



Wim & Nancy Pauw Foundation
PO Box 1070, Banff, AB T1L 1H8
PauwFoundation.com (403)762-2642

Pauw Foundation's \$1.25 million donation to support vital programming at YWCA Banff

Banff, Alberta - [April 11, 2024] - A \$1.25 million donation from the Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation to YWCA Banff highlights a new five-year partnership designed to enhance community well-being and provide vital social programs for the Bow Valley. The gift adds to the \$850,000 in funds the Foundation has donated to YWCA Banff since 2021, helping the non-profit shape a safe and inclusive Bow Valley that empowers women and their community for a better future.

"We are thrilled to be able to support the vital work of the YWCA in Banff," said Cathy Geisler, Executive Director of the Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation. "Our diverse labour force, young population, and seasonal economy are just a few factors that make the Bow Valley a unique and often challenging place to work and live. Fostering the ongoing and long-term well-being of all community members is essential and we see the YWCA as a cornerstone of this effort. By investing in YWCA Banff, we are investing in the betterment of our community."

YWCA Banff has played a crucial role in promoting a safe community in the Bow Valley for more than a century. In 2023, they served over 2,300 community members, provided over 1,400 safe nights to clients accessing emergency sheltering programs, and received over 670 crisis calls.

"It's important to remember these numbers represent real people," said Reave MacLeod, Director of Advocacy and Outreach of YWCA Banff. "These are people who live and work in this community. They are our neighbours and friends. They depend on us [YWCA Banff] to provide a safe, judgement free space and help guide them on a journey towards healing."

Through various initiatives, including emergency shelter, affordable housing, counseling services, and violence prevention and advocacy programs, YWCA Banff addresses the needs of individuals and families, contributing to the overall well-being of populations from Lake Louise to Mînh Thî.

"The support from the Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation comes at a critical time for our organization and the community we serve," said Ebony Rempel, Chief Executive Officer of YWCA Banff. "This financial commitment and partnership will enable us to continue providing an array of programs and services that promote safety, empowerment, and inclusivity for all members of our community. Ongoing stable funding is rare for not-for profits and it's not unusual to experience major fiscal gaps. In fact, we still haven't secured 50% of the funds required to operate our programs and services for this fiscal year. This reliable and sustainable funding from the Foundation takes some of that stress off, allowing us to focus more time and energy on our mission and we are so grateful for that."

The significance of this partnership lies in the link between the Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation's donation and its direct reinvestment into the community. Supported by profits derived from Banff Caribou Properties Ltd. and Banff Lodging Company, this funding creates a circular flow of support by



Wim & Nancy Pauw Foundation
PO Box 1070, Banff, AB T1L 1H8
PauwFoundation.com (403)762-2642

channeling financial resources into YWCA programs and services that support the entire community, including tourism industry workers. This partnership allows the Foundation and YWCA Banff to work together to turn tourist dollars into community change,

“I am a hospitality worker who came to Banff from Mexico. After years in pursuit of permanent residency, I found myself in a toxic workplace that landed me in the hospital. While unwell, I was evicted from employee housing, and left homeless and without income. My immigration process became at stake.” explained Elia Lopez, a Banff Resident who found herself in need of the critical services provided by YWCA Banff in 2019. “In my darkest hours the amazing staff at YWCA Banff kept me suspended and allowed me to fight the most challenging battle I have ever faced. They went above and beyond in their companionship through my healing journey and after 416 days spent living at the YWCA, I was able to leave with a robust spirit, ready to live my best life and give back to this beautiful community I call home.”

As the largest donor to YWCA Banff, the Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation is not only supporting the welfare of individuals and their families but helping guarantee the continuity and expansion of its essential social services. With reliable financial support for the next five years, the YWCA can continue to generate momentum as it builds a more inclusive, resilient, and empowered community.

- 30 -

About Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation

The Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation is committed to supporting initiatives that promote community well-being and sustainability in the Bow Valley. Through strategic partnerships and thoughtful investments, the foundation strives to create positive change and enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors.

About Banff YWCA

YWCA Banff provides essential support services, from prevention to intervention, to Bow Valley community members from Lake Louise to Mîni Thnî. The YWCA’s critical programs and services, including emergency shelter, transitional and affordable housing, counselling and violence prevention education, work to make the Bow Valley a thriving, equitable community.