

Please Support Co-operative Young Leaders



Introduction

On behalf of the Ontario Co-operative Association (OCA) and the Co-operative Young Leaders (CYL) program, we thank you for taking the time to consider this youth sponsorship opportunity. Any contribution would help support a series of week-long summer camps at the Co-operative Education Centre, located in Aylmer, Ontario in the summer of 2024. These experiences prepare youth between the ages of 13 and 18 to advance their leadership and communication skills, their knowledge and understanding of how the co-operative principles and business model contributes to the greater good, and a stronger sense of how they can be leaders in this world.

Many youth are still suffering from the after effects of years of unexpected lockdowns, restrictions and fear; it is time for them to go back to being kids again! Our generous co-operative sponsors make it possible for youth to come to camp without families bearing the financial burden. Your contribution would help sponsor youth participants to attend a week at CYL, co-operative activities, and provide the opportunity for them to make lifelong friends, feel valued and just be themselves.

In this package, we have included the reasons we are requesting a sponsorship (or donation) to the CYL program, a detailed description of the program, and a brief overview of our organization.

Here at OCA, we know the true power of the summer camp experience and the growth that youth experience while attending CYL. We admire all that the co-operative sector currently does to support youth and recognize that there is always more we can do. We thank you in advance for your consideration of supporting our program. Please feel free to reach out to me with your inquiries or to discuss sponsorship opportunities!

Yours cooperatively,

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Why Sponsor Us?

The co-operative sector values integrity, excellence for member service, care for others, independence and fun, the same way that CYL does. We know that you are passionate about supporting the well-being of your communities, and we are too. **We want to work together to make a real difference.**

The CYL program aligns with the co-operative sector's mandate to educate and support youth. It supports their development and aligns with co-operative education, as we focus on learning and social development during all our camp sessions.

We believe that youth should be empowered to be co-operative leaders in the world. We believe they deserve an opportunity to be understood and to be seen in a safe and inclusive environment. CYL provides Ontario's youth with an incredible opportunity to discover more about themselves and their role in this world. Your co-operative has the opportunity to work with us to help youth succeed.

Another thing our sector has in common with the CYL program is an unwavering focus on people. CYL has served thousands of youth over the last 57 years, and we are so excited to welcome the next generation of leaders through our doors in the summer of 2024!

With your support, incredible things can happen.



Why Sponsor Us?

Sponsoring or donating to CYL will have an extremely positive impact on the youth who participate in our program.

The three-year CYL program is rooted in leadership, as well as co-operative principles and values. We come together with facilitators from the co-operative sector and CYL Alumni, to help prepare youth to go out into their communities and lead by example, be a champion for the greater good, and to practice the characteristics of good leadership and co-operation. At end of the program participants leave with:

- A focus on the importance of leadership, diversity, and equality in their community.
- An understanding that true leadership is about listening and learning from others.
- An understanding that sometimes the smallest things they do through their leadership can have a major impact on those around them.
- A recognition of their self-worth and the personal satisfaction they receive by being a “great leader.”
- Opportunities to help those around them want to succeed and move forward with excellent leadership skills.

Sponsoring or donating to CYL will have an extremely positive impact on your co-operative or credit union and your owners/members.

As the CYL program roots its learning and experiences in the principles of co-operation, youth will leave camp with a unique and strong connection to the co-operative sector. This provides our sector with new members, staff, and co-operative champions. Your co-operative will be supporting the future leaders of our sector!

Staff members are also welcome to volunteer as facilitators at the CYL program in 2024, or any year moving forward.

This opportunity is available to any staff members of co-operatives in Ontario or CYL Alumni. This gives your team the opportunity to learn more about the co-operative sector, connect with other members in the sector, and make a difference in the lives of youth.

You will be recognized as a sponsor or donor on the Co-operative Young Leaders website, and we will also promote your co-operative on our social media platforms.

Program Description

The Co-operative Young Leaders program was created in 1967 and has served over 6,000 youth, thanks to the credit unions and co-operatives who have supported the program.

CYL is a week-long summer camp that allows young people to learn, grow, and have fun. Along the way, amazing things happen – a touch of magic you will only find at CYL! Your support allows us to provide youth with valuable life and career skills, while gaining important knowledge about the co-operative sector. In return, sponsors can gain the loyalty and gratitude of their young members, while having the opportunity to work with participants and facilitators throughout the year. **Sponsoring CYL is an investment in youth and in your co-operative.**

CYL offers our series of week-long summer camps to young people aged 13 to 18. This unique experiential learning program brings together youth from across Ontario, to learn in a safe, secure and nonjudgmental environment. CYL empowers them to be explorers, trailblazers, and visionaries, while equipping them with the change-making tools and skills they need to succeed in the world. Bringing together youth with co-operative mentors creates a relationship that embraces and enhances their leadership potential. Participants develop self-confidence, learn from inspiring guest speakers, and have fun with traditional camp activities in a fun and challenging atmosphere. A typical day at CYL may include skits, co-op tours, interactive learning sessions, sports, or a guest speaker. And, as a participant, youth share in the day-to-day leadership of their CYL week.

CYL has all the traditional things that make summer camps fun – hikes, campfires, swimming, sports and hanging out – but CYL'ers also participate in activities that emphasize leadership, communication, and teamwork. Youth will even create and operate their own co-op store called the 'Snack Shack.'

Our summer camp experiences take place over the months of July and August, but we are continuously developing our curriculum and programming throughout the year. This summer, and with your support, over 100 youth will attend CYL at the Gay Lea Foods' Co-operative Education Centre in Aylmer, Ontario! This is an amazing site that offers great facilities, good food, and a safe environment for both participants and our volunteer facilitators.

Your contribution, through a sponsorship or donation, will contribute to youth experiences at CYL and beyond. It will have a positive impact on Ontario communities as we equip youth with leadership and communication skills, and educate and empower them to lead cooperatively.

Program Description

CYL has served, and continues to serve, people in communities across the province. Our participants, facilitators, and staff come from all over Ontario - including from your community! Your contribution will make a real difference and help us further our three main goals...

1. To **provide** youth with a fantastic summer camp experience in a safe and secure environment;
2. To **develop** their leadership skills, foster self-confidence and self-awareness; and
3. To **create** a stronger awareness of co-operatives and the principles that guide them.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF CYL:

- One-part experiential learning and one-part traditional camp activities.
- CYL youth learn new leadership, team-building and communication skills.
- The history of CYL is rooted in co-operative principles and how co-operatives contribute to the greater good.
- CYL youth come to a camp where they are accepted and valued for who they are, know that they are in a safe and non-judgmental space, and learn how important personal values are.
- CYL participants can meet other youth from across Ontario and forge relationships and friendships that can last a lifetime.
- CYL provides a unique learning experience, while also creating opportunities to have fun playing sports, learning how to be part of a team through outdoor games, relaxing, and talking openly around a campfire. Participants learn that we all have values and something to contribute to the world.
- CYL is a three-year program where we continue to improve the participants' knowledge of what it means to be a great leader, their understanding of co-operatives, and show them that every career can be done co-operatively.

CYL is focused on leadership behaviours that are essential for thriving in a time of ever-increasing change. CYL helps participants understand the behaviours involved in transformational leadership, with an emphasis on co-operation, team-building, and communication skills. CYL provides the opportunity for youth to learn how to use these behaviours to enhance their leadership presence.

Program Curriculum

Our summer sessions include three different age groups and curriculums at CYL...



Explore the wonder of co-operation as we learn about the history of co-operatives and discover the CYL community that awaits! Explorers provides participants with an understanding of the values and behaviours of leadership, team-building, and communication skills. Learn what makes a “great” leader in a judgement-free environment where everyone is welcome. This week is open to participants ages 13 to 14. Watch the [2023 Explorers video here!](#)



Blaze a trail towards co-operation as we focus on our CYL community, learn to overcome communication challenges, and lead the way towards building great teamwork and co-operative leadership skills. Leadership activities focus on stereotyping, the rumor mill, influence of social media, diversity, and equality. Participants begin to take over leading their camp while having fun exploring the great outdoors and enjoying traditional camp activities. This week is open to participants ages 15 to 16 and/or who have completed Explorers. Watch the [2023 Trailblazers video here!](#)



This week we help solidify basic knowledge of the co-operative business model, support and foster the young co-operative leaders of the future and provide participants with the tools to make a difference in their community. Participants work in teams to create a co-operative that addresses a need in their community, create a communication and marketing plan which is presented to a panel of senior co-operative representatives. Visionaries take over the responsibility for leading the camp with the support of facilitators. This week is open to participants ages 17 to 18 and/or who have completed Trailblazers. Watch the [2023 Visionaries video here!](#)

Program Testimonials

Here's what our participants had to say about CYL 2023:

- I really enjoyed the camp; it was a fun experience.
- It was fun and we learned lots!
- It was the first camp I went to and it was a great experience, very different from what I was expecting.
- I loved it and I hope I can come back next year!
- It's great with lots of opportunities for fun and learning great leadership skills.
- I think that CYL is a camp with many learning experiences that teach us many life lessons that I am already finding helpful. I also like the fact that people come from a variety of places.
- CYL is a one-week summer leadership camp which supports individuals on their path to communication success.

Here's what our parents had to say about CYL 2023:

- My daughter loved it. Thank you!!!!
- My son had a great time. We appreciate the opportunity for our children to attend.
- We look forward to future registration, my daughter cannot wait to come back next year!
- Thank you, Carol, and the team for making it a memorable event for our daughter, as she is making friendships and memories for life.
- Thank you CYL, for the wonderful job.
- My oldest daughter completed CYL as a participant and has spoken of her interest in becoming a facilitator when she is of age.
- Very good experience for my child, well done!
- What a fantastic program. It turned out to be somewhat life-changing for our daughter. She truly came back from camp a stronger, more focused, and confident young lady. It's been rewarding seeing the difference attending CYL camp has made in her life.
- We would like to thank you for the opportunity. Our son had an amazing time and is still talking about the different experiences. He is already looking forward to coming back next year!

Ontario Co-operative Association

A bit about us...

Vision, Mission, Values & Mandate

The Ontario Co-operative Association is a non-profit co-operative that was originally formed in 1989 as CCA Ontario Region, and officially incorporated in 2002.

Our **vision** is an Ontario where co-operatives contribute to the sustainable growth and development of our communities, and to the overall social, economic and environmental well-being of the province. We believe that co-operatives, together, build a better world.

Our **mission** is to support, promote, advocate and provide educational programs and training for Ontario's co-operatives.

We are highly committed to the **values** of people, community, education, innovation, collaboration, sustainability and professional service.

Our **mandate** is to be the voice of co-operatives, encourage co-operation and support co-operative success.

The 2023 - 2024 Board of Directors

- Jordon Moat, Libro Credit Union (Chair)
- Wendy Carruthers, Co-operators (Vice Chair & Secretary)
- Kathy Stewart, Frontline Credit Union (Treasurer)
- Chris Caners, SolarShare Co-operative
- Craig Steven, Gay Lea Foods Co-operative
- Reba Plummer, Canadian Worker Co-op Federation
- Kelli Phillips, Hay Communications Co-operative

Learn more about us... check out our
[2022 - 2023 Annual Report!](#)