

NEWS RELEASE

PenFinancial Credit Union invests \$7,000 in youth-led environmental sustainability through Links for Greener Learning

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PenFinancial Credit Union is proud to announce a \$7,000 investment in Links for Greener Learning (LGL) in support of its *Niagara Green Rise: A Youth-Driven Environmental Transformation* project – Phase 2: an innovative initiative empowering newcomer youth to lead environmental change across the Niagara Region.

Through hands-on workshops focused on planting, composting, recycling, and environmental stewardship, Niagara Green Rise will engage youth in meaningful climate action while building essential life and leadership skills. The project will see the planting of thousands of fruit-bearing plants in public spaces, expansion of community gardens, and community clean-up efforts along local shorelines.

“At PenFinancial, we are committed to investing in initiatives that strengthen our communities today while

protecting them for tomorrow,” said PenFinancial CEO, Shari Sekel. “The Niagara Green Rise project reflects our deep commitment to environmental sustainability, youth empowerment, and community well-being. We’re proud to support a program that not only enhances our local environment, but also equips young people with the tools and confidence to lead lasting change.”

This initiative directly aligns with PenFinancial’s purpose pillars and supports key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-being, and No Poverty. By expanding access to community gardens and fresh, locally grown food, the project helps address food insecurity while promoting healthier lifestyles and stronger community connections.

With support from PenFinancial and other community partners, Links for Greener Learning will:

- Engage over 50 newcomer youth in environmental programming
- Deliver 10 hands-on sustainability workshops
- Plant thousands of fruit-bearing plants across Niagara
- Support youth involvement in community gardens and public clean-ups

- Foster a new generation of environmentally conscious leaders

Beyond immediate impact, the project aims to establish a long-term, youth-led environmental network and expand sustainable food systems throughout the region.

“Support from organizations like PenFinancial Credit Union allows us to create meaningful opportunities for newcomer youth to connect with their communities while making a tangible environmental impact,” said Ishag Yagoub, Environmental Program Coordinator at Links for Greener Learning. “Together, we’re building greener spaces, stronger communities, and brighter futures.”

PenFinancial Credit Union continues to invest in local initiatives that reflect its Truly Local Commitment, supporting projects that drive social, environmental, and economic impact across Niagara and Haldimand.

About PenFinancial Credit Union

PenFinancial Credit Union is a member-owned financial institution that has been dedicated to **improving lives and strengthening communities** across Niagara and Haldimand for over 60 years. Serving nearly 19,000 individual members and businesses, we offer full-service digital and in-branch banking backed by honest advice and local expertise. PenFinancial is a Living Wage employer guided by co-operative values, our deep Truly Local Commitment, and a pledge to reinvest a portion of profits to support programs and initiatives that make a meaningful difference in our community. As a values-driven alternative to traditional banks, PenFinancial is built to put people — not profits — first. Learn more at penfinancial.com.

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