



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Join the conversation: YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka and Georgian College invite community to identify future trends**

**Simcoe County, ON – Wednesday, May 15** | Community members and local organizations are invited to participate in *The Future Includes... Scan Club*, a new initiative by the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka and Georgian College to identify trends, challenges, and opportunities for our communities' future.

The brand-new club is part of the Future of Belonging project, which is aimed at advancing community well-being and fostering a sense of belonging across the region.

The Future of Belonging Scan Club is a unique opportunity for community members to collect and explore early signals or clues about upcoming trends, challenges, or opportunities that could affect our communities from now to 2030 and beyond. The YMCA and Georgian will use this data to help support community organizations in their strategic planning for the future.

"We're excited to invite individuals and organizations across Simcoe/Muskoka to join us in this important conversation about the future of belonging," said Pamela Marck, Vice President at the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka. "At the YMCA, we believe that understanding future trends is crucial to building inclusive and thriving communities."

Over a six-week period, participants of *The Future Includes... Scan Club* will use a mix of imagination, intuition, creativity, and observation of events in the world at large to identify early signs of change that may have important future impacts on our economy, health, environment, sense of belonging, and how we work and play.

The Future of Belonging project, a collaboration between the YMCA and Georgian's Social Innovation team, aims to explore and enhance community belonging through innovative approaches and community engagement. By leveraging the expertise and diverse perspectives of our community members, they aim to develop sustainable solutions that address the evolving needs of the region.

"The goal is to harness diverse community perspectives through crowdsourcing real-time trends that are important to people that we may not be seeing, and then we can share those back with the many community organizations heading into their strategic planning cycles," said Nicole Norris, Director, Social Innovation, Georgian College. "We can't build future-ready organizations without the tools and

knowledge we've gained through our communities. Scan clubs are a great way to gain new perspectives on where we should go, together."

The Future of Belonging Scan Club will take place virtually every Friday from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. starting May 24 and concluding June 27. Participants are encouraged to join this collaborative effort and contribute to building a more inclusive and connected community.

[Register online](#) for the Future of Belonging Scan Club and learn more about the project.

For more information, visit [futureofbelonging.ca](http://futureofbelonging.ca).

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### **About the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka**

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka is a charity dedicated to building healthy communities. We are committed to nurturing the potential of children, youth and families, promoting healthy living and fostering social responsibility within the community. We serve 1 in 5 people throughout Simcoe County and the District of Parry Sound and Muskoka. In keeping with our commitment to inclusiveness and accessibility, the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka offers financial assistance to those unable to afford program fees, including thousands of children and youth who experience YMCA camps and programs each year. For more information, please visit [www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca](http://www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca).

### **About Georgian College**

Georgian is MORE than an education – it's an experience. The college offers 130+ market-driven programs, from degrees and diplomas, to certificates, apprenticeships, corporate training and more. A recognized leader in student work experience, our graduate employment rate – 90.3 per cent – is in the top 3 for Ontario colleges. Georgian graduates continue to play a pivotal role in meeting the demand for a highly qualified workforce. We're the first – and only – college in Canada designated a changemaker college by Ashoka U for our role as a leader in social innovation and changemaking in higher education. [Georgian College.ca](http://GeorgianCollege.ca)

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