



community action grant



May 26, 2015

MLSE FOUNDATION AWARDS YOUTHLINK FIRST \$50,000 TORONTO RAPTORS COMMUNITY ACTION GRANT PRESENTED BY JUST ENERGY FOUNDATION

MLSE Foundation announced Scarborough non-profit YouthLink as the first recipient of the \$50,000 *Toronto Raptors Community Action Grant presented by the Just Energy Foundation* at Cedar Avenue Junior Public School on Tuesday evening. MLSE Foundation Chair Aris Kaplanis was joined by Toronto Raptors Basketball Development Consultant, Community Ambassador and Scarborough-native, Jamaal Magloire and Just Energy Vice President of Marketing Alan Shulman for the announcement. Following a cheque presentation, Raptors basketball development coaches hosted a clinic for participants of YouthLink's Triple-Double program. The \$50,000 grant will directly support Triple-Double, which combines five-on-five basketball, literacy and numeracy to increase youth physical activity and improve academic success.

"YouthLink's Triple-Double program is a great illustration of the positive impact and driving force sport can have in the lives of kids," said Aris Kaplanis, Chair of MLSE Foundation. "We're very excited to see this program come to life and help youth in the Scarborough Village improve their physical activity through basketball while also continuing to progress in the classroom."

Triple-Double will be open to more than 100 youth ages 14 to 20 in Scarborough Village from September to May, and requires each participant to attend weekly literacy and numeracy sessions in order to be involved in the basketball component of the program. The Triple-Double program responds to a long-term desire for basketball programming for youth in the area and also offers mentoring opportunities to community members who want to support students' success through sport.

"In a community that loves basketball but doesn't have access to a gymnasium for organized sports, the *Toronto Raptors Community Action Grant presented by Just Energy Foundation* will be transformative in providing young people in Scarborough Village the opportunity to flourish in academic-focused recreation activities in a way that the community never thought imaginable," said Ronni Gorman, Senior Program Manager of YouthLink.

The Toronto Raptors Community Action Grant along with the *Toronto Maple Leafs and Toronto FC Community Action Grants* are three \$50,000 sport-specific prizes presented by the Just Energy Foundation that MLSE Foundation will award to non-profit organizations supporting youth sports programming in the city. Eligible non-profits can apply for all grants at mlsefoundation.org, where submissions are reviewed by a selection committee before a winner is chosen and announced at a special event in their community.

(MORE)

“This latest Community Action Grant award to YouthLink continues the great effort of MLSE Foundation and the Just Energy Foundation to support youth achievement and empowerment through sport,” said Deb Merrill, Just Energy’s co-Chief Executive Officer. “YouthLink offers invaluable services to improve life outcomes for youth at risk. We’re proud to assist in their mission to provide support, guidance and opportunities to help vulnerable youth make positive life choices and achieve their potential for a positive future.”

Youthlink

YouthLink believes in the potential of every youth and is dedicated to providing the support, guidance and opportunities to make positive life choices. Working alongside young people and partners in the community, YouthLink provides an integrated approach to community based mental health services, housing, educational support, mentorship, parenting support, queer/trans programming, recreation and referral services to support young people growing up in Scarborough. Founded over 100 years ago, YouthLink has grown to serve 5,000+ youth and families each year in Scarborough Village, as well as many other underserved communities in the east end. For more information, please visit www.youthlink.ca or follow @YouthlinkTO.

About MLSE Foundation

MLSE Foundation believes all kids should have access to sport and the opportunity to develop lasting dreams on the playing field. With the support of all four MLSE teams - the Toronto Maple Leafs, Toronto Raptors, Toronto FC and Toronto Marlies - the Foundation funds the refurbishment of local athletic facilities and programs that support kids through sports and recreation. Since launching in December 2009, the MLSE Foundation has invested more than \$15 million into our community. For more information visit mlsefoundation.org, or follow @MLSEFoundation

About Just Energy Foundation

The Just Energy Foundation was established in 2013 by Just Energy Group Inc. to help registered Canadian and U.S. charitable organizations secure the resources required to promote the health and well-being of communities in need. Funded entirely by Just Energy, the Foundation invests in local programs that work to enhance the quality of life in Just Energy's operating markets towards building stronger and supportive communities. Visit justenergyfoundation.com to learn more.

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