

EMBRACE AGING

News from the RTOERO Foundation



Thank you to all our donors...we are thinking of you.

As COVID-19 continues to be top of mind, I wanted to reach out and let you know that all of us at the RTOERO Foundation are thinking of you during this uncertain time. We hope you and your loved ones are keeping well and safe.

I can't help but think of a Maya Angelou quote as I consider what is happening. "Every storm runs out of rain." There is little doubt that a storm arrived in the form of COVID-19 and overwhelmed each of us. At the beginning of this storm everyone was confident that it would be over soon and life would return to normal. It quickly became evident that this was not the case.

Because we are social creatures and crave interaction with others, social isolation is very problematic. How we handle the situation is what will ultimately determine our future well-being as we weather this storm.

For our own mental well-being it is critical that we stay positive in order to survive the pandemic. How do we achieve this? Instead of fixating on the isolation, make contact with other people. Your telephone is a wonderful way to do this. People you have not spoken with recently will be glad to hear from you. Make the effort and you will benefit from it.

Each day, choose something that you enjoy such as drawing, painting, baking or exercising. Sorting through photographs is a way to reminisce about happy times. It's natural, especially these days, to occasionally feel blue. The important thing is that we not dwell on it.

I like the Elbert Hubbard quote that was popularized by Dale Carnegie. "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." So, while the storm is passing, let's all work together by making the best of the situation.

I want to offer a big thank you to our Foundation staff, who have worked from home since the office closed in March. They have been untiring in their efforts to keep the Foundation on track. This speaks highly of our staff's work ethic and I am very proud and pleased with them.

In closing, I want to express my sincere gratitude to you, our donors. We look forward to continuing to build a healthier future for Canadian seniors, together.

Joanne Murphy

Chair, Board of Directors
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You are the RTOERO Foundation's most important partner



We do...because of you

The regular support of our donors is the key to our success. Thanks to this reliable revenue stream, we are able to stay focused on fulfilling our mission. Because of our dedicated monthly and annual donors, we are able to invest in programs and research initiatives dedicated to improving the future for all aging Canadians.

You provide credibility

A relatively young organization like the RTOERO Foundation needs to establish trust with potential donors and community partners in order to grow. Your support and the support of hundreds of other generous individuals is the most powerful way to demonstrate our credibility and accountability to the public.



Your words inspire

We love hearing from our donors. The feedback we receive from you reinforces that the work we do is important, and also provides perspectives that lead to improvement. Feedback fuels bravery. Earlier this year it was a message from a donor that inspired us to develop a new campaign. Your words elevate our mission and inspire our work.



You make dementia research possible

by **Lori Schindel Martin
& Dr. Tricia Woo**

The generosity of donors makes the RTOERO Foundation's grant program possible. It was you, therefore, that helped fund a program designed by our research team to study the impact of an important education program for post-secondary healthcare students.

The number of people living with dementia is rising, and many post-secondary healthcare students will interact with dementia patients in clinical placements and in their professional careers. Students need to be trained to listen carefully to older persons in order to identify and address their physical and psychological needs using a variety of interpersonal communication strategies.

One such training was delivered through an education program called the Gentle Persuasive Approach (GPA). The GPA focuses on how best to provide care for people with dementia-related functional and behavioural changes, and to apply this knowledge in the clinical setting.

Our study, made possible through RTOERO Foundation donor contributions, allowed us to work with 78 medical, nursing, occupational therapy and physical therapy

students to assess and understand the impact of GPA. The study revealed that immediately after the education program, students showed a significant increase in scores for dementia knowledge, confidence, competencies and caring measures as compared to their baseline scores.

Overall, our findings suggest that GPA education is an effective way to teach dementia care skills to post-secondary healthcare students and improve their future practice in the clinical field.

Without RTOERO Foundation funding, our team would not have been able to capture the positive impact of our program on the everyday lives of people living with dementia. We would like to thank all RTOERO Foundation donors for the generosity that made our project possible and for trusting in the work that we do.

Lori Schindel Martin, RN, PhD, GNC(C) is a professor at the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing at Ryerson University

Dr. Tricia Woo, MD, works with the Division of Geriatric Medicine, Department of Medicine at McMaster University

Contact Us!

We'd love to hear from you.



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Remembering Harold Brathwaite

by Joanne Murphy

Harold Brathwaite was a good man who was infinitely kind and compassionate. He was an impeccable dresser, stylish and self-assured with a *joie de vivre* unique to himself. He had a presence in the room, both relaxed and commanding that got people's attention. Everyone felt drawn to his words and ideas.

One of Harold's greatest strengths was his ability to inspire positive change. He was a visionary who understood that neither race nor ethnic background should hinder anyone in life. This pioneering outlook was evident when he came to RTOERO. Harold knew that to make our organization viable we must keep reaching out and improving our services to members.

Harold recognized that the growing seniors population would soon be impacted by a shortage of doctors, specifically a lack of trained geriatricians. It was this insight that prompted the creation of the RTOERO Foundation. Harold was tireless in his efforts to help create this magnificent project which will ultimately benefit all of us. We will continue to do him proud.

Farewell, my friend.

Harold was a very kind and generous man who had a remarkable impact on so many lives, including mine. We can only imagine the future influence of his ideas and actions. I remember the day he first raised the idea of a Foundation for RTOERO. There is no way we will ever be able to measure the societal impact of that project which has now become reality.

Pauline Duquette-Newman

Senior Manager, French Language Services, RTOERO

A towering presence, and not simply because of his physical stature, Harold Brathwaite was a true gentleman in every sense of the word. Harold was refined, erudite, compassionate and supremely generous with his time for causes in which he truly believed, especially those related to equity, inclusion and diversity; and, for those individuals whom he called "friend". I was fortunate to be included in this special group.

Simon Leibovitz

Chief Administrative Officer, RTOERO



Harold was instrumental in the creation of the RTOERO Foundation; he wanted our organization to bring change to how geriatric services are structured in Canada. What a better way than connecting RTOERO's vision with researchers and medical professionals who are supported by our members and partners' funding?

Harold will always be remembered as a gentle, yet powerful leader, someone who masterfully initiated change by tirelessly following his dreams and motivating others.

Ewa Romanski

Chief Financial Officer, RTOERO