



August 23, 2017

MLSE FOUNDATION AWARDS TORONTO FC COMMUNITY ACTION GRANT PRESENTED BY THE JUST ENERGY FOUNDATION TO TORONTO YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

MLSE Foundation announced Toronto Youth Development as this year's recipient of the \$50,000 *Toronto FC Community Action Grant presented by the Just Energy Foundation* at BMO Field on Wednesday. MLSE Foundation's Manager of Philanthropy, Erika Minkhorst was joined by Just Energy Foundation Executive Director, Kandi Terry, for the announcement. As part of the celebration, Toronto Youth Development Executive Director Brian Keaney and program youth were invited to the Toronto FC versus Philadelphia Union match as guests of MLSE Foundation and to participate in the cheque presentation. The \$50,000 grant will directly support Toronto Youth Development's Regent Park Soccer League (RPSL).

"We are excited to announce Toronto Youth Development as this year's winner of the *Toronto FC Community Action Grant presented by the Just Energy Foundation*," said Michael Bartlett, Executive Director, MLSE Foundation. "The Regent Park Soccer League is a great example of a program that uses sport to improve the lives of youth, and we look forward to seeing it grow."

Entering its fifth year, the Regent Park Soccer League provides at-risk, disenfranchised children and youth (ages four to 13) in the Regent Park community of Toronto with an opportunity to engage in community sport, recreation and physical activity. The ongoing soccer-based program delivers skills training, coaching and referee on-field practical experience to substantially improve participants' quality of life. As the program is looking to increase registration by 25 per cent, this grant will allow for appropriate expansion and help serve 200 children and youth.

Sports serves as the perfect vehicle for community engagement and youth development," says Brian Keaney, Executive Director, Toronto Youth Development. "Skills and lessons children learn through sports, such as teamwork, discipline, and perseverance are transferable to facets of their daily lives. The *Toronto FC Community Action Grant presented by the Just Energy Foundation* will provide support for the expansion of the Regent Park Soccer League. The program's inclusive nature will help serve and develop hundreds of at-risk children."

The Toronto FC Community Action Grant along with the *Toronto Maple Leafs and Toronto Raptors Community Action Grants* are three \$50,000 sport-specific prizes presented by the Just Energy Foundation that MLSE Foundation awards to non-profit organizations supporting youth sports programming in the city each year. 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.

"We are delighted to award Toronto Youth Development's Regent Park Soccer League with our latest \$50,000 MLSE Community Action Grant presented by the Just Energy Foundation," says Kandi Terry. "We were

impressed with their application of sports, academics and character enrichment workshops to offer a more holistic approach to youth development and leadership training. The program demonstrates well that equitable access to sport, recreation, and physical activity improves quality of life, confidence and long term outlook for at-risk, disenfranchised children and youth.”

About Toronto Youth Development

Toronto Youth Development (TYD) is a registered charitable organization created in 1995 to assist and foster Toronto’s youth in order to help reduce the social dilemma of high school dropout rates, community violence, and next-generation poverty. Toronto Youth Development’s, academic, sports, and enrichment programs are a much needed and proven system, enabling underprivileged youth to rise from their present environment, build confidence and leadership capabilities. To learn more about how TYD serves to develop the youth of Toronto, visit torontoyouth.org, or follow [@TorontoYouthDev](https://twitter.com/TorontoYouthDev) on Twitter, and [TorontoYouthDevelopment](https://www.instagram.com/TorontoYouthDevelopment) on Instagram.

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 MLSE’s teams, the Foundation funds the refurbishment of local athletic facilities and programs that support kids through sports and recreation. Since launching in 2010, MLSE Foundation has invested more than \$30 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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Media contacts:

Abby Albino, MLSE, 416-815-5455, abby.albino@mlse.com

Nancy Donnaperna, Just Energy Foundation, 905-670-4440, ndonnaperna@justenergy.com