

A Touch of LOVE & HOPE'S
INSPIRATION

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2015 • 2016

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VOLUME 1



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See Highlights of the Launch on Centre Pages

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Frances Delsol

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Commissioner in Canada

A Touch of LOVE & HOPE'S INSPIRATION

Magazine Editors:

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Christine Dewairy

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Snapd Woodbridge

Panorama

Vaughan Citizen

J.D.M. Productions

Special Thanks to:

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President's Message



The foundations of every Non-Profit Organization are the patrons and volunteers who support the mission. A Touch of Love and Hope has been blessed with a dedicated Board of Directors, Honorary Board and members of the community who donate their time, energy and resources towards our mission. A Touch of Love and Hope is dedicated to improving human lives nationally and internationally.

It is with much pride and felicitations that I welcome you to our new publication, *INSPIRATION* for A Touch of Love and Hope; celebrating our recent achievements, upcoming events and future goals.

As an avid volunteer, I derive satisfaction from helping others. I began volunteering with the Spastics Society in London, England while studying Business Administration and Public Relations. The Spastics Society is a charitable organization that is dedicated to

enabling opportunities for disabled people. I wrote correspondence and Thank-You letters to donors that were signed personally by Actor/Singers Dame Vera Lynn and Sir Harry Secombe. The organization's patrons included Prince Phillip and Princess Marina, the Duchess of Kent.

More recently I have volunteered for 10 years with the Toronto Board of Education/Toronto Public Libraries in the Leading to Reading Programme, where I helped children improve their reading skills. For 11 years, I served as a Property Standards Committee Member at the City of Vaughan, and 15 years combined with Opera York and Opera Belcanto of York as a member of the Board of Directors.

In the summer of 2014, I decided, together with my husband, John Di Marco, to launch a Touch of Love and Hope: an organization that benefits my home Island, the Commonwealth of Dominica as well as Health Care resources in the Greater Toronto Area. With the support of our generous benefactors, the organization was officially launched in the winter of 2014, with an overwhelming number of patrons, friends and members of the media, to whom I would like to express our sincere thanks.

I would like to make special mention of our Honorary Board Members and thank them for their support: Deputy Mayor Michael Di Biase, Regional Councillor Mario Ferri, and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati of the City of Vaughan; Director of the Diocese of Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica, Msgr. William John-Lewis; and Dominica's Trade and Investment Commissioner in Canada, Frances Delsol.

In 2015, A Touch of Love and Hope participated in a number of Community Events including The Feast of the Assumption at the Immaculate Conception Church, Vaughan; and the Tropical Storm Erika Relief Efforts for Dominica. In collaboration with local residents, we celebrated the 30th Anniversary of Vineyard Court, Woodbridge, which enabled us to support the "Wish You Were Here" Campaign, the Knights of Columbus, Council #13164/ Immaculate Conception Church, and issue community hours to five students from St. Jean de Brebeuf Catholic High School and St. Joan of Arc Catholic Secondary School. We would like to express our sincere thanks to BBM Excavation Company Limited, Knights of Columbus Council #13164, the Vineyard Court 30th Anniversary Celebration Committee Members, Pino Cea Band, Tenor Anthony Macri, Aldo Cavaliere, and Vineyard Court and Granite Street Residents for their support and participation.

In February 2015, A Touch of Love and Hope proudly pledged \$10,000 to the Mackenzie Health Foundation. This pledge contributed to the achievement of their \$5 million goal toward a new and bigger State of the Art 3T MRI Scanner. Our goals also include: support for the projects of the Diocese of Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica; research and training in heart failure at the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, TGH; and scholarships to mentally and physically challenged children at the Alpha Centre in the Commonwealth of Dominica. The cost of a one-year scholarship cost is \$2,000, and a full scholarship, which will enable a child to reach his/her maximum potential, is \$10,000.

To date we have a total of 80 registered members and a team of dedicated volunteers from all walks of life, to whom we owe a depth of gratitude. We are presently in need of volunteers in the following areas: fundraising, marketing, collecting gifts items for our silent auctions, gala production, magazine production, grant writing, and administrative and clerical support. If you would like to join us as a member or volunteer, we can be reached at info@touchofloveandhope.com or 905-851-4409. As a member or volunteer of A Touch of Love and Hope, you will be invited to Fundraising Galas, Soirees, BBQs, meet new friends, and help make a meaningful contribution to the betterment of lives of many, both locally and internationally.

In 2016 we look forward to launching a Health and Wellness programme for: Seniors, Patrons, Members, Volunteers and Friends of A Touch of Love and Hope. Participation between the members, volunteers, corporate community, government and the general public is the key in supporting this venture.

We look forward to working and interacting with you in the coming years and sharing the joys and satisfaction of supporting those-in-need abroad as well as in our community.

Thank you for coming on this journey with us.

Support with a smile! Together, we can make it happen!

Geraldine Di Marco

Geraldine Di Marco
President/Co-Founder

Proud Sponsor of A Touch of Love and Hope



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Honorary Gala Patron



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

November 7, 2015

A MESSAGE FROM DEPUTY MAYOR AND REGIONAL COUNCILLOR MICHAEL DI BIASE

I am very pleased to offer greetings to everyone attending A Touch of Love and Hope gala. It is a privilege to be an Honorary Member of the Board of this incredible organization and Honorary Patron of the gala.

This special event provides an opportunity to support local and international health and education initiatives. Founded last year, A Touch of Love and Hope is dedicated to supporting programs for mentally and physically challenged children in developing countries, as well as helping to make their own local communities a better place to live.

Proceeds from this event will go to support the Alpha Centre, a school and projects of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau, in the Commonwealth of Dominica. This school offers life skills to mentally and physically challenged children. Here at home, the proceeds will benefit the Mackenzie Health Foundation and Toronto General Hospital.

The City of Vaughan is an inclusive community. We are privileged to have an organization like A Touch of Love and Hope that is committed to helping children with special needs.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful event.

Sincerely,

Michael Di Biase
Deputy Mayor
Regional Councillor
City of Vaughan



DOMINICA CORNER

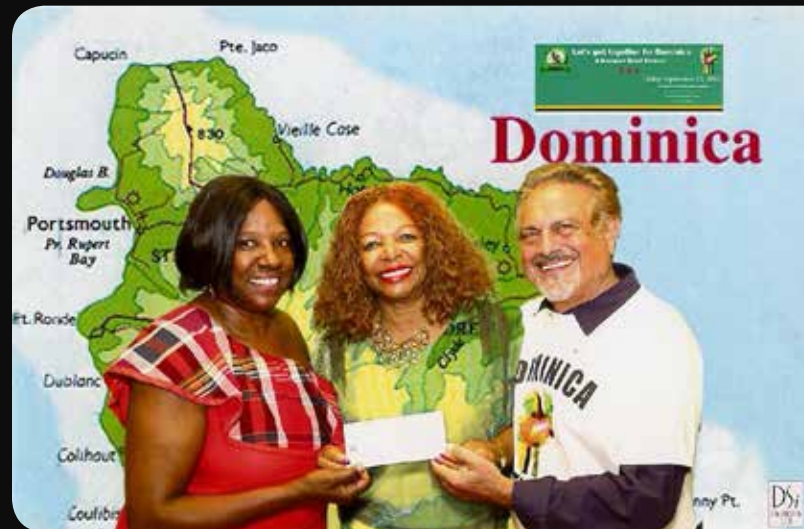


Commonwealth of Dominica

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.



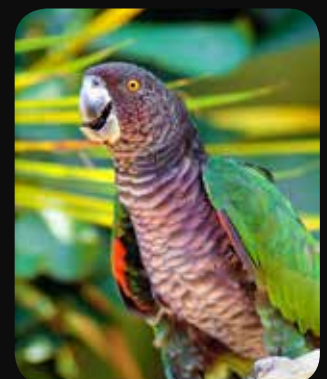
Geraldine and John Di Marco presenting a cheque on behalf of A Touch of Love and Hope to Frances Delsol, Dominica's Trade and Investment Commissioner in Canada, in aid of the Tropical Storm Erika Relief Efforts for Dominica.



(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.



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.



Honorary Gala Patron



November 7, 2015

A Touch of Love and Hope Speranza 1st Annual Fundraising Gala

As an Honorary Board Member, it is my pleasure to extend greetings to all those attending *Speranza*, the 1st Annual Fundraising Gala organized by a Touch of Love and Hope.

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 contributes to the charitable goals of various groups, including: the Alpha Centre and programs 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gino Rosati'.

Gino Rosati
Local and Regional Councillor

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Board of Directors and Honorary Board members

Greetings



Premier of Ontario - Première ministre de l'Ontario

November 7, 2015

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, I am pleased to extend warm greetings to everyone attending the first annual fundraising gala organized by A Touch of Love and Hope.

I commend everyone for their generosity. The funds raised today will go towards the Alpha Centre, a school which offers life skills and hope to young people with mental and physical challenges operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau, in the Commonwealth of Dominica. A portion of the proceeds will also benefit the Mackenzie Health Foundation as well as the Toronto General Hospital's Peter Munk Cardiac Centre.

I would like to thank everyone involved in A Touch of Love and Hope for your dedication to raising funds to support local and international health and education initiatives. Take pride in knowing that your efforts are helping to make a difference in many people's lives.

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

Kathleen Wynne
Premier



STEVEN DEL DUCA, MPP

Vaughan



November 7th, 2015

Dear Friends,

Please allow me to congratulate A Touch of Love and Hope on the success of tonight's Speranza Gala. With the support and generosity of those in attendance, children with mental and physical disabilities will have the opportunity learn life skills at the Alpha Centre operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau, in the Dominica. As well, a portion of the proceeds from this event will benefit the Mackenzie Health Foundation here in Vaughan and the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre at Toronto General Hospital.

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 you on your efforts.

Wishing everyone an enjoyable evening,

Hon. Steven Del Duca, MPP
Vaughan

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Greetings



Mario Sergio, MPP York West



November 7, 2015

As Member of Provincial Parliament for York West and on behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, I extend warm greetings to everyone attending A Touch of Love and Hope's Fundraising Gala. I commend the Board of Directors for continuing to facilitate and strengthen relationships that benefit disabled children at the Alpha Centre in the Commonwealth of Dominica, as well as the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, TGH, and the Mackenzie Health Foundation in Richmond Hill.

I send my sincere congratulations to the board of directors for your outstanding dedication to our community and for your positive contributions to society.

Your commitment to youth initiatives and your ongoing financial support of programs is commended and acknowledged by the Province of Ontario. I wish you continued prosperity and every success as you celebrate this first annual gala.

Yours Sincerely,

**Mario Sergio, MPP
York West**

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LAURA ALBANESE, MPP York South-Weston

November 7, 2015

1st Annual Fundraising Gala - Speranza

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, it is with distinct pleasure that I offer my greetings and best wishes for the 1st Annual Fundraising Gala - Speranza hosted by the charitable organization, A Touch of Love & Hope.

This event supports health care in the Greater Toronto Area such as the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, Toronto General Hospital and the Mackenzie Health Foundation. Internationally, this event also supports Alpha Centre programs - a special needs school for children in the Commonwealth of Dominica and programs run by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau.

Thank you to the Board of Directors, Honorary Board, Sponsors and the volunteers who dedicate their time to this philanthropic cause which supports the health of those in the Greater Toronto Area and abroad.

Wishing you continued success.

Sincerely,

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



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Greetings



Wayne Emmerson
Chairman and CEO



The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket,
Ontario, L3Y 6Z1
Tel: 905-895-1231
email: wayne.emmerson@york.ca

A Message from the York Region Chairman and CEO

On behalf of York Regional Council, it is my pleasure to send greetings and congratulations to *A Touch of Love and Hope* on your inaugural fundraising gala.

In our communities, both at home and globally, ensuring those in-need are treated with respect is the benchmark of compassion. *A Touch of Love and Hope* demonstrates this through your ongoing work here in Canada and abroad.

Your commitment to the children at the Alpha Centre, Commonwealth of Dominica, as well as supporting local care resources in York Region and across the Greater Toronto Area is inspiring and appreciated.

Locally, many residents will benefit from your generosity to Mackenzie Health Foundation and Toronto General Hospital.

Please accept my best wishes for a truly enjoyable and successful evening.

Yours truly,

Wayne Emmerson
York Region Chairman and CEO



Office of the Mayor



Thank You for Supporting A Touch of Love & Hope

November 7, 2015

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

Your presence here this evening is a testament to the spirit of generosity that exists in our city. Vaughan is truly blessed to have a community that demonstrates compassion and empathy by helping people who need it most. Through 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, please accept my gratitude for your contribution to these worthy initiatives. You can take a great deal of pride in knowing that you are making a positive difference in our community and beyond.

Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable evening.

Yours sincerely,

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua, P.C.
Mayor

Greetings



Frank Scarpitti
Mayor

November 7, 2015

MESSAGE FROM MAYOR SCARPITTI

On behalf of Members of Council and the City of Markham, I am pleased to extend our best wishes to **Speranza – 1st Annual Fundraising Gala** hosted by A Touch of Love and Hope.

Speranza is the Italian word for hope and is a perfect word to describe the 1st Annual Fundraising Gala. The definition of hope in the Oxford Dictionary can be used as a noun or a verb. The noun definition is "A feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen" or "Grounds for believing that something good may happen". A verb definition is "Want something to happen or be the case".

Hope is strong on the list of human needs. It is like a single candle during the night. It gives light for us to continue on and find the way out of the darkness. It is an important aspect of humanity which to build one's foundation. Your efforts to support the mentally and physically disabled children in the Commonwealth of Dominica provide hope to those less fortunate.

I extend my sincere thank you to everyone here supporting this worthwhile cause.

As Mayor of the City of Markham, I am proud of your efforts and I am delighted to have this opportunity to extend my best wishes for a very successful and enjoyable evening.

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 www.markham.ca



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and Audit Committee
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Human Services
Planning Board
Transportation Services
Board of Health



Board of Directors
Human Resources,
Compensation &
Governance Committee
(Vice-Chair)



Board of Directors



November 7, 2015

Dear Members & Guests:

Congratulations & Best Wishes

I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the members, executives, sponsors and volunteers of A Touch of Love and Hope on the occasion of its 1st annual fundraising Gala.

Since the launch of this organization, less than one year ago, you have worked tirelessly on various fundraising efforts to help mentally and physically challenged children in the Commonwealth of Dominica as well as local health care resources in the GTA.

Although I was unable to attend this event, I applaud your tremendous efforts and extend a big "thank-you" to all the guests who are present this evening for supporting this most worthy cause.

I am proud to be an honorary board member of such a passionate and well-intended organization.

Respectfully,

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

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T 905.832.8585 EXT 8999 | F 905.832.8906 | E mario.ferri@vaughan.ca | W vaughan.ca

Greetings



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



October 15, 2015

On behalf of the Government and people of the Commonwealth of Dominica, I am pleased to extend warm greetings to everyone attending *A Touch of Love and Hope* Inaugural Gala.

A Touch of Love and Hope fills a much needed void in our community, focussing on helping the less fortunate like the mentally and physically challenged children in the Commonwealth of Dominica and the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre at Toronto General Hospital.

John and Gerry DiMarco have spent a lifetime giving and this is merely an extension of the way they have lived their lives; and it is for this reason we give our unconditional support to this worthwhile undertaking. *A Touch of Love and Hope* like its founders, reaches out to the humanity in us to make our world better, by helping and giving.

I extend my appreciation to the dedicated organizers and volunteers for putting on this event with pride and diligence knowing that it is because of their hard work, that positive change in the world takes place.

Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable event tonight.

With Highest Respect,

Frances DelSol
Trade & Investment Commissioner for Dominica (in Canada)

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November 7, 2015

Good Evening Dignitaries, Invited Guests and Friends,

I am delighted to extend my congratulations to the Di Marco family and The Board of Directors of *A Touch of Love and Hope* on this, your Inaugural Fundraising Gala.

Running a charitable organization whose goals are so diverse as yours and whose intent is so geared towards building a better society, requires a significant effort and determination to succeed, and I am really proud that you have made it thus far.

Your enthusiasm, love and dedication for your country and the less fortunate provides me with much needed inspiration that we as a community and a society, can do much more.

I commend everyone participating in tonight's fundraising gala. You are a vital part of enabling this worthwhile initiative to become a success.

On behalf of the Executive and Membership of the Commonwealth of Dominica Ontario Association (CDOA) community, I congratulate everyone who has worked hard to make tonight's event possible. Please accept my best wishes for a memorable and successful evening.

Sincerely,

Hetty Lawrence
President - Commonwealth of Dominica Ontario Association



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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 disability 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.

A Touch of Love and Hope
Speranza
1st Annual Fundraising Gala

*"Best Wishes for a Successful Event and
Enjoyable Evening!"*



Gino Rosati
Local & Regional Councillor

Dr. H. Ross, MD, MHSc, FRCP(C), FACC

Specializing in Heart Failure,
Mechanical Circulatory Support & Transplant
Ted Rogers and Family Chair in Heart Function
Director, Ted Rogers Centre of Excellence in Heart Function
Peter Munk Cardiac Centre
Professor of Medicine
Medical Director of Cardiac Transplant Program
President Canadian Cardiovascular Society



November 7, 2015

It is my great pleasure to welcome everyone tonight to the first annual *A Touch of LOVE & HOPE Fundraising Gala, SPERANZA!* The Peter Munk Cardiac Centre is honoured to be one of the benefactors of this event.

This is a very exciting time in the field of heart failure research; we are making tremendous strides in the diagnoses, treatment options and therapeutics for our patients. Philanthropic leadership affords our program the needed flexibility in management and policy to invest in research, patient care, and education, allowing our clinicians and researchers to lead the way in the management of heart failure.

A dedicated team of cardiologists and surgeons on the Heart Failure and Transplant team care for some of the most complex patient cases. Our primary focus is a commitment to improving the care of our patients through the deployment of novel technologies like real-time home monitoring and telecommunication technologies that empower patient self-care and reduce re-admission rates for heart failure. Our multidisciplinary team is internationally recognized for their efforts in heart failure research and education. We are advancing the understanding of cardiac disease through the use of powerful databases, new biomarkers for cardiac disease and regenerative medicine. With your support we can dramatically improve the future of heart health.

I am inspired everyday by my patients; the obstacles they overcome, with unparalleled optimism and determination, is what motivates me to continually advance our knowledge and understanding of heart failure to enhance patient care and outcomes.

A special thank you to Geraldine DiMarco for bringing light to our cause. It is through the commitment of patrons, Board of Directors, volunteers and friends of A Touch of LOVE & HOPE that we are able to make tonight such a wonderful success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "H. Ross", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dr. 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

PMB 11-137, Toronto General Hospital, 585 University Avenue, Toronto, ON M5G 2N2
Admin Tel (416) 340-3482 Fax (416) 340-4134 Ambulatory Cardiac Clinic Booking Line: 416-340-4085

DOMINICA ASSOCIATION FOR THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED ALPHA CENTRE



Photo: Dominica News Online

DOMINICA ASSOCIATION FOR THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED

ALPHA CENTRE

McIntyre Lane

Goodwill, DOMINICA

Tel: 767 448 6509

Email: alpha.centre @hotmail.com



Claudia Bellot

Chairperson, Dominica Association for the Mentally Handicapped

The Dominica Association for the Mentally Handicapped, administrator of the ALPHA Centre, School for children with Special Needs in Dominica, is honoured to send special greetings and congratulations to A Touch of Love and Hope on the launching of its 2015/16 Magazine INSPIRATION and on the occasion of its first Annual Fundraising Gala “SPERANZA”. This is certainly a significant milestone for your organization.

As the premier school for children with special needs in Dominica, we are very pleased to be associated with A Touch of Love and Hope, since at the ALPHA Centre we aim to above all, instill a genuine sense of hope and love into the lives of our students. In partnering with organizations like yours, we feel strengthened by your support and commitment.

We look forward to a long and fruitful relationship with A Touch of Love and Hope as the ALPHA Centre continues to educate and nurture children with special needs in Dominica. Our mission is built on the concept of the inherent dignity of every child with a capability to achieve to their highest ability.

Our sincerest compliments to A Touch of Love and Hope on your mission to bring dignity of life and love to those who need it most.

Claudia Bellot

Chairperson

Dominica Association for the Mentally Handicapped



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Beneficiaries

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

Alpha Centre



Programmes being operated by the Alpha Centre, Commonwealth of Dominica – a school for mentally and physically challenged children. Your donation will help the children to meet their maximum potential and give them life skills and hope for a bright future where they would not have had a chance. We seek to raise funds to offer annual scholarships, and to help increase the student body of the Alpha Centre.

Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau (Dominica Catholic Radio)



Programmes being operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica. ie: Dominica Catholic Radio – a national listener-supported radio programme reaching rural communities throughout the Commonwealth of Dominica, which is dedicated to integral human development. And Courses for adult faith formation – 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 Cadriac Centre

Your donation will also support the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, Toronto, towards 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 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 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 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.





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For the Launch



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Dear Friends:

Greetings from Dominica!

It is with a heavy heart that I greet you following the devastation that we suffered with the passage of Tropical Storm Erika on August 27. Many lives were lost, and there was extensive irreparable damage to property, and the damage to the infrastructure of the island was massive. And yet, such a disaster brings into sharp focus the work of our organization, A Touch of Love and Hope as our organization redoubles its efforts to alleviate the suffering of the world bringing hope to those traumatized by the negative forces in their lives.

In the days following the Storm, Dominica Catholic Radio, conscious of the plight of our people, produced special programmes featuring words of comfort and inspirational music in an effort to strengthen our people's faith while offering them a word of consolation and hope.

In a word that sometimes seems to be indifferent to the misery of the marginalized, the poverty of the powerless, the violation of the voiceless, A Touch of Love and Hope joins Pope Francis in saying "No" to those systems that keep humanity in bondage including *"an economy of exclusion* [Evangelii Gaudium 53-54] *the new idolatry of money* [55-56] and *"a financial system which rules rather than serves* [57-58], and says "Yes" to life, patterning ourselves on Jesus Christ who came "that they may have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

I pray God's blessing on all those who read this message. I thank you for partnering with us in our endeavor to serve the least of the brothers and sisters of Jesus our Lord. May the Lord himself reward your kindness and generosity.

Msgr. William John-Lewis , Director
Dominica Catholic Radio

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An aerial, night-time photograph of the Toronto skyline. The city's lights are reflected in a circular pool of water in the foreground, creating a sunburst effect. The CN Tower is prominent on the left side of the image.

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Presents

SPERANZA GALA 2015

“Celebration of Caribbean and Italian Cultures” was the theme for the 2015 Fundraising Gala SPERANZA, chaired by Geraldine Di Marco. The Honorary Patrons were Deputy Mayor Michael Di Biase and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati of the City of Vaughan.

Greetings address was delivered by Cav. Michael Tibollo, Master of Ceremony was Vincenzo Somma, and a toast was proposed by John Di Marco. The Riviera Parque served a delicious meal and guests were entertained by: the Ramblers of Guyana, a Caribbean dance performance by Ballet Creole, followed by famous Arias by Tenors Anthony Macri, Tony Milioto and Soprano Mila Ionkova, narrated by Councillor, Tony Carella.

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November 7, 2015

Message from Mackenzie Health Foundation

On behalf of the Board of Directors, volunteers, staff and patients of Mackenzie Health, it is my pleasure to welcome you to A Touch of Love and Hope's Speranza Gala.

Your support is making a difference! Your generosity is helping to fund the new 3 Tesla Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanner at Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital. Operational for just over a year, the MRI has made a world of difference for patients awaiting diagnosis of illness and injury. Patients at Mackenzie Health now wait less time to receive a more accurate diagnosis, and the scanner's roomier compartment has increased comfort and decreased anxiety for patients during the procedure.

Mackenzie Health aims to provide your community with innovative, specialized and compassionate care that is right in your own backyard. With a new hospital in Vaughan and advanced patient care initiatives at Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital, you and your family can look forward to enhanced access to a full range of core and specialty services.

Thank you to members of A Touch of Love and Hope Foundation for hosting this wonderful gala evening and supporting Mackenzie Health. We wish you all a memorable evening.

With sincere appreciation,

Ingrid Perry
President & CEO
Mackenzie Health Foundation

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Michael Di Biase

Greetings from Sabrina



Welcome to INSPIRATION! It is with great pleasure and pride that we release Inspiration by A Touch of Love and Hope. With the gift of life, we have each received unique resources and challenges. Many of our readers have been blessed with relatively good health, strong family and community. It is in community today that we unite to share our blessings with those in need.

I have visited and explored nearly 30 countries. The world has welcomed me. It has taught me to be gentle with judgment, knowing that “but there, for the grace of God, go I.” It has taught me that no matter what we have, as humans, we can all find ourselves in need of a neighbour. For 15 years I worked as an international development consultant; the last ten as partner at C.A.C. International, a boutique monitoring and evaluation consulting firm. I have traveled on behalf of our federal government to evaluate the results of projects like those of our beneficiaries in Dominica.

My work has examined programs funded or run by USAID, civil society like YMCA, and government like Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Public Safety National Crime Prevention Centre, and Millennium Scholarship Excellence Awards; however, at C.A.C. International, our main client was the Canadian International Development Agency. For them, I advised on Poverty Reduction programming for business growth, investments, and entrepreneurial options throughout Africa; offered analysis on the Haitian Diaspora in Canada and their role in Haiti’s development, and evaluated CIDA’s implementation of its own Gender Equality Policy.

Having talked to thousands of youth, entrepreneurs, women, and men in villages and cities, I have seen the direct positive impact that can result from development programs. Children are the most vulnerable; especially those with special needs. Many are dealt a bad hand in life and lift themselves up by their bootstraps. Indeed these are the admirable qualities possessed by recipients of ALPHA Centre scholarships. Looking back, few of us could have achieved our individual successes completely alone. Someone, somewhere, offered us assistance, faith, or support at a critical time in our growth. Your support of A Touch of Love and Hope is doing that for these children!

I am a proud daughter of Vaughan. As a youth I contributed to Vaughan CARES; fighting the expansion of the Keele Valley Landfill in Maple. I brought the United Nations 50th Anniversary Celebrations to Vaughan with the partnership of the late Lorna Jackson. More recently I contributed to the Italian Canadian Museum, and the production of “Multiculturalism Around the World.” I am very proud to have humbly served as a community volunteer in various capacities since my youth.

Now in my role as Broker at J.D.M. Realty Ltd., Brokerage, I am active in the growth that is characteristic of Vaughan’s culture. Real estate is a vital and strong component of every family’s security and sense of home. Privy to the intimate business of our communities’ families, I am honoured to negotiate on their behalf and help them make fantastic investments; to get the job done. I see directly the hearts and strong ties that unify us in business, charity, and friendship. I see the generosity. I see the fruits of hard and smart work.

A Touch of Love and Hope funding will also benefit our GTA families directly. Contributions to the Mackenzie Health Foundation for a larger MRI will serve more of us faster. It is weird to know that one day I will probably need that machine, many of us will. Your donations are also supporting vital heart failure research at the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, TGH. This research helps patients live better, longer; bringing immeasurable value to whole families.

We can only continue this work with your help, your volunteer contributions, your memberships, and your support.

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

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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 help mentally and physically challenged children in the Commonwealth of Dominica; as well as to support local health care resources in the greater Toronto Area.

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Board of Director's Biographies



Cav. Roberto Bandiera

Born in Siracusa, Sicilia, Roberto earned a Diploma in Accounting and immigrated to Canada in 1966. He has produced radio programs, conference series, a pantomime, and La Carota newsletter. He worked at Corriere Canadese, CHIN, and as an accountant. Together with his wife Maria Grifone, Roberto has contributed leadership to: Club Molise, Club Guardiaregia, FAMCO, and the Sicilian Cultural Society. Knighted in 2007 by la Repubblica Italiana, Roberto is currently co-publisher of the Panorama Italian Canadian magazine.



Eliana Di Biase

Born in Lyon, France, Eliana earned a BA from York University Glendon College and a B.Ed from the University of Toronto. She has worked as an elementary school teacher, including core French, with the Toronto Catholic District School Board for over 30 years. Eliana's community and leadership contributions include: Vaughanwood Ratepayers Association, Vita Nova Foundation, Share Life Committee, Parent Councils, Woodbridge Soccer and Swim Clubs, Canadian Cancer Society, and Hospice Vaughan.



Christine Dewairy

Christine is a Creative Director who has worked at national publications including: Saturday Night, Canadian Business, MoneySense, Profit, and the National Post. As its Art Director, she oversaw the redesign of Maclean's magazine. Christine currently works as the Art Director for Toronto Life Magazine. She holds a BA from the University of Toronto.



John Albert Di Marco

John is a Creative Video Producer and proprietor of JDMP.ca, a media service agency that provides video solutions and support services for businesses. He earned Diplomas from Ryerson University and Seneca College. John works with marketing, communications and sales groups to produce branded video content, and has worked for: Rogers Publishing, St. Joseph Media, CBC, CanWest/Dose.ca, Mars Discovery District, Siemens Corporation and other GTA organizations.

Board of Director's Biographies



John Di Marco

Raised in Chieti, Abruzzo, John is a licensed *Geometra*. He worked as a land surveyor with the Municipality of Tripoli. After immigrating to Toronto in 1968, he continued surveying work before establishing J.D.M. Realty Ltd., Brokerage in 1977. He has held several leadership and community roles within: Ofena Club, FACI/Italian-Canadian Congress, COMITES, Federazione Abruzzese, OACETT, Opera York, OBCY, Knights of Columbus and together with wife Geraldine Di Marco, is Co-Founder of A Touch of Love and serves as its Treasurer.



Cav. Michael Tibollo

Founder of Tibollo & Associates, Michael is a Lawyer working in corporate and commercial law, member of the Law Society of Upper Canada since 1987. His affiliations and community involvement include: Caritas, Brampton Downtown Development Corporation, Knights of Malta Order of St John of Jerusalem, Meta Centre, Oaklands Foundation, Confederation of Italian Entrepreneurs Worldwide, Ontario Taekwondo Association, Confederation of Pugliese in Ontario, and the Canadian Bar Association.



Vincenzo Somma

Born in Napoli, Italy, Vincenzo studied biology and chemistry at the University of Naples before moving to Canada in 1980. For 19 years he worked as news anchor with the team at OMNI Television. He has also co-hosted the award-winning program Incontri (Encounters). Over the years, he has interviewed political figures and internationally-renowned personalities including Sophia Loren, Liza Minelli, and the Canadian Prime Minister Harper. Vincenzo is also a soccer fan, cheering on his team S.S.C. Napoli.



Elena Zeppieri

Elena is Administrative Assistant to the Director of Healthy Public Policy with the City of Toronto and has worked as Assistant to the President with Jan K. Overweel Ltd. where, amongst other initiatives, she was responsible for event management. She studied Business Administration at Humber Business School and has contributed to the community initiatives of: Global Citizen's Forum in Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Opera York, and OBCY.



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