



## For Immediate Release

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### **The Cowan Foundation Celebrates 20 Years and 20 Million Dollars!**

CAMBRIDGE, ON. May 21, 2015 - 2015 marks a momentous year for The Cowan Foundation as we celebrate two significant milestones - 20 years of building community and 20 million dollars in donations.

“The Cowan Foundation was started in 1995 in honour of Frank Cowan, the founder of Frank Cowan Company and Cowan Insurance Group”, said Maureen Cowan, Chairman and Co-CEO Princeton Holdings Limited and Chairman of The Cowan Foundation. “Although basking in accolades would have gone against his grain, we would be remiss if we didn’t offer him deserved thanks for placing such importance on building community where we do business. This strong focus on our community is an important part of the culture across the Princeton Holdings group of companies.”

“Over the past 20 years, The Cowan Foundation has made a significant impact in Canadian communities, supporting approximately 450 charitable organizations,” explained Terry Reidel, Executive Director, The Cowan Foundation. “As our Operating Companies, including Cowan Insurance Group (and its subsidiaries: The Williamson Group, Millennium CreditRisk Management, Wentworth Financial Services and Cowan Financial Solutions), Frank Cowan Company, The Guarantee Company of North America, Cowan Asset Management, and Fountain Street Finance continue to grow and evolve, we look forward to continuing to partner with, and support, charities that matter to our employees, business partners, and clients, and that contribute to the well-being of Canadian communities.”

It has been a busy two decades full of partnership and positive impact, however our anniversary is not only about remembering the past, it is also about shaping the future. To celebrate this important milestone, in addition to the planned 2015 contributions, The Cowan Foundation has donated \$20,000 to each of the following ten charitable organizations in Canada:

- [Accelerator Centre](#) (Waterloo Region)
- [The CPS Foundation](#) (National)
- [The Food Bank of Waterloo Region](#)
- [Nova Vita](#) (Brantford)
- [Phoenix Place](#) (Hamilton)
- [Second Harvest](#) (Toronto)
- Brain & Mind Matters Community Fund /[Stratford Perth Community Foundation](#)
- [Woodstock District Developmental Services](#)
- [YMCA Canada](#)
- [YouthNet](#) (Ottawa Region)



Over the coming months we will share more detailed information about these ten charities and their programs. A snapshot is included below:

### **Accelerator Centre**

Dedicated to building and commercializing technology startups, the Accelerator Centre, located in Waterloo, provides rigorous mentorship focused on growing strong, sustainable companies. The Cowan Foundation funds will support [AC Momentum](#), a new program designed to help early-stage start-ups validate their idea and set the foundation for a successful business. This 9-12 month in-house program guides young and/or new entrepreneurs through a structured market validation process that includes world-class mentoring, a dedicated incubation support team, educational sessions, rich networking environment, and professional office space at the AC. <http://acceleratorcentre.com>

### **The CPS Foundation**

Since 1975, The CPS Foundation has acted as the charitable arm of the [Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons \(CPS-ECP\)](#), providing funding to enhance projects and programs that make Canadian waterways safer for all boaters. Through the support of The CPS Foundation, CPS-ECP's network of trained volunteers provide quality education to its members, and the broader public, in safe boating practices. Recently, a new device called the Boating Skills Virtual Trainer was developed. This new equipment provides simulated events that a boater will encounter in real life, giving instructors the opportunity to enhance classroom and on-line educational efforts. Support from The Cowan Foundation will assist in the provision of additional units for the use of our Squadron volunteers, at approximately 150 training facilities across the country. <http://www.cpsfoundation.ca/>

### **The Food Bank of Waterloo Region**

The Food Bank of Waterloo Region works to channel the community's energy to ensure that no one goes hungry. One of the ways they support this vision is through food sorting activities. On an annual basis, more than 1000 people and 85 corporate and community groups participate in food sorting activities at the Food Bank of Waterloo Region. 5500 hours of volunteer service is an essential part of ensuring that more than 600,000 pounds of food donations are prepared for distribution to community food programs. The Cowan Foundation's investment in this program helps to provide a safe work environment for community volunteers, ensures a level of service excellence, and timely food service delivery to member agencies and programs. <http://www.thefoodbank.ca/en/>

### **Nova Vita**

Research and empirical evidence indicates two important facts: 1) domestic violence is intergenerational in nature and, to stop the cycle of domestic violence, it is essential that we intervene early; 2) the impact on children of witnessing domestic violence (either directly or indirectly), especially children 0 to 6 years of age, is very damaging to the cognitive, emotional and psychological development of a child. With the support of The Cowan Foundation, Nova Vita, in Brantford, is able to employ an Early Childhood Educator (E.C.E.) who works to help minimize the impact of witnessing domestic violence on children. Equally as important, the E.C.E. provides the opportunity for mothers to learn appropriate play activities, parenting skills and structure for their children, and offers much needed respite during an extremely stressful time in their lives. <http://novavita.org/>



### **Phoenix Place**

Phoenix Place has been aptly named the “Starting Over House” for women and their children who have been affected by domestic abuse. Their commitment is to counsel, empower, educate and house their clients as well as provide them with a safe, caring environment in which to start their healing process – to help them put their lives back together. The Cowan Foundation funding will not only support the work they do with in-house clients, but will also help to provide outreach services to many women in the Hamilton community who are struggling with issues of domestic abuse. Recent statistics indicate that 97% of women maintain an abuse free life after leaving Phoenix Place. In the words of one of their clients, “Phoenix Place put me on the path to peace”. <https://phoenixplacehamilton.wordpress.com/>

### **Second Harvest**

Since 1985, Second Harvest has worked to nourish people in need and prevent waste by rescuing fresh, surplus food and delivering it daily to a network of more than 200 social service agencies across Toronto. The food that would otherwise go to waste is donated by grocery stores, manufacturers, distributors, farmers, restaurants and hotels, and feeds people experiencing hunger across Toronto. Since inception, Second Harvest has rescued and delivered over 100 million pounds of food and prevented 50 million pounds of greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere. For every dollar donated, two meals are provided. Second Harvest’s annual [Hero Workplace Fundraiser](#) campaign invites thousands of people across the GTA to be Second Harvest Heroes and engage in fun and rewarding activities to raise funds for food rescue. The Cowan Foundation’s support of this campaign will provide 40,000 meals for children, adults and seniors experiencing hunger. <http://www.secondharvest.ca/>

### **Stratford Perth Community Foundation (Brain & Mind Matters Community Fund)**

The Stratford Perth Community Foundation enriches the lives of people in Stratford, St. Marys and Perth County now and for generations to come by providing support to charitable organizations through grants made possible by responsible stewardship of endowment funds and by sharing their unique understanding of community needs. The Cowan Foundation’s contribution will be directed to the Brain & Mind Matters Community Fund (BAMM) at the SPCF that was created to assist with outpatient care and ongoing support in concert with leading organizations for mental health and traumatic brain injuries. <http://www.spcf.ca>

### **Woodstock and District Developmental Services**

Woodstock and District Developmental Services (WDDS) is a non-profit agency that provides opportunities and support for people with developmental disabilities to help them live full lives within the community. With a vision of “a community where everybody belongs,” they strive to seek a wide array of options that meet individual preferences and choices in areas of employment, accommodation and day programs. The Cowan Foundation’s funding will help WDDS’s capital campaign which is focused on expanding and retrofitting their current facility to accommodate the shift from sheltered workshops to community engagement through learning, training, and placements. The retrofit will include 5 learning spaces, a larger commercial kitchen, increased meeting and training space, and additional washrooms. By minimizing isolating situations, these changes will help increase community acceptance and social inclusion. <http://wdds.ca>



### **YMCA Canada**

As a charity, the YMCA provides vital community programs and services that have a positive impact on some of Canada's most intractable social issues – chronic disease, poverty, social isolation, inequality, and more. For more than 160 years, the YMCA has been dedicated to the health of individuals and communities, with a special focus on the 1.5 million children, teens and young adults they serve each year. The funding provided by The Cowan Foundation will support program development and ensure access to programs for low income children and youth. Their goal is to provide as many children as possible the opportunity to go to camp, to learn to swim, to play, to graduate high school and get a job, regardless of their background or financial situation. The YMCA is a place where kids can feel like they belong. That matters because when kids feel connected and accepted, they become stronger and healthier. <http://www.ymca.ca/>

### **Youth Net**

Youth Net/Réseau Ado (YNRA) is a bilingual, mental health promotion, intervention and support program run for youth by youth, using authentic youth engagement approaches. Based at CHEO in Ottawa, YNRA supports youth aged 13 to 20 through programming run in-house, in schools and in the community, with the key objective of helping young people develop and maintain good mental health and utilize healthy coping strategies for dealing with stress, all while decreasing the stigma associated with mental illness. Youth Net was developed based on a body of research conducted by Dr. Simon Davidson and Dr. Ian Manion that suggests adolescents are much more likely to talk to their peers (aged 20-30) about mental health, than to adults. The Cowan Foundation's contribution will support YNRA's six early intervention programs, each of which bring 12 youth together over an 8-10 week period to talk about mental health, take part in healthy activities and develop resiliency. All programs are backed by a clinical social worker. <http://www.youthnet.on.ca/>