

# MEET IGOR

If you’ve been around the YFC Youth Centre, you’ve likely bumped into Igor. He has been our go-to guy for all maintenance and custodial issues. Prior to joining YFC, Igor was the Head of Property Maintenance at the Ukrainian Centre.

Igor moved to Canada in 1996 from Ukraine. He is married with 2 children and one grandchild. He loves music and is gifted on the piano and the accordion. He also makes some pretty amazing perogies.

We are grateful for Igor’s servant heart and the many ways he helps the youth of London in his role. He loves working with YFC and thinks of the people as his family.

As we witness what is happening in Ukraine, please pray for Igor and his family.



*When circumstances around us feel uncertain and unsettled, it can be difficult to allow ourselves to hope. But, we know that God’s faithfulness, love and mercy remain steadfast despite our circumstances. This summer, we are thrilled to open our doors and welcome London youth back into our centre. We will dare to hope and put our trust in the unchanging foundation of Christ.*

# FINDING OUR HOPE IN CHRIST

During an after-school program, a youth approached me to chat with her friend who was being bullied at school. I found the youth curled in a ball, sobbing. With her friend holding her, she began to share the ongoing body-shaming she was experiencing from another girl at school.

*“I bet you wish you could have a body like mine.”*

*“When you walk, you make the whole earth shake!”*

*“How can you even look in a mirror with a body like that?”*

This was her daily experience and it had reached a climax.

As I listened to her story, I could see that she felt alone, called out, and dealing with shame from the repetitive negative comments. She had already reported the bullying, but with the increased needs at our schools, there are limited resources available to support her. Therefore, all she had left were the staff at YFC.

As we shared space together, we explored what the bully may be experiencing to make such harsh comments. It came out that the bully’s

parents divorced in the new year and this is when she began attacking this youth.

Our conversation then shifted to what God spoke over us and how He views our bodies and life. We turned to Ephesians 2:10 **“For we are God’s beautiful masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus to do the work that He prepared in advance for us to do.”** She reflected on how the Creator loved her and placed beauty over and in her life. If her Creator said she is beautiful, who has the right to say otherwise? Peace entered our space and she took a deep breath once again.

Your support to YFC London provides youth with a safe space to be vulnerable, reflect, and consider how to overcome the challenges they face. I hope you are encouraged by what you read as the love of God provides youth with the opportunity to dare to HOPE again!

**James Coolidge**  
Executive Director, YFC London



**CIBC** CIBC PRIVATE WEALTH  
**THE LARRY MYNY FINANCIAL GROUP**

**SAVE THE DATE**  
Ironman Golf – September 26th  
Annual Banquet – October 24th

# HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

NOTES FROM PARENTS:

“My daughter has no friends at school and struggles with her mental health, especially loneliness. But, coming to programs at YFC and being included and accepted so warmly by the other girls has made a huge impact on her confidence. She looks forward to being involved in the programs and making new friends.”

“My daughters love YFC. They nearly consider it their second home. They are eager to be involved in all the programs and have even come straight from school to sit and do their homework so they can go. They feel safe and comfortable at YFC and are even wanting to volunteer there as well.”

“We have been so thrilled to have discovered YFC for our 2 boys. They have struggled through COVID with their connections with friends and have found YFC programs something that they look forward to. It is the highlight of their week.”





Are you inspired to help others dare to hope again? Our youth have been impacted by the extended periods of isolation and as we emerge from the pandemic and reboot our programs, we are looking for volunteers. Whether it's helping with activities & sports or lending a supporting ear we need caring people willing to give their time to invest in the youth of London. For more information, contact us 519-686-0093.



GLEN CAIRN PARKS CLEAN UP DAY



## NEW FACES

### KAREN KING

Hi my name is Karen, I am an Aussie that loves living in Canada. Working at Youth for Christ has been wonderful and a true answer to prayers.

The people here at YFC are so warm and friendly, kind and understanding. I have been married to my teenage sweetheart for nearly 31 years and we have been blessed with 3 amazing children. I enjoy crafts, gardening and getting outside.



### SIERRA WESTERMAN

I am so excited to be working at YFC London as a Community Youth Outreach Worker! I am currently a student at Redeemer University studying Urban and Intercultural Ministry and doing my co-op placement here at YFC. I'm looking forward to spending more time getting to know the Glen Cairn neighbourhood and making plans for this summer. Outside of work you can find me spending time in my garden, cooking for friends, or being active outdoors.



### CAROLYN BAGNALL

The Lord has given me this opportunity to serve at YFC and work with young people in a few of the afternoon programs. I am looking forward to how God will work in this ministry as we come out of COVID and enter a new stage of togetherness.



### JEFF STE. MARIE

In my new role of Community Liaison for London YFC, I feel like I've come back 'home'. My journey with YFC started in the early 1970s when I was a "roadie" for the London YFC music teams. I came to faith in Jesus after a trip to Detroit in 1974.

I joined the staff in 1976 as a full time Campus Life worker in three London high schools. I have returned to the YFC staff on a part time basis although it feels like I've never been too far away, as I have served on the Board of Directors for 35 consecutive years. (1986-2022)

In the past 2 years, youth have suffered in silence as they wrestled with online learning, lack of meaningful "in person" relationships and isolation. It's my desire to help reengage the youth, schools and churches in south-central London with our Youth Center and our mission "to see every young person living fully alive in Christ".



## BACK ON THE COURT

### JAY LAWRENCE

This year we were able to run Spring Jam - the first time since 2019 due to COVID.

Our goal was to provide a program for grade 6 - 8 boys, many of whom were new to basketball. We wanted to teach them new skills but also experience playing in games and competing.

The effects of COVID are far-reaching as many of the 15 boys that signed up had not participated in any sports in 2 years. In the beginning, socializing was awkward and they were not accustomed to playing in a gym.

One of the boys had never participated in any sports in his life. Due to a medical condition he wasn't able to engage in activities. However, his mom wanted him to be around other kids after the isolation of COVID had a negative effect on him. It was great to see him playing and laughing! His mom now hopes he will join some of the other after-school programs at the YFC Center.

The 6 week Spring Jam program flew by and the boys all had tons of fun. Many are now signed up for our summer camps. What a blessing to be back on the court and connecting again.



## NEW PROGRAMS

These are exciting days. As we leave behind the cold, dull days of winter, we enter spring - a time of renewal, restoration and rejuvenation. We are closing the chapter on virtual events and isolation and trading them for in-person, interactive connection.

We currently have Mmmmm Mondays for aspiring chefs, Workout Wednesdays to get active with friends and Feel Good Fridays to connect in a meaningful way.

We are overwhelmed to see the impact these connections are having on young people as they gather together again and are encouraged by the relationships they are building. After some trying times, we are daring to hope as we move forward with our plans for summer.

