

Good Evening and welcome.

Tonight we have come together to:

- **Recognize and celebrate our history:** Thank you Peter for your wisdom and Institutional knowledge that has helped guide me for the past year and YES for nearly 4 decades.
- **Highlight our current programming and staff,** without them YES would not be where it is today.
- **Plan for the future,** for the young people here today and many that will come after us, that their lives are filled with a multitude of experiences.

Today, with the **economy** in its present state, it is an extremely **challenging** for families to not only make **ends meet**, but continue to provide **safe, accessible, and affordable** programming for their children. This is where YES plays a **huge role** in the lives of many: by providing **experiential education** through its outdoor year round activities as well as with our **YES Academy Programs**. Families can feel **secure** that whatever the **challenges** that our communities and societies face, YES has proven it will **always** be there, and that will never change.

This past year, we have achieved a lot and made much **progress** towards the goals of our **Strategic Plan**, and that is to have a **profound impact** in a youth's life in a way that will help to **shape him/her** into the productive and successful men and women. Our successes include:

- Our Ski and Snowboard Season Pass Program produced a **20% increase** in the number of service days/individual trips that were completed;
- All programs have been and will be **evaluated annually** and will continue to be measured against the goals of Strategic Plan;
- An increased emphasis on **year round, youth development** programming is transitioning our Operation Snowsports, Outdoor Adventure, and YES Academy to providing an array of services and mentoring opportunities through all **4 seasons**;
- Our **summer** programming has diversified to meet the many needs of our young people as program participants and young trainees;
- Increased our **staffing** to reflect the fundraising and youth needs of YES;
- Our **Junior Volunteers** are now involved in a Progressive Leadership Development model that will be the **springboard** towards developing the skills needed to succeed in life.
- A **Ski and Snowboarding Race Team** is planned for this upcoming season that will give youth the opportunity to **develop, compete, and move** to the next level.

None of this would be possible without the **dozens of new partnerships** that have been formed and old ones secured over the past year. **Whether** it is an individual donor, an in-kind donation from the ski/snowboard industry, a volunteer or group, corporation, foundation, or many of the other friends, that **because of all of you**, now know and believe in YES. So far in the first 6 months of this year, we have received over \$100,000

I in-kind donations that has been leveraged by all of you, which is 5 times as much as in previous years.

Our message is out there. Our model works. For YES to move forward as leader and to thrive, and grow, we need to continue to **build bridges and forge new partnerships**. Whether with a **national collaboration** that has been formed or a **business relationship** with a local vendor, we need to establish expand our capacity, as we are being **asked to do more with less resources** available to us.

There are a number of challenges to meet in 2010:

- **Continue to recruit and cultivate the volunteers**, who are the backbone of YES. 200 strong who give time, energy, and resources because they believe in YES. We need you now more than ever. You are our ambassadors.
- **Our fundraising needs to continue to diversify** with a our current array of events and move towards a prominent signature event. With a new Development plan, it is critical we now communicate and reach out to **individuals** who can support YES.
- **We need to market YES in the 21st century** and use our newly launched website, newsletters, social networks to reach way beyond our traditional vision and bring others into the YES family;
- **Financially**, we need to ensure we are sound and our programs are cost effective. The creation of a **Business and Strategic Plan** in the next year will guide us through an ever changing economy.
- We must welcome **20 new board members** into the YES Family. Thank you for answering our call and taking on a strategic role. We look forward to working with you and are sure your expertise and experience will help tremendously in achieving our goals.

We have done a lot, but still **have much to do**. **Thank you** for your many years of support to YES and for being here tonight. It means a lot to us.

The **Staff are the driving force** behind our vision to impact youth. As role models and mentors, they are critical to the development of youth. What has been so impressive over the last year has been the **initiative of the staff to continue to push themselves** and improve and expand their programs, knowing there are new challenges ahead.

- Gayle Saks, Development and Communications Manager
- Mike Arkin, Shop Manager and Youth Development Coordinator
- Tomas Guevara, Business Manager
- Aisha Shillingford, GOAL Manager
- Karen Schwinn-Clanton, Ski Team Director
- Carmen Maianu, BC School of Social Work Intern
- Carla Mendoza, North Cambridge High School Intern
- Rachada Hiranyaket, YES Academy Director
- Will Morales, Chief Operating Officer
- Diron Mobley, Volunteer and Marketing Director