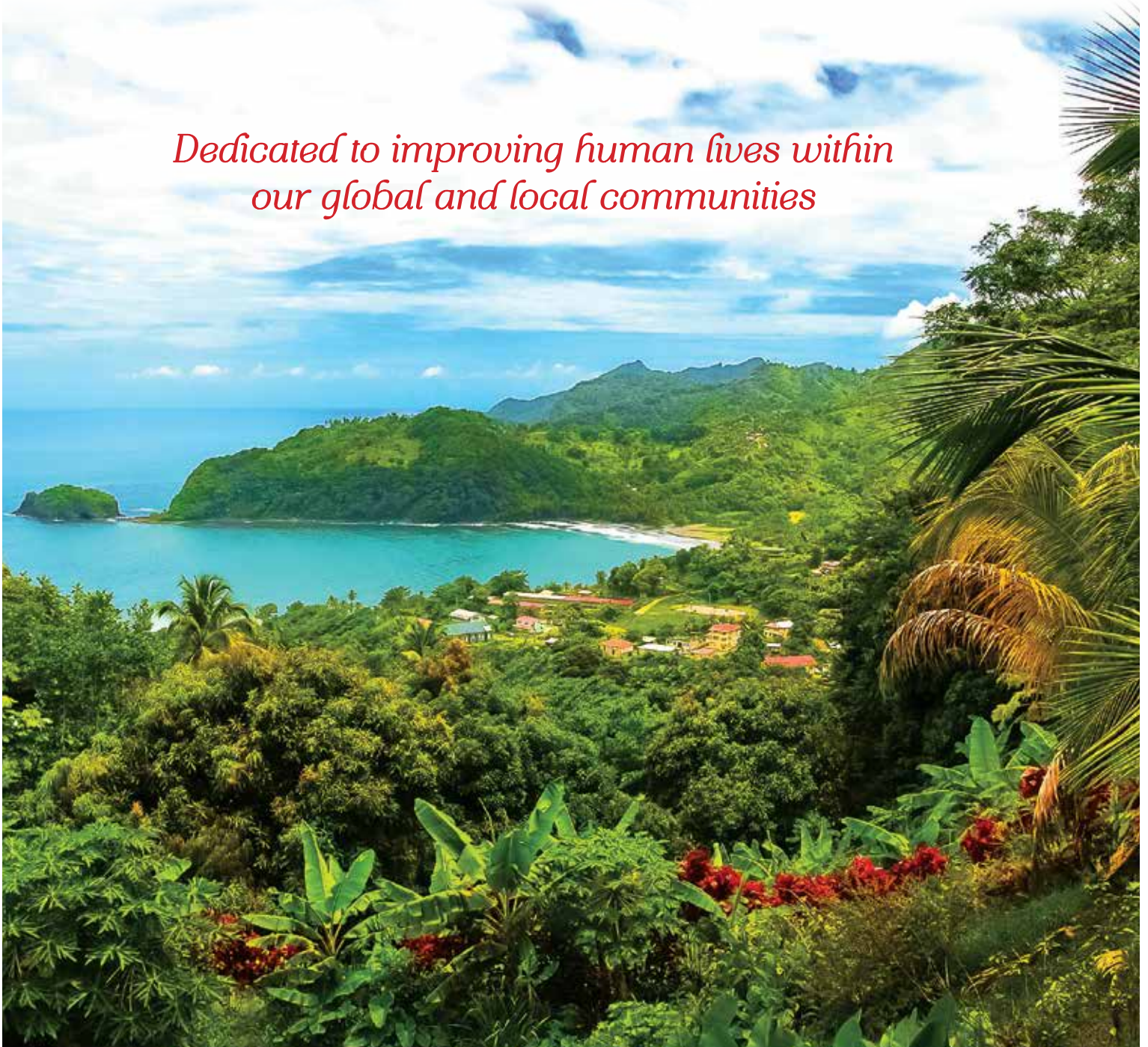


A Touch of LOVE&HOPE Foundation's

# INSPIRATION

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2017 • 2018

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VOLUME 2



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 Dominica's Trade and Investment  
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## **A Touch of LOVE & HOPE FOUNDATION'S INSPIRATION**

### **Magazine Editors:**

Geraldine, John and Sabrina Di Marco

### **Cover Design and Gala Poster:**

Christine Dewairy  
 John Albert Di Marco

### **Photos:**

Lo Specchio  
 Snapd Woodbridge  
 Panorama  
 Vaughan Citizen  
 J.D.M. Productions  
 Italiani.ca

### **Special Thanks to:**

J.D.M. Productions  
 V.J. Graphics  
 A.M Creatives

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THE GOVERNOR GENERAL · LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL



It is a pleasure to send greetings to all those supporting A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation.

I have seen first-hand how Canadians show compassion for people and passion for causes. Taken together, this generosity of spirit has an impact on our whole society and contributes to our smart and caring nation. This foundation helps to address challenging issues with creativity and collaboration, and with keener minds and kinder hearts. I thank all those involved for being there to answer the call to service, and for mobilizing to help others and to strengthen our country.

Whether it is through a gift of time, talent or funds, your collective giving moments are examples for all of us to follow.

I wish you the very best.

David Johnston

March 2017





PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

April 1, 2017

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation's fundraising gala.



Tonight you have gathered to support an organization dedicated to improving the lives of others. Funds from this year's event will help support programs for children with mental and physical disabilities in the Commonwealth of Dominica, the Alpha Centre, the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, the Mackenzie Health Foundation MRI Unit, and social services for seniors in the Greater Toronto Area.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend everyone involved in organizing this event. Your generosity and compassion exemplify what it means to be Canadian.

Please accept my best wishes for a memorable evening and for every success in meeting your fundraising goal.

Sincerely,

The Rt. Hon. Justin P.J. Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada





Government of Dominica



**Congratulatory message from**  
**Hon. Roosevelt Skerit, Prime Minister to**  
**A Touch of LOVE & HOPE FOUNDATION**

I am delighted to send you greetings and congratulations as you go to the press for publication of your magazine. I have every confidence that this publication which should reach a much wider public will go a long way in spreading knowledge and awareness of the existence of **A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation** and the extremely valuable and laudable goals you have set yourself.

I am impressed that the seed which inspired the creation of **A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation** has germinated and is showing signs of blossoming into a **trans-border** organisation committed to supporting and supplying the basic needs of those with disabilities, victims of disasters, and others who have been forced to live on the fringes of society as forgotten people.

It is my prayer and hope, that as you continue on your mission to relieve the pain and suffering being experienced by so many of our brothers and sisters, that you be strengthened by your groundings in your catholic faith and doctrine. This will be the quintessential ingredient for overcoming the challenges that will come your way as you carve out a permanent space for making the world a better place to those in need.

May your magazine be a resounding success and may the **A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation** grow, from strength to strength.

**ROOSEVELT SKERRIT**  
PRIME MINISTER



## 2017 Speranza Gala Honorary Patrons:

A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation is proud to have Deputy Mayor Michael Di Biase and Local and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati as Honorary Patrons on the Speranza 2017 Fundraising Gala.



**Michael Di Biase**  
*Deputy Mayor  
City of Vaughan*



**Gino Rosati**  
*Local and Regional Councillor  
City of Vaughan*

Michael Di Biase currently serves as Deputy Mayor and a Local and Regional Councillor. He is a graduate of York University and the University of Toronto, and has lived in Vaughan since 1977; where he and his wife, Eliana, have raised three children and grandchildren. Michael worked sixteen years as a high school teacher and has been very involved in his community as a volunteer.

Michael was elected: to Council in 1985, first elected as Local and Regional Councillor in 1988, as Mayor from 2002 to 2006, and as Deputy Mayor since 2014. Michael has diligently contributed to an impressive number of Committees, Boards, and Task Forces, representing Vaughan within the City and York Region.

Local and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati has lived in Vaughan for more than 35 years where he has raised three children and is a proud grandfather. He worked as a Bank Manager and has remained an active and constant contributor to local community initiatives and charitable organizations. Gino was first elected as School Board Trustee in 1982-1988. He was elected to Vaughan Council in 1988 as Ward 2 (Woodbridge) Local Councillor. Since 2006 he has been serving Vaughan Residents as Local and Regional Councillor; and from 2010-2014 as Deputy Mayor. Gino serves on key Committees, Boards, and Task Forces representing Vaughan within the City and York Region.

*City of Vaughan website*

# Beneficiaries

Funding support is needed in contribution towards the following charitable goals of our current beneficiaries:

## Alpha Centre



The Alpha Centre, Commonwealth of Dominica, is a school for mentally and physically challenged children. Your donations will help the children to meet their maximum potential and give them life skills and hope for a bright future. We seek to raise funds to offer annual scholarships, and to help increase the student body of the Alpha Centre.

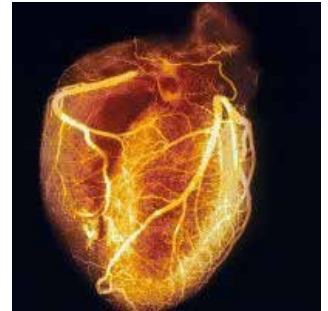
## Archdiocese of Roseau, Dominica



The Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica operates Dominica Catholic Radio; a national listener-supported radio programme reaching rural communities throughout the Commonwealth of Dominica. It is dedicated to integral human development and providing courses for adult faith formation such as Retreats and Workshops for various groups especially of the students and teachers from Catholic Schools. In 2013/14, a total of 1,400 Students and Teachers benefited from those programmes. We seek to raise funds to help keep the programmes ongoing.

## Peter Munk Cardiac Centre

Your donations support the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, Toronto General Hospital, toward the necessary development of smart technology that will reduce heart failure re-hospitalizations by identifying symptoms before they become problematic. This support will help to make Toronto and the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre an internationally-recognized and sought-after site for heart failure research and treatment. We seek to raise funds to help provide technology needed to make the goal of optimizing outcomes, improving quality of life, and reducing re-admission to hospital for patients with heart failure a reality.



## The Mackenzie Health Foundation



The Mackenzie Health Foundation installed a new 3T MRI Scanner in fall 2014, with improved imaging capabilities. The new MRI is bigger and completes scans quicker enabling professionals to perform two additional scans a day. The Mackenzie Health Foundation has achieved the highest MRI efficiency rates in the Province and the lowest wait times in the Central Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN).

On February 20, 2015, A Touch of Love and Hope proudly pledged \$10,000 to Mackenzie Health Foundation which helped to successfully achieve their \$5 million goal for the new MRI Scanner. At a ceremony held on March 27, 2015, Mackenzie Health Foundation unveiled its Donor Wall which includes, among the Donors – A Touch of Love and Hope, representing all our Patrons, Board of Directors, volunteers and members.







## 2017 President's Message:

During the 15 years I spent helping to improve Arts and Culture in York Region, I never thought of co-founding A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation. Although I remain an avid “Afezionata dell’Opera”, the tremendous satisfaction I get from the work we do at A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation surpasses my love for the Arts.

I feel great fulfillment from bringing diverse community stakeholders together to affect positive change in people’s lives. Together we are doing this by: issuing scholarships to mentally and physically challenged children at the Alpha Centre, and supporting projects of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau, both in the Commonwealth of Dominica; supporting a state of the Art MRI Scanner at the Mackenzie Health Foundation, Richmond Hill; Dr. Heather Ross’s work at the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, Toronto General Hospital, and providing Social Services for Seniors in the Greater Toronto Area.

2016 was a very exciting year for A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation. Together, we made great strides in bringing the organization forward. Among other things,

we donated \$10,000 to our beneficiaries in Dominica and the Greater Toronto Area including issuing a scholarship to a mentally and physically challenged child at the Alpha Centre, Dominica.

With the support of a grant received from the Ontario Seniors Secretariat, we produced, in association with the Vaughan Community Health Centre, a very successful Health and Wellness Fair for 150 Seniors in Vaughan. The seminar was dedicated not only to the prevention and self-management of diabetes, diet and physical fitness, but also to keep the Seniors active in their communities. Two of the Seniors who attended the Fair, went on to serve on our 2017 Gala Committee and several others joined the organization as volunteers.

A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation was approved for a second government grant, this time from Heritage Canada. These funds are directed towards a multi-cultural event, in celebration of Canada’s 150th Anniversary of Confederation. This event will be held in July in Woodbridge. I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Board of Directors and Honorary Board, to extend our gratitude to the Ontario

and Canadian Governments for placing their trust in us.

***A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation is about  
People helping people in need.***

***We believe in teamwork and collegiality of effort.***

A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation is growing. Its growth depends on the continued in-kind and financial support of its: Members, Event Attendees, Volunteers, Media, Donors, Patrons, Corporate Sponsors, and Advertisers.

Our Board of Directors, on the whole, is a very active one indeed; busy: drafting grant applications; designing artwork for our present and forthcoming events; broadening our on-line presence; bringing in donations; offering legal assistance, doing administration, accounting, promotion, and welcoming new members. We thank our Honorary Board Members: Deputy Mayor Michael Di Biase, Regional Councillors Gino Rosati and Mario Ferri of the City of Vaughan; Dominica's Trade and Investment Commissioner in Canada, Frances Delsol and Director of the Diocese of Roseau, Dominica, Msgr. William John-Lewis.

***Your donations are much appreciated. You can  
donate by cheque or paypal. We can be reached at  
905-851-4409 or atouchofloveandhope.com***

Thank you for your participation. Your contributions are very important to the success of A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation. It is your contribution, together with the partnership of many others, which will continue to help A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation achieve results that positively impact lives. It is this synergy within the community that is the backbone of our Foundation. Your support enables us to help those in need and share our blessings.

***Thank you for being part of our team.  
Together, we can make it happen!***



*Geraldine Di Marco*

**Geraldine Di Marco**  
*President & Co-Founder*

# Doing good is in our DNA.

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where it matters, right here in our community.

Proud to support a Touch of Love and Hope Foundation.

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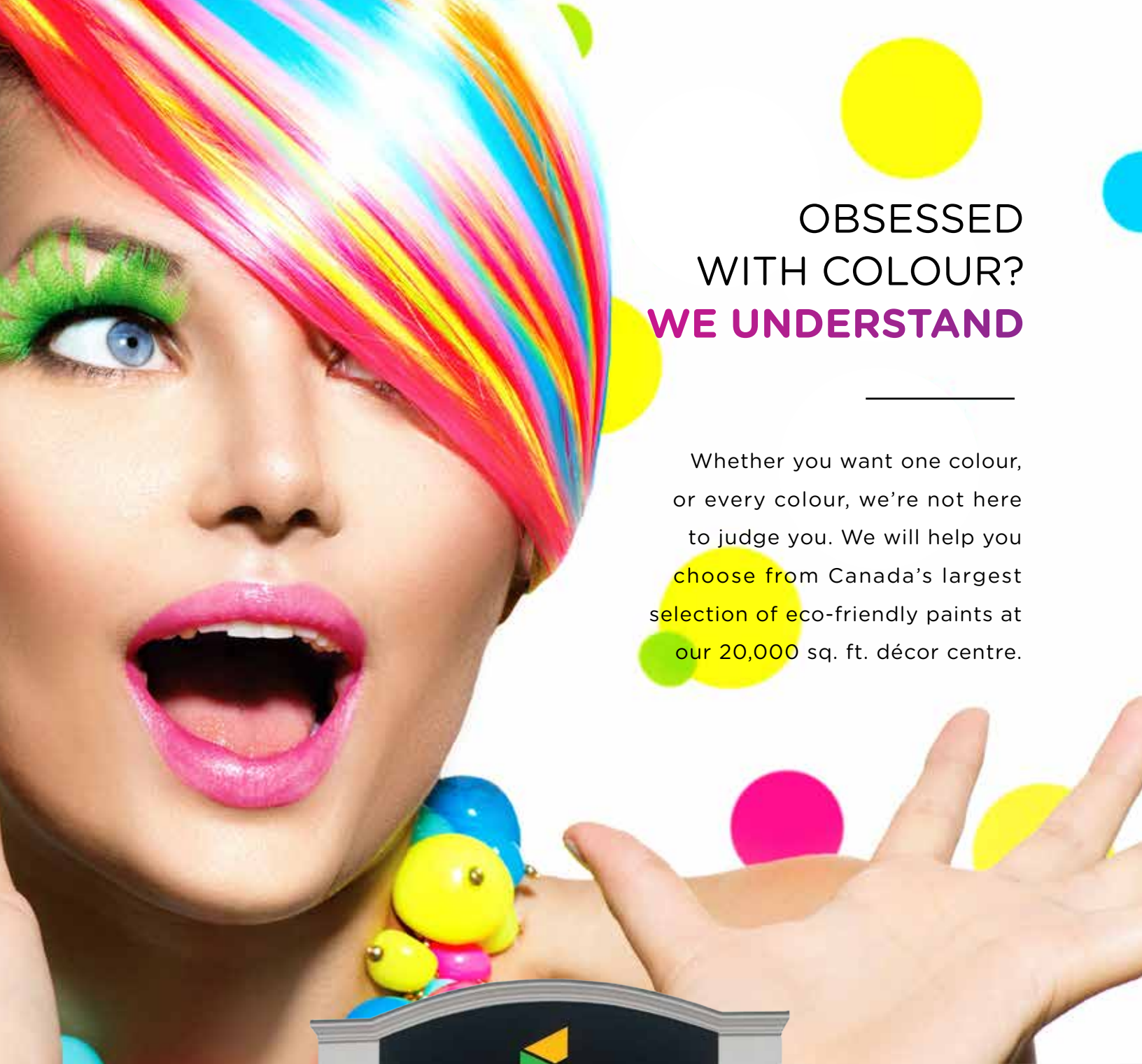


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# Greetings



Dear Friends,

As the Member of Parliament for Vaughan-Woodbridge, I would like to extend my thanks to the President and co-founder of the A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation, Ms. Geraldine Di Marco, as well as the Foundation's Board of Directors and Honorary Board for inviting me to their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala. The proceeds from tonight's event will go to support the Alpha Centre programmes, the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, the Mackenzie Health Foundation MRI Unit and Social Services for Seniors in the GTA. I am proud to recognize the incredible efforts of the charitable organization in providing financial support for the health and well-being of those it serves.

Ms. Di Marco co-founded the A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation with her husband, John Di Marco, to carry on her tradition of devoting her life to others through assisting children with mental and physical disabilities, as well as their communities, in developing countries. And from the moment it was founded, A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation has been making a meaningful impact. For example, in 2016, the Foundation proudly pledged \$10,000 to Mackenzie Health Foundation in Richmond Hill in realizing its goal in achieving a \$5 million MRI scanner.

Tonight's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala taking place on April 1, 2017 at the Riviera Parquet Dining Banquet and Convention Centre is raising funds to assist four important programmes, specifically: the Alpha Centre, a school for mentally and physically challenged children and Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau programmes in the Commonwealth of Dominica; Toronto's Peter Munk Cardiac Centre in support of its technologies aimed to reduce heart failures and re-hospitalizations; the Mackenzie Health Foundation MRI Unit; and Social Services for Seniors in the GTA to assist in service provision.

I would like to express my gratitude to Ms. Di Marco, the Foundation's Board and all those who support the Touch of Love and Hope Foundation in enriching the lives and health outcomes of children with disabilities in developing countries, patients in need of further supports and seniors living in our community.

I wish the Foundation and all its supporters the very best for a successful Gala.

*Francesco Sorbara*

Francesco Sorbara, M.P.  
Vaughan-Woodbridge



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**Deb Schulte**

Member of Parliament / députée – King-Vaughan

Thank You for Supporting  
A Touch of Love  
& Hope Foundation

As the Member of Parliament for King-Vaughan, I am pleased to extend greetings to everyone attending the Foundation's 2017 Fundraising Gala.

A Touch of Love & Hope Foundation continues to inspire through its critical work, providing funding for children faced with physical and mental challenges, and helping to fund advancements in health care and social services for seniors.

Through its contributions to the Alpha Centre, located in Dominica, its contributions toward improved MRI technology through the Mackenzie Health Foundation, and the life-saving work of Dr. Heather Ross, at Toronto's Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, A Touch of Love & Hope stays true to its name.

I am grateful to have such a dedicated organization based in our community and I applaud all the contributions of those involved with A Touch of Love & Hope.

Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable and successful evening.

Sincerely,

*Deb*

Deb Schulte, MP  
King-Vaughan

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Ottawa Office	804 Justice Bldg., Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6	Tel: 613.992.1461	Fax: 613.992.1470



# Greetings



Premier of Ontario - Première ministre de l'Ontario

April 1, 2017

## A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, I am delighted to extend warm greetings to the readers of *Inspiration* magazine, which is published by A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation.

I commend the foundation for its dedication to raising funds in support of programs and services related to education, health care and community living in Canada and around the world.

I am very pleased that the funds raised at this year's Speranza gala will help to support the Alpha Centre in Dominica; as well as the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, the Mackenzie Health Foundation MRI Unit, and social services for senior citizens in the Greater Toronto Area.

I want to thank all those who lent their time and energy to the success of the Speranza gala. I also want to thank the foundation's supporters for their generous support of its important work.

Please accept my best wishes for much continued fulfilment and success.

**Kathleen Wynne**  
Premier



**LAURA ALBANESE, MPP**  
York South-Weston



April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

As the Member of Provincial Parliament for York South-Weston and on behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, I am very pleased to congratulate A Touch of Love & Hope Foundation on the success of their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala Speranza.

I commend everyone attending for their support and their generosity, which will benefit worthwhile initiatives both locally and abroad.

The funds that are being raised this evening will indeed continue to make a difference in the lives of children with mental and physical disabilities at the Alpha Centre in the Commonwealth of Dominica. As well, a portion of the proceeds will support the Mackenzie Health Foundation in Vaughan and the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre in Toronto.

Please accept my best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

  
**Laura Albanese, MPP**  
York South-Weston

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# Greetings



**STEVEN DEL DUCA, MPP**  
Vaughan



April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate A Touch of Love and Hope on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Speranza Fundraising Gala.

With the support and generosity of those in attendance, funds raised tonight will go to benefit the Alpha Centre, a school for mentally and physically challenged children, the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, the Mackenzie Health Foundation MRI Unit, as well as support for Social Services for Seniors in the GTA.

As the MPP of Vaughan, it brings me great pleasure to see the community come together in support of all of these organizations and I commend Geraldine and John Di Marco on your ongoing commitment and dedication to these worthy causes.

Wishing everyone an enjoyable evening,

Hon. Steven Del Duca, MPP  
Vaughan

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@StevenDelDuca | Facebook.com/StevenDelDucaMPP  
www.stevendelduca.onmpp.ca



**Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua, PC**  
Mayor



## Thank You For Supporting A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation

April 1, 2017

On behalf of the City of Vaughan, I am pleased to extend greetings to everyone attending A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation Gala.

A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation, established by Geraldine and John Di Marco, is dedicated to improving lives here at home and around the world. With your support, proceeds raised at this event will be directed to the Alpha Centre, a school dedicated to teaching life skills to children with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Dominica, as well as the Mackenzie Health Foundation and the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre at Toronto General Hospital.

I would like to congratulate the organizers and volunteers who have dedicated their time and energy to make this event a success. To everyone here tonight, thank you for your generous contribution to these worthy causes. You can take pride in knowing that, by working together, you are creating a better future for everyone.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful and enjoyable event.

Yours sincerely,

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua, PC  
Mayor



# Greetings



**Frank Scarpitti**  
Mayor

April 1, 2017

## MESSAGE FROM MAYOR SCARPITTI

On behalf of Members of Council and the City of Markham, I am pleased to extend a warm welcome to all those attending the "Speranza – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala" organized by the A Touch of Love & Hope Foundation.

Our community is immeasurably enriched by the diversity of its people and by the special gifts of heritage and culture we each carry within. The Touch of Love & Hope Foundation, has been serving the Greater Toronto Area for the last couple of years and our community is grateful for the work they are performing. The A Touch of Love & Hope Foundation is a reflection of Canadian values of giving back to the community and helping all those in need.

I commend the Foundation for the commitment to assist people with disabilities and those in need with social, health care and supportive services to enable them to live an independent lifestyle in the community. I also commend the Foundation for supporting the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre and the Mackenzie Health Foundation MRI Unit by donating the proceeds to the improvement of patient healthcare through more advanced technological equipments. I recognize the efforts of your Foundation, volunteers and employees, who work tirelessly to provide assistance by working together for the betterment of our community.

I take this opportunity to extend a special thank you to the Foundation for all your hard work and fundraising efforts to support local charitable organizations and for making this event possible.

Best wishes for a joyful evening and successful event.

Sincerely,

Frank Scarpitti  
Mayor



The Corporation of the City of Markham, Anthony Roman Centre, 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Markham, Ontario L3R 9W3  
Tel: 905.475.4872 Fax: 905.479.7775 • [fscarpitti@markham.ca](mailto:fscarpitti@markham.ca) • [www.markham.ca](http://www.markham.ca)



**Michael Di Biase**, B.A., B.Ed.  
Regional and Local Councillor  
Deputy Mayor

April 1, 2017

## A MESSAGE FROM DEPUTY MAYOR AND REGIONAL COUNCILLOR MICHAEL DI BIASE

It is my pleasure to extend greetings to everyone present this evening, attending the second "A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation" Fundraising Gala "Speranza". I am privileged to be both, an Honorary Member of the Board of Directors and a Patron of the Gala of this incredible organization.

This special event provides an opportunity to support local and international health and educational initiatives. Founded in 2014 by an amazing and hardworking couple, Geraldine and John Di Marco, A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation is dedicated to supporting programs for mentally and physically challenged children in developing countries, as well as, helping to make their local communities a better place in which to live.

Proceeds from this event will go to support the Alpha Centre, a school and projects operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau, in the Commonwealth of Dominica. Here at home, proceeds will benefit the Mackenzie Health Foundation, the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre of Toronto General Hospital, and Social Services for Seniors. The City of Vaughan, an inclusive community, is privileged to have this organization.

A big "Thank You" to the Board of Directors, volunteers and organizing committee for your hard work and dedication towards such a worthy cause.

Please accept my very best wishes for a successful, enjoyable and memorable event.

Sincerely,

Michael Di Biase  
Deputy Mayor/Regional Councillor  
City of Vaughan

City of Vaughan, 2141 Major Mackenzie Dr., Vaughan, ON L6A 1T1  
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[vaughan.ca](http://vaughan.ca) • [michael.dibiase@vaughan.ca](mailto:michael.dibiase@vaughan.ca)

# Greetings



April 1, 2017

***A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation  
Speranza  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala***

As an Honorary Board Member, it is my pleasure to extend greetings to all those attending *Speranza*, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala organized by a Touch of Love and Hope Foundation.

I would like to acknowledge and commend the founders of this organization, Geraldine and John Di Marco, along with the Board of Directors, Volunteers, and Organizing Committee for their dedication and hard work.

A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation contributes to the charitable goals of various groups, including: the Alpha Centre and programmes operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau in the Commonwealth of Dominica, Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, and the Mackenzie Health Foundation. Their enthusiasm and efforts span great lengths, and provide great assistance to these beneficiaries.

Thank you to all that have come out this evening, and best wishes for a successful, most memorable and enjoyable event.

Yours truly,

Gino Rosati  
Local and Regional Councillor

City of Vaughan, 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Vaughan ON L6A 1T1 Tel. 905-832-8585 [www.vaughan.ca](http://www.vaughan.ca)



Mario F. Ferri M.E.S.  
LOCAL & REGIONAL COUNCILLOR

April 1, 2017

***Congratulations  
on your 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala***

I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the organizers and volunteers of A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation on your 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala.

The charitable work of your organization to assist those less fortunate, especially children with mental and physical disabilities, is commendable.

A special note of gratitude is also extended to the guests attending this event in support of this worthy cause.

Best wishes for an enjoyable and successful evening.

Respectfully,

Mario F. Ferri, M.E.S.  
Local & Regional Councillor

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# Greetings



**Tony Carella, FRSA**  
Councillor – Ward 2/Woodbridge West

Congratulations  
to the  
*A Touch of Love & Hope Foundation*  
on the occasion of the  
*Second Annual Speranza Fundraising Gala*  
in aid of worthy causes in Vaughan, Toronto,  
the Greater Toronto Area, and the  
Commonwealth of Dominica



Trade & Investment Commission for The Commonwealth of Dominica, in Canada  
Trade Investment & Tourism



A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation  
Mrs. Geraldine DiMarco, President

Good Evening,

It is my esteemed pleasure to extend greetings and a warm Caribbean welcome to everyone attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual *SPERANZA - A Touch of Love and Hope* Gala, and my personal welcome to all guests whose contribution tonight, will make a significant difference in the lives of the less fortunate on our island.

*A Touch of Love and Hope* provides much-needed support and awareness to those who can be so easily forgotten because their voices are muted, sometimes by birth and just sometimes because they cannot find a champion, like tonight's hosts. A Touch of Love and Hope has made its mark in our community, not just in hosting fundraising efforts for those far and near, but by recognizing the most vulnerable in our community, our seniors, and helping improve their lives through wellness fairs.

Tonight's event is a significant step forward in changing lives and on behalf of the Government and people of the Commonwealth of Dominica, The Nature Island, please accept our best wishes for a truly informative and enjoyable evening.

Warmest regards,

Frances DelSol  
Commissioner

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# Greetings



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Good Evening Patrons and Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome everyone tonight to the Second Annual "A Touch of Love and Hope" Fundraising Gala.

Congratulations to Geraldine and John Di Marco, Founders of *A Touch of Love and Hope* and all those responsible for this great humanitarian effort. Thank you for dedicating your kind efforts towards improving the lives of the less fortunate, both locally and internationally. Your cause continues to provide much needed support to the mentally and physically challenged children in the Commonwealth of Dominica.

I am inspired everyday by your passion, love and dedication for humanity.

On behalf of the entire Commonwealth of Dominica community here in the Greater Toronto Area, we extend sincere congratulations to you, the Board of Directors, Volunteers, Friends and Patrons for yet another successful event tonight.

Warmest Regards,

Hetty Lawrence

President

# Thanks to our Gala Committee

## 2017 Gala Committee Members:

Geraldine Di Marco – Chair

Claire Del Monte

Donna Leone

Elena Zeppieri

Eliana Di Biase

Joanna Guido

John Di Marco

Ken Lacivita

Lisa Ventura

Mike Tibollo

Rose Micallef-Lacivita

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# DOMINICA CORNER



## Commonwealth of Dominica

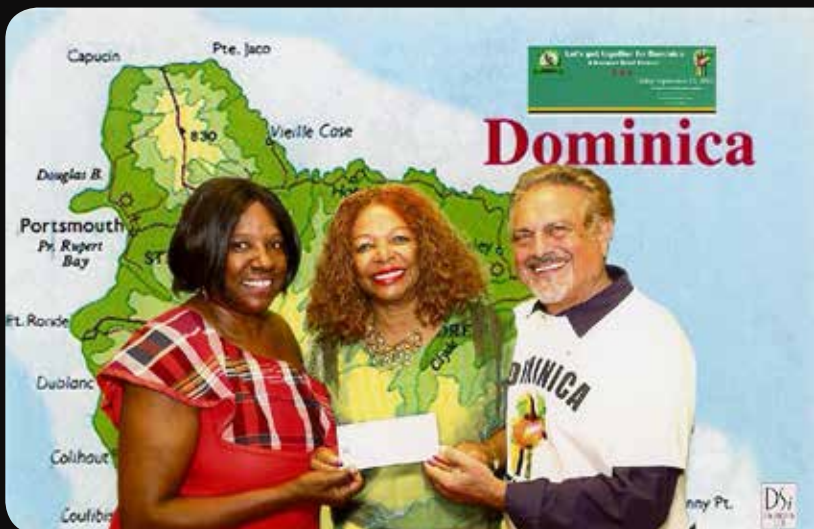
Known as the "Nature Isle" for its lush bounty, Dominica is a mountainous island in the Windward archipelago of the Caribbean Sea. It boasts complex rainforests, 365 rivers, healing sulfur springs, a boiling lake and beauties such as the Emerald Pool and Trafalgar Falls. Dominica is strengthened by the roots of its Aboriginal Caribs, warriors in canoes, who today are protected with the only remaining Carib Territory.

Dominicans are: proud, generous, family-oriented, faith-loving, fun-loving, and independent people. Its people are ambitious and committed to continually improving themselves.

On November 3, 1493, Christopher Columbus named the Island after the day of the week on which he spotted it – a Sunday (Dominica in Latin). It has been independent from Great Britain since 1978 and unofficially speaks Creole (French patois). Its mix of English, French, African, and Carib influences are visible in its people, government, and architecture; as well as its culture, music, and celebrations such as Carnival and the World Creole Music Festival.



(L to R): Former Chief Armand La Barge, Geraldine Di Marco, The Honourable, Roosevelt Skerit, Prime Minister of Dominica, Mrs. La Barge and John Di Marco at a CDOA gala.



Geraldine and John Di Marco presenting a cheque on behalf of A Touch of Love and Hope to Frances Delsol, Dominica's Trade and Investment Commissioner in Canada, in aid of the Tropical Storm Erika Relief Efforts for Dominica.



Dominicans in traditional dress and Italian military Representatives at a fundraiser, hosted by Sabrina Di Marco (Multiculturalism Around the World) for the 2009 Abruzzo, Italy Earthquake.



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# Highlights





# of the Gala





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April 1, 2017

Dear friends,

On behalf of Mackenzie Health Foundation, it is my pleasure to welcome you to A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation's second annual Speranza Gala.

Our patients are truly benefitting from your generosity tonight. Part of tonight's proceeds will support A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation's pledge to Mackenzie Health Foundation's Picture This campaign for a new and technologically advanced Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanner at Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital. The new MRI was installed early last year and is continuing to make a world of difference for patients requiring advanced diagnostic imaging for a multitude of conditions. Mackenzie Health's vision for enhanced medical imaging capabilities is a reality at Mackenzie Health thanks to our generous community.

Momentum continues to build for our \$250-million Exceptional Care Belongs Here campaign – the largest community hospital campaign in Canada – to raise the community portion of building and equipping Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital, as well as enhance care at a vibrant Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital over the next few years.

In October, we celebrated the official groundbreaking for Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital. Construction is now underway for Canada's first smart hospital! We thank our truly generous donors for their part in this exciting milestone and for believing that exceptional care belongs here.

Thank you to A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation for sharing this wonderful gala with Mackenzie Health. Your support is helping to ensure our community has access to a world-class health experience close to home. We wish you all a memorable evening.

With sincere appreciation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ingrid Perry".

Ingrid Perry  
President & CEO  
Mackenzie Health Foundation





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HOPE**  
FOUNDATION

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to fund a new MRI*



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Frank S. Pagliaro  
Gerry Silva  
Mario Volpentesta  
Michele and (Late) Candida Consiglio  
Peter Tymosko  
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## Adriatic Level:

Anna Mascitelli  
Annamarie Castrilli  
Antonio and Josie Leonzio  
Celestino Natale  
Concetta Morello  
David and Petrolina Jerome  
David Wong  
Diana Bell  
Fiore and Annunziata Paniccia  
Gianni and Emilia Fiorillo  
Gino and Orsola Capogna  
Giovanni Pronio  
Ida Spizzirri

Joe Lancione  
John and Geraldine Di Marco  
Josephine Roberts  
Laura Albanese Politi  
Laura Pronio  
Maria Petrielli  
Mario Ferri  
David and Petrolina Gerome  
Raffaele Lisi  
Roberto Bandiera  
Sabrina Di Marco  
Tony Carella

## Caribbean Level:

Ainsley Blair  
Amabel Hawkins Watson  
Ana Maria Magaches  
Barbara Johnne  
Christina Ianni  
Christine Dewairy  
Clare Del Monte  
Concetta Pacione  
Connie Whittaker  
Cosimo Papa  
Dino and Rosanna Morante

Editha Christie  
Elena Zeppieri  
Fiore Vitale  
Frances Delsol  
Francie and Paolo Bianchi  
Frank Ianni  
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Gino Rosati  
Giovanni and Susan Palmieri  
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John Albert Di Marco  
Marcella Dib  
Maria Galea  
Mena Conte  
Michael and Eliana Di Biase  
Michael Tibollo  
Nalda Douglas  
Nathalie Iaboni  
Nathalie Williams

Pino Correale  
Rosa Franchino  
Sam and Donna Leone  
Sylvian Letham  
Tarquinio Di Marco  
Teresa Cicchini  
Theresa Logan  
Tony Lancione  
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**Michael Di Biase, B.A., B.Ed.**  
Regional and Local Councillor  
Deputy Mayor

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# Thank you to our Volunteers:

Ainsley Blair  
Aldo Cavaliere  
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Amanda Piazza  
Clare Del Monte  
Cocoa Bell  
Concetta Morello  
David Wong  
Diana Bell  
Donna Leone  
Franca Romano  
Frank Giustini  
Hetty Lawrence  
Jackie Tavernier  
Jackie Wong  
Joanna Guido  
Joanna Rosa  
Joe Barba  
Josephine Roberts

Ken Lacivita  
Knight of Columbus, Council #13164  
Lina Cavaliere  
Luciano Giustini  
Marcella Dib  
Nadia Bellini  
Nathalie Williams  
Paula Delsol  
Rita Trimboli  
Rose Micallef-Lacivita  
Sam Leone  
Sara Schiavello  
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A circular collage of various Toronto skyscrapers at night, with lights glowing. The CN Tower is prominent on the left side of the circle.

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Director, Ted Rogers Centre of Excellence in Heart Function  
Peter Munk Cardiac Centre  
Professor of Medicine  
Medical Director of Cardiac Transplant Program  
Past President Canadian Cardiovascular Society

April 1, 2017

It is with sincere pleasure that I welcome you to the annual A Touch of LOVE & HOPE Fundraising Gala, INSPIRATION! The Peter Munk Cardiac Centre is honoured to once again be one of the benefactors of this wonderful event. It is wonderful to see this Gala continue its momentum, truly magical.

The Peter Munk Cardiac Centre (PMCC) has brought together the world's best and brightest to help in our mission to reduce the impact of heart failure. We continue to recruit the best talent and train the next generation of heart failure experts. Our trainees come from around the globe to learn the cutting edge management of heart failure. Once they have completed their fellowships they go back to their home countries, including this year alone Brazil, Argentina, Australia, the US and of course Canada.

We continue to work tirelessly in our efforts to combat this devastating and potentially life altering disease. Our achievements would be not possible without philanthropy so thank you for fueling this life-saving work. Your support allows our program to enhance patient care, educate the next generation of heart failure specialists and remain world leaders in heart failure.

I am so sorry that I am not able to attend and bear witness to such a wonderful evening. A special call-out to Geraldine DiMarco. You are an inspiration in your continuing dedicated efforts. Lastly, a thank you to the patrons, Board of Directors, volunteers and friends of A Touch of LOVE & HOPE who have once again made this evening a wonderful success!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Ross'.

Heather Ross MD, MHSc, FRCPC, FACC  
Ted Rogers and Family Chair in Heart Function  
Director of Ted Rogers Centre of Excellence in Heart Function  
Site Lead – Ted Rogers Centre for Heart Research  
Peter Munk Cardiac Centre

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**Mario F. Ferri**  
Local and Regional Councillor

*Congratulations*  
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**Fundraising Gala**

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# Health and Wellness





# Wellness Fair





# From the V.P.'s Desk.....

Welcome to Inspiration vol.2 by A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation. In 2016 we strengthened our governance and registered as a foundation. The new Foundation has been extremely active under the charismatic leadership of its President Geraldine Di Marco. At our first fundraising gala, nearly 300 members and friends enjoyed a culturally rich night of: great food, a silent auction, a raffle, an operatic performance, and a performance by the famous Ballet Creole; everyone grooved to the Caribbean sounds of The Ramblers. Over 2,000 copies of Inspiration vol.1 were published and distributed throughout the GTA and beyond. In spring of 2016 the organization was proud to make its first financial contribution of \$10,000 to our beneficiaries.



We went on to apply for and implement a 55 Plus Health and Wellness Fair. As part of the government's accountability, a third party monitor was engaged to assess the results achieved from this event. Impact from the 55 Plus Health and Wellness Fair was evidenced in the Report that noted, "the most immediate improvements participants were able to implement in the first two months (after the event) centered on increasing levels of activity in and around their own home. In addition, dietary improvements, such as cooking with less oil or reducing servings of bread on the dinner table, were widely accepted changes amongst their family members." The Executive Summary of this Report will be available on [atouchofloveandhope.com](http://atouchofloveandhope.com).

Our second grant submission was also successful. In July 2017 we will host a free, public, multicultural event in Celebration of Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Confederation! Diverse sectors of the community will come together for this outdoor day-long celebration of our Canadian reality. Looking forward, A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation will continue to: grow our membership, pursue government funding, and implement a corporate sponsorship campaign.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the vision and the selfless dedication of the Founders; and in particular the gracious duty with which Geraldine Di Marco directs the Organization toward the mission of A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation. For years, Geraldine and John Di Marco have put community service above personal leisure, and have brought together: friends, neighbours, businesses, media, and community leaders in joyous and memorable moments resulting in the improvement of lives at home and internationally. The manifestation of their vision is only possible with the support and generosity that you, as members, sponsors, and friends have proven time and again. Thank you.

Funds sent to the children at the Alpha Centre and the Roman Catholic Diocese, both in Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica, are cherished. Both work hard to efficiently use funds to help people make better lives for themselves. Contributions to the Mackenzie Health Foundation for a larger MRI will serve more of us faster. Support to vital heart failure research at the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, Toronto General Hospital, helps patients live better, longer; bringing immeasurable value to whole families.

I thank you all and I appreciate the blessings of our community support for this cause. You make this possible and your efforts do change lives.

Miigwetch, Thank you, Merci, e Grazie a tutti!



*Sabrina Di Marco*

**Sabrina Di Marco, MBA**

*Vice-President*

*A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation*

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## About Speranza 2017

The theme of the 2017 Touch of Love and Hope Foundation Fundraising Gala was **LOVE**. We celebrated **LOVE** in many forms, including: romantic love, love of self, and love of family. **LOVE** is that feeling within us, one that despite generations of poets cannot be fully described. It is not tangible. It is not matter. It is action. It is deeper and lasts longer than even the breathe of life. The theme of our second fundraising gala was **LOVE**. We came together to raise money and show our love to our community by way of health care resources and sent our love to mentally and physically challenged children and the work of the Roman Catholic Diocese in Dominica.

Participants enjoyed an eventful and glorious evening at the Riviera Parque in the City of Vaughan. The evening began with a welcome address by John Di Marco, followed by National Anthems and famous Arias by Tenor Michael Nasato. A Silent Auction, Raffle, and a 50/50 Lottery were held to support A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation in bringing people together to improve human lives within our global and local communities.

Geraldine Di Marco officially thanked the Ontario and Canadian Governments for two grants the Organization received in 2016/17; during an Awards Presentation, with the assistance of Co-Founder, John Di Marco; Deputy Mayor of the City of Vaughan, Michael Di Biase; and Regional Councillor of the City of Vaughan, Gino Rosati; Geraldine recognized and thanked three Corporate Sponsors: CIBC, Platinum Sponsor; Beaver Valley Stone, Platinum Sponsor; and Toro Aluminum, Silver Sponsor; and two long-time Benefactors: Lady York Foods and BBM Excavating; as well as recognition to the Gala Patrons. Geraldine then went on to report the achievements and direction of A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation's growth. The organization is growing, and that growth is only possible due to the moral, in-kind, and financial support of all of you.

Las Vegas Show Girls entertained attendees during the traditional Italian dinner. Guests danced the night away to the famous Tony Silvani Band. Among the distinguished guests were: MP for Vaughan-Woodbridge, Francesco Sorbara; MP for King-Vaughan, Deb Schulte; Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, the Honourable Ahmed Hussen; Ontario Minister of Transportation, the Honourable Steven Del Duca; Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Honourable Laura Albanese; Deputy Mayor, City of Vaughan, Michal Di Biase; Regional Councillor; City of Vaughan, Gino Rosati; His Excellency Vince Henderson Ambassador for the Commonwealth of Dominica to the United States of America; Trade and Investment Commissioner for Dominica, Frances Delsol; and Senior Major Gifts Officer Mackenzie Health Foundation, Tammy Bucci.

A Touch of Love and Hope  
*Speranza*  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala



**Gino Rosati**  
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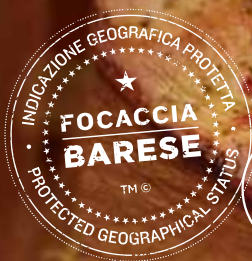
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# Loyal Volunteers



## Josephine Roberts

I volunteer with A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation to help alleviate physical, spiritual, and mental needs locally and in my home country of Dominica.

My interest in volunteer work originated from my participation in Youth groups such as: Young Christian Workers, 4H Club, and High School Credit Union in Dominica. In Toronto, over 40 years, I have volunteered with the: Legion of Mary/St. Peter's Church, the CDOA, Opera York, and the Toronto Public Library's Lead to READ School Program (grades 1-6).

As a retired Social Worker I can personally attest to the positive influence that can be achieved from the dedication and commitment of people who care to serve others. Volunteers offer a unique role in our society.

A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation is very dear to my heart for its Inspiring and uplifting concepts. It provides stimulating and educational guidance to its members and non members. I am pleased to contribute to this work and its fundraising initiatives for beneficiaries here at home and back home.



## Rose Micallef-Lacivita

I volunteer with A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation for many reasons. I support the work of my dear friends, the organization's founders. It provides me an opportunity to give back. I have been fortunate in my life; far too many in the world have very little.

I have a history of volunteering. When my children were younger I was active within their schools helping with Food Bank drives, clothing drives, and fundraising. While working in the power industry I had the opportunity, as a Seconded Employee, to volunteer for 12 weeks at the United Way. For many years I served on the Board of Directors of St. Gabriel the Archangel Child Care Centre. For over 20 years, the local Food Bank has been the beneficiary of my annual Christmas Cookie Exchanges.

My contribution to A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation gives me great satisfaction; to be able to help my community and people in need. In addition, my experiences with A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation have honed my capacity to notice and benefit from opportunities in my daily life where I can bring people and resources together for a good cause.



## Ken Lacivita

I was attracted to the idea of helping others and was further Inspired to volunteer with A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation to support my neighbour's initiative. I have worked as an Engineer in the energy sector for decades. I had long seen myself, not so much as a giver of time, but a giver of funds. I am an avid curler and am active with my curling club where weekly I share my: time, skill, and passion for this sport with young people facing difficult physical challenges. They call themselves, "Special Olympics Athletes." With a Touch of Love and Hope Foundation I have contributed to the organization and operations of many events and have gained great satisfaction helping my community and people in need with my volunteer efforts. A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation is an important way in which I use my advantages to help my community and make a better world.





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# Geraldine and John Di Marco

## Founders



Geraldine and John Di Marco founded A Touch of Love and Hope in 2014. The organization is dedicated to improving human lives within our global and local communities.

For 15 years Geraldine and John Di Marco enriched York Region's Arts and Culture organizations with leadership, directorship, and major contributions to organizational growth. The opera is their passion. However, upon recognizing the dire need for support to children suffering from mental and physical challenges in Geraldine's home island of the Commonwealth of Dominica; Geraldine and John were inspired to direct their philanthropic work towards helping the individual lives of these children as well as needed Healthcare Centres in the Greater Toronto Area.

A Touch of Love and Hope is operated by a dedicated and loyal Board of Directors with the support of an Honorary Board, Patrons, Members and Volunteers who take pride in supporting those in need, as well as helping to make their own local communities a better place in which to live.





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**EMAIL: [alpha.centre@hotmail.com](mailto:alpha.centre@hotmail.com)**



The ALPHA Centre is particularly honoured to be associated with A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation and forwards greetings on the occasion of its Gala.

The Centre has been fortunate to benefit from the Foundation's generous donations and has utilized these resources to strengthen and expand its life skills programmes in woodwork and sewing. These programmes provide the students with marketable skills which they can utilize to generate income following their graduation from the Centre and thereby live independently.

This partnership between the ALPHA Centre and A Touch of Love and Hope has resulted in greater confidence that the skills programme of the Centre can be sustained into the future with hope of a better future for our students.

Congratulations to A Touch of Love and Hope on another successful year of operation and our sincerest wishes for an increasingly productive future.

**CLAUDIA BELLOT**

**CHAIRPERSON**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

**A Touch of Love and Hope is dedicated to improving human lives within our global and local communities. It fundraises for programming to support mentally and physically challenged children in the Commonwealth of Dominica; as well as to support local health care resources in the greater Toronto Area.**

---



*150 Seniors participated in A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation's 55 Plus Health and Wellness Fair, 2016,  
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