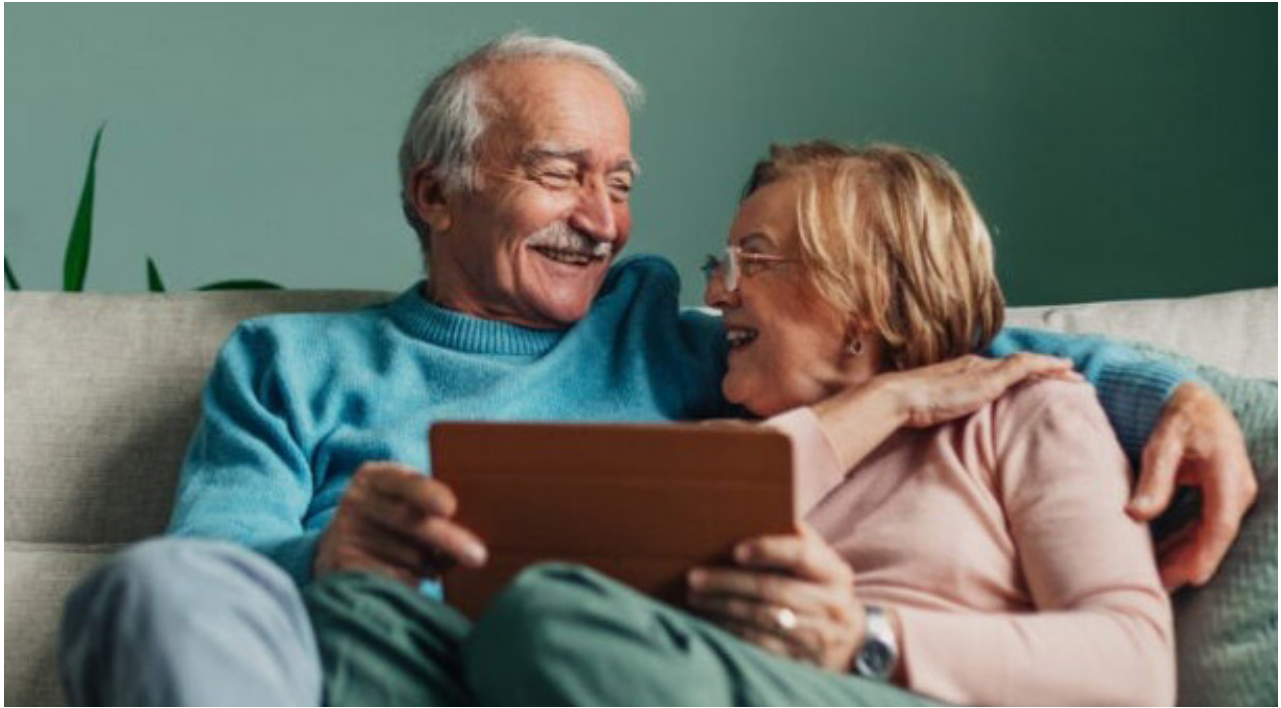
The Y's commitment to newcomers remains as strong as ever, with programs that have evolved to meet the diverse needs of those settling in Southwestern Ontario. From English classes to employment support and recreational activities, the Y continues to be a beacon of hope and opportunity for thousands of newcomers each year.

We couldn't be more grateful to the Bierbaum family for celebrating Ewald's life and legacy in this meaningful way.



PHOTO: The late Ewald Bierbaum

Calculate Your Legacy to Support Causes and Loved Ones



It might sound strange, but your Will can be a powerful tool to protect family and make change in this world. It's an option most people don't think about.

The Y is partnering with the national Will Power campaign. We are one of many charities and financial and legal advisors that are part of this initiative, showing Canadians how to make a bigger difference just by getting a little creative with their giving.

For example, did you know that leaving a small percentage in your Will to a charity could result in a major donation? The kind of contribution that could seriously change the Y for the better.

You don't use the money you need now, or take away from what your loved ones will need either. In fact, your donation could offset the taxes your family will have to pay on your behalf!

Try the legacy calculator of our trusted partner Will Power and see for yourself, or contact us anytime to learn more. You can find the legacy calculator at: willpower.ca/legacy-calculator/

Connect with us!

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