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**Statement by President Rhonda L. Lenton on the passing of Ignat Kaneff**

A respected and beloved friend of York University, Ignat “Iggy” Kaneff has died at the age of 93. He was an active supporter of the University and a visionary philanthropist, contributing more than \$7.5 million in support of several signature buildings, student financial aid and areas of study at York. The positive impact he created will be long felt by future generations of students.

Dr. Kaneff truly lived his values and reflected that commitment back in his generosity – of his time, resources, and spirit. He was a proud immigrant to Canada who went on to build a real estate empire and then used his success in business to serve his community. To recognize his role in building Canadian communities, his support of access to education, and his tremendous impact on the future of legal education in Ontario and Canada, York awarded him an honorary doctorate of laws from the Osgoode Hall Law School in 2010. In appreciation for the Kaneff family’s generous support of the University, Kaneff Tower was also named in his honour in 2013.

Dr. Kaneff helped build hospitals, schools, and community centres, and his gift toward the development of York’s Lassonde School of Engineering is building new opportunities for the next generation of engineers. The elegantly renovated and expanded Ignat Kaneff Building at Osgoode Hall Law School was a \$57-million project that was jointly funded by the University, the federal and provincial governments, and through the generosity of Dr. Kaneff and other donors. He further contributed to the Osgoode Hall Law School’s Winkler Institute for Dispute Resolution.

Dr. Kaneff received the Order of Canada in 2017, a prestigious honour that recognizes “outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation.” He was, in all ways, a community builder.

Iggy Kaneff’s legacy is an extraordinary example of generosity that addresses the needs of today while building for a brighter future for everyone. His memory will live on in the many opportunities he created and the people he loved and supported. On behalf of the York University community, I extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife Didi, daughters Kristina (J.D. 2008 Osgoode Hall) and Anna-Maria.

Sincerely,



Rhonda L. Lenton, PhD  
President and Vice-Chancellor

