



# YMCA Fitness Leadership Conference

**November 8-9, 2025**

Shane Homes YMCA at Rocky Ridge

Sponsored by



# Elevate your skills with us!

Join us at Shane Homes YMCA at Rocky Ridge for our annual YMCA Fitness Leadership Conference. This will be a fun-filled, energetic weekend designed to develop and champion YOU, our incredible fitness instructors. Don't miss the opportunity to grow your network, bounce ideas off your peers, and learn from experts in the health & fitness industry.

## Registration Fees

Registration includes up to 10 YMCA & Fitness Alberta Continuing Education Credits (CECs) with access to six conference sessions, one Keynote Presentation, two catered lunches, conference package, draw prizes and the spirit of camaraderie within an unbeatable fitness community – PRICELESS!

YMCA Calgary Staff & Volunteers: **FREE\***

Regional YMCA Staff & Volunteers: **\$125\*\***

External Fitness Instructors & Personal Trainers: **\$350**

\*Must have a valid YMCA Calgary Staff or Volunteer Membership to register at this rate.

**Media Advisory:** Please note that photographic & videographic images will be captured throughout the conference for YMCA promotional purposes. By participating in this conference you agree to have your photo taken.



## Registration Dates

**September 29** — Registration opens for participants with valid YMCA Calgary Staff & Volunteer Memberships

**October 6** — Registration opens for Regional YMCA Staff & Volunteers

**October 13** — Registration opens for External Participants

**October 27** — Registration closes at 7:00pm

**Register by 7:00pm on October 27, 2025!**

Registration is by phone only. Please call [403-351-5262](tel:403-351-5262) between the following times to speak with our registration team:

**Monday–Friday** — 8:30am–7:00pm

**Saturday/Sunday/STAT** — 9:00am–5:00pm

Please make sure to have your preferred sessions on hand including first, second and third choices for each timeslot. Spaces will be allotted on a first come first basis.

# Shane Homes YMCA at Rocky Ridge

Join us at this premiere recreational facility in the city's northwest!

Sitting in a reconstructed wetland with views of the city and mountains, Shane Homes YMCA at Rocky Ridge is a beautifully designed recreation facility that complements its natural landscape.

The open-concept building offers 284,000 square feet of family-friendly recreational fun, including a world-class fitness centre, triple gymnasium, a feature-packed aquatic centre, the BMO Theatre and a Calgary Public Library.





November 8, 2025

# Saturday Schedule

	Studio 1	Studio 2	Studio 3	Gym	MP1	MP2	Pool
8:00 - 8:45am	Conference Check-in & Package Pick-up   📍 BMO Theatre						
<b>Session 1</b> 9:00 - 10:30am	<b>PILATES FUSION</b> <b>Building Strength, Functional Movement, Balance and Total Body Toning through Pilates, Yoga and Barre</b> Christine Penner	<b>OLDER ADULT</b> <b>Strength Training Progressions for Older Adults: From Foundation to Performance</b> Helen Vanderburg	<b>CYCLE</b> <b>Hybrid Hustle: Building Balanced Cycle &amp; Strength Classes that Work</b> Allan Tigley	<b>CARDIO</b> <b>Manipulating Intervals</b> Jessica Power Cyr	<b>LECTURE</b> <b>Perimenopause Decoded - Hormones, Habits and Hope for a Vibrant Midlife</b> Tessa Ethier	<b>LECTURE</b> <b>The Importance of Creating Hyper-Inclusive Fitness Practices</b> Geoff Starling	
<b>Keynote</b> 10:45 - 11:45am	The Science of Engagement - Keep Your Clients Coming Back! with Robin O'Grady   📍 BMO Theatre						
12:00 - 12:45pm	Lunch & Draw Prizes   📍 BMO Theatre						
12:45 - 1:30pm	Fitness Instructor Connect   📍 BMO Theatre						
<b>Session 2</b> 1:45 - 3:15pm	<b>STRENGTH</b> <b>Lean In Lean Out</b> Krista Popowych	<b>OLDER ADULT</b> <b>Functional Aging</b> Helen Vanderburg	<b>CYCLE</b> <b>Spin Ladders &amp; Pyramids</b> Jessica Power Cyr		<b>YOGA</b> <b>The Transformational Path of Yoga</b> Paul Larmer	<b>PERSONAL TRAINING</b> <b>Wellness 360</b> Hayley Hollander	<b>AQUA</b> <b>Make Waves with Shallow Water Training and Travel</b> Judy Cudrak
<b>Session 3</b> 3:30 - 5:00pm	<b>CARDIO</b> <b>The Art of the Warm-Up</b> Robin O'Grady	<b>STRENGTH</b> <b>Strength Variables</b> Jessica Power Cyr	<b>CYCLE</b> <b>Ride Revival by Keiser</b> Krista Popowych		<b>YOGA</b> <b>The Art of Yoga Alignment</b> Vandana Vora	<b>LECTURE</b> <b>Shoulder 360</b> Helen Vanderburg	<b>AQUA</b> <b>"Zone In" to Intensity and Interval Training Aqua-Style</b> Judy Cudrak

November 8, 2025

# Saturday Workshops

Session 1 | 9:00 - 10:30am

Studio 1	Studio 2	Studio 3	Gym	MP1	MP1
<p><b>PILATES FUSION</b></p> <p><b>Building Strength, Functional Movement, Balance and Total Body Toning through Pilates, Yoga and Barre</b></p> <p>Christine Penner</p> <p>This workshop explores how to design intelligent, well-structured movement sequences that integrate the core strength and postural alignment of pilates, the mindfulness and breathwork of yoga, and the precision and sculpting techniques of barre. Participants will learn to cue effectively and confidently across all three modalities; modify movement to support all fitness levels safely and effectively; flow seamlessly between pilates, yoga and barre to build functional, engaging classes; use mindfulness, breath and purposeful intention to enhance the client experience; promote balanced movement patterns and develop proper body posture and alignment. This session is ideal for instructors looking to design movement experiences that support both physical transformation and mind-body integration.</p>	<p><b>OLDER ADULT</b></p> <p><b>Strength Training Progressions for Older Adults: From Foundation to Performance</b></p> <p>Helen Vanderburg</p> <p>Gaining and maintaining strength with age is critical to overall health, independence, and function. Learn how to systematically approach to strength training programming that integrates movement assessment, strategic exercise progression and regression to gain optimal performance. Learn a logical progression through four training phases from foundation to optimal performance. Walk away with specific exercise progressions to incorporate into your strength training programming immediately for older adults.</p>	<p><b>CYCLE</b></p> <p><b>Hybrid Hustle: Building Balanced Cycle Strength Classes that Work</b></p> <p>Allan Tigley</p> <p>Ready to ignite both cardiovascular endurance and muscular power? In this high-impact session, FIS &amp; PT Allan Tigley presents a dynamic hybrid format that blends the best of cycling with smart strength training strategies. This engaging workshop walks attendees through a proven blueprint for designing classes that keep clients motivated, challenged, and coming back for more.</p>	<p><b>CARDIO</b></p> <p><b>Manipulating Intervals</b></p> <p>Jessica Power Cyr</p> <p>Come manipulate intervals in this metabolic based workshop sure to blow your mind! Jess will explain the essentials of exercise physiology such as energy system transfer and muscle fiber type to create a variety of unique interval based workouts for your participants. The workshop will review and define interval training, how to manage large groups efficiently and effective class design and delivery. You do not want to miss this session. Come get POWERED UP with Jess!</p>	<p><b>LECTURE</b></p> <p><b>Perimenopause Decoded - Hormones, Habits and Hope for a Vibrant Midlife</b></p> <p>Tessa Ethier</p> <p>Perimenopause is a major—yet often misunderstood—phase of a woman's life. This session will demystify what's really happening during this transition, offering clear insight into the hormonal shifts behind common symptoms</p> <p>Together, we'll explore practical and empowering strategies to reduce discomfort, shift mindset, and embrace this transformative stage. You'll learn how food and lifestyle choices—especially yoga and targeted movement—can ease symptoms, boost energy, and support emotional wellbeing. We'll also introduce grounding routines and rituals to build self-awareness and resilience.</p> <p>This session is designed to reframe perimenopause not as an ending, but as a powerful new beginning.</p>	<p><b>LECTURE</b></p> <p><b>The Importance of Creating Hyper-Inclusive Fitness Practices</b></p> <p>Geoff Starling</p> <p>The majority of people who want to participate in regular exercise are alienated by traditional fitness practices and their messaging. During this talk, we will explore actions that invite all people to engage in joyful movement through a genuine understanding and celebration of what makes them worthy of care.</p>

Keynote Speaker

**Robin O'Grady**

**Saturday** | 10:45 - 11:45am

📍 BMOTheatre

## **The Science of Engagement: Keep Your Clients Coming Back!**

Getting participants to come back consistently is the real test of fitness instruction, yet many talented instructors struggle with keeping participants engaged long-term. While technical skills and great workouts are important, the psychology of participant engagement goes much deeper. In this evidence-based workshop, we'll explore the science behind what transforms one-time attendees into devoted regulars. Led by Robin O'Grady, this keynote presentation combines behavioral psychology with practical strategies, giving you a systematic approach to building the kind of connections and experiences that create lasting participant loyalty. Whether you're new to teaching or looking to boost retention in existing classes, you'll discover actionable techniques that work immediately.



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# Saturday Workshops

Session 2 | 1:45 - 3:15pm

Studio 1	Studio 2	Studio 3	MP1	MP2	Pool
<p><b>STRENGTH</b></p> <p><b>Lean In Lean Out</b></p> <p>Krista Popowych</p> <p>Let's lean in and transform! Ignite your metabolism in this high-energy workshop! Combining strength, cardio and dynamic intervals, you'll learn effective workouts designed to maximize calorie burn and boost metabolic efficiency. Discover strategies to build lean muscle and maintain a strong active body. Perfect for instructors or trainers looking to rev up their members fitness routine and achieve sustainable results</p>	<p><b>OLDER ADULT</b></p> <p><b>Functional Aging</b></p> <p>Helen Vanderburg</p> <p>Aging is inevitable but how we age is a choice. By the year 2030, it is predicted that 20- 25% of the total population will be over the age of 65. With the continued growth in this demographic, trainers need to understand the importance of functional exercise programming to meet the needs of these clients. In this workshop, you will learn common concerns, corrective exercises, and programming for the aging client.</p>	<p><b>CYCLE</b></p> <p><b>Spin Ladders &amp; Pyramids</b></p> <p>Jessica Power Cyr</p> <p>Jessica will review a variety of cycling drills that incorporate the use of ladders and pyramids. We are going to sit, stand, climb and sprint all using exercise science to create a fun yet challenging workout that has lots of intense peaks and valleys that progressively get more or less challenging.</p>	<p><b>YOGA</b></p> <p><b>The Transformational Path of Yoga</b></p> <p>Paul Larmer</p> <p>The YMCA is more than a gym — it is a community where body, mind, and spirit unite. In this session, we'll explore the foundations of yoga as a tool for integration of mind, body and spirit. Through the practice and understanding of Sun and Moon Salutations, you'll develop the awareness to take your class from physical exercise to spiritual transformation.</p>	<p><b>PERSONAL TRAINING</b></p> <p><b>Wellness 360</b></p> <p>Hayley Hollander</p> <p>Want better results between the reps? This session explores simple, science-backed strategies you can implement between sets and workouts to help your clients reduce stress, improve mobility, and build resilience. From joint distractions and tissue work to weighted breathing and movement "snacks," you'll learn quick 3-minute practices that create compounding benefits— both in the gym and in everyday life. You'll walk away with practical tools you can immediately plug into your programming or clients' daily routines.</p>	<p><b>AQUA</b></p> <p><b>Make Waves with Shallow Water Training and Travel!</b></p> <p>Judy Cudrak</p> <p>When teaching a shallow water aquatic exercise class, we have the option to keep our groups stationary, or to further utilize the principles of water and travel! Let's explore the enticing reasons to add more travelling moves to our shallow water classes, and how to safely manage the space to add variety and create intensity.</p>

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# Saturday Workshops

Session 3 | 3:30 - 5:00pm

Studio 1	Studio 2	Studio 3	MP1	MP2	Pool
<p><b>CARDIO</b></p> <p><b>The Art of the Warm-Up</b></p> <p>Robin O'Grady</p> <p>A well-designed warm-up is the foundation of a great class, preparing participants for movement while setting the tone for an engaging and effective workout. Yet, warm-ups can be overlooked or approached with a one-size-fits-all mentality. In this workshop, we'll explore how to create intentional, dynamic warm-ups that align with the specific demands of different class styles—including strength training, HIIT, barre, step, and more. Led by Robin O'Grady, this interactive session combines lecture and practical application, giving you the tools to build purpose-driven warm-ups that not only prime the body but also enhance participant experience—whether choreography-based or conditioning-focused.</p>	<p><b>STRENGTH</b></p> <p><b>Strength Variables</b></p> <p>Jessica Power Cyr</p> <p>Jessica is going to take your strength based classes to the next level by reviewing a variety of strength variables so you have plenty of variety to keep pushing your participants. She is going to discuss compound training, pyramids, ladders, tempo training, negative training, super sets and breakdown training plus she is going to show you so many strength combination exercises.</p>	<p><b>CYCLE</b></p> <p><b>Ride Revival by Keiser</b></p> <p>Krista Popowych</p> <p>Reignite your passion for Keiser indoor cycling. This session builds on foundational skills, refining technique and expanding your training toolkit. Dive deeper into effective cueing, power-based intervals, and energy zones to elevate your rides. Perfect for new and experienced riders looking to refresh and enhance their sessions while rediscovering the joy and challenge of the ride.</p>	<p><b>YOGA</b></p> <p><b>The Art of Yoga Alignment: Discovering Support and Stability Using Props in Yoga Asanas</b></p> <p>Vandana Vora</p> <p>"This dynamic and inclusive session introduces participants to the intelligent use of Iyengar yoga props—making yoga accessible for all. Whether you're a seasoned teacher or new to the practice, this workshop offers foundational tools to teach and practice yoga at any level, including for those with no prior experience. Through guided exploration, Vandana Vora will lead participants in understanding and experiencing the principles of alignment, activation, and stability using the body in combination with props such as blocks, straps, bolsters, chairs, and the wall. The focus will be on aligning the trunk and lower body, and learning how to anchor the back leg effectively—key elements in creating a supportive and balanced yoga practice.</p>	<p><b>LECTURE</b></p> <p><b>Shoulder 360</b></p> <p>Helen Vanderburg</p> <p>Explore the complexity of the shoulder in this workshop taking a 360 degree look at the shoulder. With so many clients struggling with shoulder issues how can we help them gain mobility and stability to enhance function, performance, and strength. We will discuss the anatomy and biomechanics of the shoulder and walk away with effective exercises and techniques to enhance shoulder movement efficiency.</p>	<p><b>AQUA</b></p> <p><b>"Zone In" to Intensity and Interval Training... Aqua-Style!</b></p> <p>Judy Cudrak</p> <p>How hard? What should this drill feel like? What are the benefits of various intensities? In this workshop, we'll explore the concept of intensity zones as they relate to perceived exertion, and how to apply this knowledge to create intense yet simple class plans that yield results.</p>



November 9, 2025

# Sunday Schedule

	Studio 1	Studio 2	Studio 3	Gym	MP1	MP2
8:00 - 8:45am	Coffee and Refreshments   📍 BMO Theatre					
<b>Session 4</b> 9:00 - 10:30am	<b>LECTURE</b> <b>Can You Reduce Visceral Fat Through Diet?</b> Michelle Capicio	<b>OLDER ADULT</b> <b>Circuit Training for Active Agers</b> Helen Vanderburg	<b>CYCLE</b> <b>Ride Revolution</b> Krista Popowych	<b>CARDIO</b> <b>Choreography Lab: The Creative Process Unveiled</b> Robin O'Grady	<b>PERSONAL TRAINING</b> <b>Periodization for Your Real Life Clients</b> Jessica Power Cyr	<b>LECTURE</b> <b>Working More Effectively with Clients in Diverse Bodies</b> Geoff Starling
<b>Session 5</b> 10:45am - 12:15pm	<b>LECTURE</b> <b>Can You Reduce Visceral Fat Through Diet?</b> Michelle Capicio	<b>STRENGTH</b> <b>Unlocking Mobility: Bridging Science with Practical Application</b> Helen Vanderburg	<b>CYCLE</b> <b>Metabolic Mapping</b> Jessica Power Cyr	<b>CARDIO</b> <b>Step Fusion: Where Athletic Meets Artistic</b> Robin O'Grady	<b>YOGA</b> <b>Prop Power: Level Up Your Yoga Instruction</b> Judy Cudrak	<b>PERSONAL TRAINING</b> <b>Wellness 360</b> Hayley Hollander
12:30 - 1:15pm	Lunch & Draw Prizes   📍 BMO Theatre					
1:15 - 2:15pm	YMCA Fitness Leadership Awards Ceremony   📍 BMO Theatre					
<b>Session 6</b> 2:30 - 3:45pm	<b>Body and Brain Boost with Krista Popowych   📍 Gymnasium</b>					
3:45 - 4:00pm	Final Draw Prizes and Closing Remarks   📍 Gymnasium					

November 9, 2025

# Sunday Workshops

Session 4 | 9:00 - 10:30am

Studio 1	Studio 2	Studio 3	Gym	MP1	MP2
<p><b>LECTURE</b></p> <p><b>Can You Reduce Visceral Fat Through Diet?</b></p> <p>Michelle Capicio</p> <p>This session is focused on body fat distribution and the science on how nutrition can impact visceral fat. The session will explain different types of fat in the body (visceral, subcutaneous, ectopic, etc.), as well as address some of the ways visceral fat could negatively impact health and lead to chronic disease. The presentation will review some of the current scientific evidence for dietary approaches on how to decrease visceral fat specifically.</p>	<p><b>OLDER ADULT</b></p> <p><b>Circuit Training for Active Agers</b></p> <p>Helen Vanderburg</p> <p>In 2022, the world's population of people aged 65 and older was 771 million, which is almost 10% of the world's population. This segment of the population has been growing at an increasing rate and is projected to more than double by 2050, reaching 1.6 billion people. Designing exercise programs to help older adults increase strength, gain better mobility and flexibility, improve cardiovascular health, reduce the risk of falls, improve balance, gain independence, and ward off the negative physical effects of aging, is going to continue to become a super important skill for fitness pros to learn. In this workshop, learn simple ways to create fun and effective circuit workouts that align with your active agers' goals and beyond.</p>	<p><b>CYCLE</b></p> <p><b>Ride Revolution</b></p> <p>Krista Popowych</p> <p>Today's indoor cyclists want more than just a workout—they want results. This workshop focuses on creating cycling classes that are intensity-based and aligned with specific physiological goals. Using proven indoor cycling methods, you'll learn to design classes that meet the needs of any rider, whether they prefer beat-based, HIIT, or power-focused workouts. Get ready to ride the revolution!</p>	<p><b>CARDIO</b></p> <p><b>Choreography Lab: The Creative Process Unveiled</b></p> <p>Robin O'Grady</p> <p>Creating memorable, teachable choreography is both an art and a science, yet many instructors struggle with the creative process or feel intimidated by choreography development. The gap between having great ideas and translating them into effective, engaging sequences can feel overwhelming without a systematic approach. Led by Robin O'Grady, this hands-on workshop takes you behind the scenes of choreography creation, revealing the systematic methods used to build memorable, teachable choreography from initial concept to polished performance. Perfect for instructors ready to develop their own signature style and move beyond copying others' work.</p>	<p><b>PERSONAL TRAINING</b></p> <p><b>Periodization for Your Real Life Clients</b></p> <p>Jessica Power Cyr</p> <p>The simple definition of periodization is planned RESULTS. The goal of periodization is to design a program that includes a big picture goal, mid way point goals and short term goals so you can achieve a goal within a certain timeframe. Sounds easy enough right? What happens when LIFE happens to your real life clients? And you haven't seen them for weeks and they haven't been doing their workouts? Now, the whole periodization schedule is ruined. Or is it? Jessica is going to give you the tools to design simple straight forward periodization programs that you can implement in your classes, registered programs and with your real life client. We will discuss how to manipulate the volume of work, intensity of effort, and rest and recovery phases to design realistic programs that produce planned results!</p>	<p><b>LECTURE</b></p> <p><b>Working More Effectively with Clients in Diverse Bodies</b></p> <p>Geoff Starling</p> <p>From exercise selection, to coaching cues and intake processes, every interaction you have with your clients is an opportunity to positively influence their relationship with exercise. Learn how to effectively serve clients and class participants living in a variety of body sizes, ages, abilities, and identities, and keep them engaged for years to come.</p>

November 9, 2025

# Sunday Workshops

Session 5 | 10:45am - 12:15pm

Studio 1	Studio 2	Studio 3	Gym	MP1	MP2
<p><b>LECTURE</b></p> <p><b>Can You Reduce Visceral Fat Through Diet?</b></p> <p>Michelle Capicio</p> <p>This session is focused on body fat distribution and the science on how nutrition can impact visceral fat. The session will explain different types of fat in the body (visceral, subcutaneous, ectopic, etc.), as well as address some of the ways visceral fat could negatively impact health and lead to chronic disease. The presentation will review some of the current scientific evidence for dietary approaches on how to decrease visceral fat specifically.</p>	<p><b>STRENGTH</b></p> <p><b>Unlocking Mobility: Bridging Science with Practical Application</b></p> <p>Helen Vanderburg</p> <p>The link between mobility and performance is very clear whether it is to improve activities of daily living or athletic endeavors. The pathway for enhancing mobility is varied depending on the specific needs of your clients. In this workshop, you will learn common imbalances in the body, explore the upper and lower crossed syndrome theory and the role of fascia in mobility. Experience mobility exercises to target tight and weak sites in the body to enhance your personal training client sessions, add to your classes or create a dedicated mobility workout.</p>	<p><b>CYCLE</b></p> <p><b>Cycle - Metabolic Mapping</b></p> <p>Jessica Power Cyr</p> <p>Do you feel like all you do is stand up &amp; sit down in your cycling classes? Jessica is going to take your cycling class to the next level. This metabolic based cycle workshop is sure to blow your mind! Jess will provide you the tools to map out metabolically efficient and effective class designs and deliver a kick a** class. The workshop will review and define interval training, and Jess will explain the essentials of exercise physiology such as energy system transfer and muscle fiber type to create a variety of unique interval based workouts for your participants. You will participate in challenging intervals and competition drills. Not for the faint of heart! Jessica will re-ignite your passion for teaching cycling classes! You do not want to miss this session.</p>	<p><b>CARDIO</b></p> <p><b>Step Fusion: Where Athletic Meets Artistic</b></p> <p>Robin O'Grady</p> <p>Step has incredible potential beyond traditional choreography, but many instructors feel limited by conventional patterns or struggle to create step experiences that feel both athletic and artistic. The challenge lies in seamlessly blending conditioning elements with flowing choreography while maintaining the accessibility and joy that makes step classes special. Led by Robin O'Grady, this innovative workshop explores how athletic conditioning and artistic choreography can create step experiences that challenge the body while captivating the mind. Whether you're a step veteran or new to the format, you'll discover fresh approaches that elevate step beyond basic patterns.</p>	<p><b>YOGA</b></p> <p><b>Prop Power: Level Up Your Yoga Instruction</b></p> <p>Judy Cudrak</p> <p>There are many key reasons to use yoga props. They can enhance a yoga practice, by providing support and stability, and can make poses more accessible for yogis of all levels and abilities. Let's explore some creative ways of utilizing common yoga props to create interest and variety to your yoga practice!</p>	<p><b>PERSONAL TRAINING</b></p> <p><b>Wellness 360</b></p> <p>Hayley Hollander</p> <p>Want better results between the reps? This session explores simple, science-backed strategies you can implement between sets and workouts to help your clients reduce stress, improve mobility, and build resilience. From joint distractions and tissue work to weighted breathing and movement "snacks," you'll learn quick 3-minute practices that create compounding benefits—both in the gym and in everyday life. You'll walk away with practical tools you can immediately plug into your programming or clients' daily routines.</p>

# Conference Finale

## Session 6

### Body and Brain Boost with **Krista Popowych**

**Sunday** | 2:30 - 3:45pm

📍 Gymnasium

Elevate your fitness and sharpen your mind in this unique workshop! Combining physical exercises with brain-training drills, your students will improve coordination, focus and mental agility while building strength and endurance. Perfect for all levels, this session challenges both body and brain, leaving you energized and ready to tackle anything. Train smarter, move better and think faster!





# Meet your instructors

## Allan Tigley

A proud Calgarian and University of Calgary alumnus, Allan brings a rare blend of technical expertise and fitness passion to the wellness space. With advanced degrees in science and software technology and over 20 years leading business intelligence and data analytics in oil and gas, Allan channels his analytical mindset into delivering high-performance group fitness experiences. Certified in multiple modalities — including CanFitPro, YMCA, and Red Cross — and with 15+ years of teaching diverse formats, Allan specializes in creating dynamic, science-driven classes that challenge both body and mind. He's a seasoned endurance athlete, having competed in obstacle races across North America and completed several marathons, with aspirations to return to track and field. As a father of three and lifelong mover, Allan is committed to helping others achieve balance, resilience, and results — through thoughtfully designed training and authentic leadership.

## Christine Penner

Christine Penner, B.Sc., B.Ed., brings over 16 years of experience integrating yoga, Pilates, and strength training. She is a certified Pilates Instructor (Balanced Body), Barre Instructor (Barre Concept), and Hatha Yoga Instructor (Maharishi Yoga), with additional training in Core Strength Vinyasa Yoga (Sadie Nardini). She also holds multiple certifications through Fitness Alberta in Aquatics, Cycle, Older Adult Fitness, Mind-Body, and Pre/Postnatal Yoga (Aura Yoga). Christine is a certified Personal Trainer through Fitness Alberta (formerly AFLCA). Her extensive teaching background includes roles with the University of Calgary, Alberta Ballet School, City of Calgary, The Glencoe Club, City of Airdrie, VIVO, and the Calgary Public Library, Calgary Board of Education as well as international experience in Dubai. Since 2020, Christine has been a dedicated instructor at YMCA Calgary, leading classes in Yoga, Fusion Pilates/Barre, Aqua, and Cycle, as well as offering personal training. She also works full-time at Calgary Public Library as a Library Experience Facilitator, where she is often referred to as a librarian.

## Geoff Starling

Geoff became a fitness professional in 2007 when he saw a need for folks who wanted to become active for the first time, or the first time in a while, to have a safe, predictable and judgement-free environment to do that.

In 2017, Geoff created Every Body STRONGER. A hyper-inclusive fitness space committed to making exercise available to people living in bodies of all sizes, ages, orientations, and identities. EBS now incorporates physio, chiro, massage, acupuncture, meditation and yoga, and has become a hub for inclusive body care.

Since his 20s, Geoff has lived without a stomach and most of his left lung after a series of medical events attempted to take his life. In 2014, he battled with the loss of his younger brother to homicide. The key to his journey since then has been to embrace these challenges as trials; not only to live but to thrive in spite of them to honour their legacies.

For his own training, Geoff is a competitive Strongman and Powerlifter.

## Hayley Hollander

Hayley is an international coach, educator and business consultant. She is a co-founder of Pivotal – a global development company empowering people to fulfill their greatest potential, the Co-Director of Education for Gray Institute, Precor Consultant & Master Coach and Power Plate Training & Education Advisory Member. Throughout her 22+ year career her leadership, programming and content creation has influenced the masses. She has written over 30+ nationally accredited or CEC approved courses delivered online and live today. She has coached and educated thousands of clients, teams, athletes and coaches from all over the world. She is renowned for her program creation and implementation and her work can be found in major health club chains, university recreation centers, non-profit wellness centres and professional sports training centers. Hayley has been named amongst the top 3 finalists for IDEA Personal Trainer of the Year in 2014, 2018, & 2019; IDEA China Industry Top Contributor Finalist in 2018, IDEA China Fitness Inspiration Finalist in 2019; and chosen as the 2013 Fan Favorite for LifeFitness' Personal Trainer to Watch. Her passion extends to empowering coaches and leaders to achieved levels, while inspiring those they serve.



# Meet your instructors

## Helen Vanderburg

Founder and co-owner of The ACADEMY fitness, yoga, spin studio, and author of Fusion Workouts. Helen is one of the most celebrated fitness personalities in the global fitness community today. She has been recognized numerous times as Canada's top fitness educator by CanFitPro, the largest Canadian fitness association, and is the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. She has been awarded the IDEA Program Director, Fitness Presenter of the Year, and the 2018 Global Top Industry Contributor. Helen's passion for fitness, health, and wellness has been recognized as one of Canada's most influential people and honored with the Women of Vision award. She is the recipient of many industry awards and is an elite athlete as a former World Champion Synchronized swimmer and honored member of the Sports Hall of Fame. She has educated fitness leaders globally for the past 25 years in over 25 countries. Helen is the Commercial Fitness Education Manager for Balanced Body and has consulted for international fitness companies such as NIKE, Total Gym, BOSU, Hedstrom Fitness, Schwinn Cycling, and Core Health and Fitness, to name a few.

## Jessica Power Cyr

M.Sc., B.Sc.Kin. CSEP-CEP, CSEP-CPT IE, ACSM-CEP, AFLCA Trainer, 200-YTT, FMS Level 2 Jess is a fitness and mind body coach, leading industry educator, programmer and public speaker. Jessica brings a wealth of information, charisma and personality to each session making them fun and easy to learn from. You'll never walk away bored from one of her sessions and you may learn something new or change your perspective on something old. Jess is fortunate to be working closely with industry leaders at Mount Royal University, University of Calgary, Fitness Alberta and the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology to provide you with industry trends that are safe and effective. Get ready to "Get Powered Up!" in one of Jess's sessions!

## Judy Cudrak

Judy Cudrak, B.Sc., B.Mgmt., is a YMCA Champion in Group Cycle, Aquatic Fitness, Group Cardio & Strength and Yoga. She is also a Fitness Alberta Trainer Educator in Aquatic Exercise, Group Conditioning, Group Choreography, Group Cycle and Mind Body. Judy is a Keiser National Trainer, a Fusion instructor, and a certified 200 hour registered Yoga teacher. Judy has been an exercise leader for over 40 years, and brings her passion and love for fitness and yoga to every class and course she teaches.

## Krista Popowych

Krista Popowych (B.HKin) is a globally recognized fitness expert, educator, and presenter specializing in group fitness, personal training, and program management. With a career dedicated to inspiring movement and education, Krista has traveled the world sharing her passion and expertise. She has been named IDEA Fitness Instructor of the Year and is a three-time recipient of canfitpro's Canadian Fitness Presenter of the Year award. As the author of Partner Workouts (Human Kinetics, 2022), Krista continues to contribute to the industry as the Global Director of Group Education for Keiser. Additionally, she serves as an educator for Balanced Body and the Integrated Movement Specialist program, sits on numerous boards, mentors university students in the field of kinesiology and supports numerous industry initiatives. Get ready to move and learn with Krista!

## Michelle Capicio

Michelle is a YMCA personal trainer and registered dietitian (RD). Michelle started with YMCA of Northern Alberta in 2016 teaching group fitness. After graduating from the University of Alberta, Michelle moved to Calgary to work as a personal trainer for YMCA Calgary. She has completed continuing education from Girls Gone Strong (Menopause Coach) and MedFit (Longevity Specialist & Menopause Specialist). Michelle also has background working in geriatrics/long-term care as a clinical dietitian..



# Meet your instructors

## Paul Larmer

Paul Larmer has dedicated 30 years to the study of the mind and human consciousness. Likely the only personal trainer and Metaphysical Reverend you'll ever meet, Paul has been teaching fitness, yoga and meditation for over 20 years. He was the owner and director of Home Sanctuary Natural Health Centre for 9 years (2003-2012) before he decided to take the powerful teachings of yoga and meditation into the corporate sector and devote more time to working with groups and individuals through his current wellness company, Sacred Line Spirituality. Paul also works as a consultant for LIVunltd, a national fitness consulting and management company where he specializes in the delivery of mindfulness and meditation programs for the corporate sector.

## Vandana Vora

Vandana's journey with yoga began at a very young age, inspired by her parents and guided by spiritual teachers. What started as a personal exploration has become a lifelong path of learning, teaching, and sharing. She feels deeply grateful for the opportunity to pass on the wisdom and joy that yoga offers.

After exploring various styles of yoga, Vandana found her foundation in Iyengar Yoga in 2001, practicing at Yoga Studio North. She earned her first teaching certification from the Yoga Studio College of Canada in 2009. In 2012, she became a certified Relax and Renew® Trainer under Judith Hanson Lasater. She further expanded her teaching qualifications in 2015 through the Thrive Health Services Teacher Training Program at the University of Calgary, designed to support cancer survivors.

Vandana's dedication to continued learning has led her to study with many respected teachers, including Judith Hanson Lasater, Julie Gudmestad, Jawahar Bangera, and Vic Mehta. Her deep roots in the Calgary yoga community span over two decades, teaching at

## Robin O'Grady **Keynote Speaker**

As an experienced Fitness Professional, Speaker and Consultant Robin is dedicated to delivering strategies and tools that make health and wellness achievable for everyone. She is passionate and committed to this ideal as she walks the walk every day, not only coaching her clients but showing them, it can be done. Robin is a regular presenter and educator at facilities and conference internationally and is proud to be a Certified Mindset Coach and Assistance Trainer for Fitness Alberta. In addition to owning O'Grady Consulting, Robin is a Group Fitness Instructor, Dance Instructor and Aerialist. With her contagious energy and positive outlook, Robin's sessions are always uplifting and inspiring.

Yoga Studio North and Yoga Studio South. Her offerings include classes for beginners, all levels, Restorative Yoga, Yoga Nidra, and specialized weekend workshops.

In 2019-2020, she also contributed to an academic project at the University of Calgary, assisting in the data analysis of rare Hindu and Buddhist scriptures—an experience that further deepened her appreciation for yoga's philosophical roots.

For Vandana, yoga is an evolving journey that continues to enhance her personal and professional growth. She brings a grounded, joyful, and energetic presence to her classes, encouraging students to connect deeply with body, breath, and mind.

Reflect. Refresh. Transform.  
Welcome to Vandana's yoga session.  
Namaste.

## Tessa Ethier

Tessa Ethier is a dedicated wellness guide empowering women through the perimenopausal and menopausal journey. With a B.Ed., M.Ed., a Holistic Nutrition Certificate, and certification as a Yoga Therapist, she brings a well-rounded, evidence-informed approach to midlife transitions.

Blending her love of food, nature, and yoga, Tessa offers both group and one-on-one support to help women ease midlife symptoms and embrace this phase with intention and vitality. As a passionate mother, educator, and entrepreneur, she guides others with compassion and practical strategies for a vibrant, balanced midlife.





## What to Bring

- Water Bottle
- Notebook
- Comfortable fitness attire – dress in layers!
- Swimsuit & Towel (for aquatic sessions)
- Yoga Mat (optional for your comfort)

## Lunch

Catered lunches, coffee and light snacks will be provided for conference registrants on Saturday and Sunday. We are unable to guarantee accommodation for food sensitivities and dietary preferences. Please feel free to bring your own food/snacks as required.

## Tell us about your experience!

### We want to hear from you!

Please remember to fill out the conference & session evaluation form by scanning the QR code provided to you at the end of the conference, so we know what to keep and what to improve upon next year. Your feedback matters!

## Share Your Photos with Us!

### This is what memories are made of!

Please share your photos throughout the conference by tagging us with **#YMCAFitness2025**. The best photos will be featured on our conference photo reel, social media platforms and YMCA promotional materials.





**We can't wait  
to see you!**

**Register today  
403-351-5262**

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