

President's Message

I am reflecting on our Board of Directors meeting last night. Four of the nine directors are Spanish speakers; and three are native to the Dominican Republic (DR). As new director Juan Pablo Liriano noted, TMA is changing to reflect the people and country it serves.

These changes are by design. TMA, from the beginning, has been deeply concerned with the painful reality of inequality in education in the DR. This inequality is a striking issue that has huge ramifications, past and present. Director José Lopez spoke of this in his educational presentation to the board. Although the Dominican government has made significant investments in school construction, has extended the school day, has provided lunch programs, and even invested in training, there continues to be a great divide between private and public education. The private sector can provide high quality education but at such great cost that it proves exclusive and inaccessible to most families.

We know that education is essential to improved employment opportunities and quality of life. Its absence is often evident in the emigration of individuals and families who cannot afford the inclusive and quality education they want for their children. The irony is that José Lopez, who in 2005 saw what TMA could become, is living this truth. Close relatives of his recently moved to North America seeking a better future for their sons. And this despite both parents having post-secondary degrees.

We heard hard truths in José's presentation; however, at the conclusion we also heard much hope expressed by him and Juan Pablo. They believe TMA can and will contribute to providing inclusive and quality education for those who find private education is beyond reach.

~ Nancy Threan Loraine



TMA had a successful year-end meeting on October 30, 2021.

Click [here](#) for our 2021 Annual Report.

Financial statements are always available upon request.



Intercultural Sensitivity Workshop

How best does TMA demonstrate respect for the people and institutions with whom our Mentor teams, Committees, and our Board work with in the Dominican Republic (DR)? How well do we understand the realities of living and working in the DR? These are among the questions to be addressed in a workshop being developed for this spring to equip Canadian team members travelling to work with Dominican mentors.

All TMA volunteers, including our Board, will participate in this interactive workshop. Dominican voices from Mentors and collaborators coupled with material gathered from research-based sources aim to recognize ownership by the Dominicans and do our best to equip Canadians for an experience that can be life changing.

Ways to Give

- [Canadahelps](#)
- Via e-transfer to info@teachermentors.ca
- Cash / Venmo to your fundraiser contact

Donations of \$20 or more are tax-deductible

20X21 Campaign!

TMA 20x20, our first online fundraiser, was so successful that it exceeded its goal thanks to the generous support of our donors. This year's goal is \$8,400. The Dominican mentors and educators who will benefit from the training they will receive in 2022 would say, 'gracias de todo corazon' thank you with all our heart and we do too.

The 20x21 campaign invites people to consider a \$20 donation (or more if you can!) to help us extend our work. Funds raised will go towards expenses that include training costs for DR trainers in a Spanish-language classroom program suited to the needs of their colleagues, transportation and meals for DR teachers who attend workshops, facilities costs, and more recently, as the pandemic moved us to virtual connections, costs related to e-learning.



PROGRAM COMMITTEE UPDATE

In person training to resume in 2022

Plans are underway to resume in-person professional development for teachers and instructional leaders in the Dominican Republic (DR). Two significant training sessions are planned.

In February, Program Committee members Janet Giberson, and Denise Taylor-Edwards along with TMA President, Nancy Threan Loraine will meet with the Santo Domingo and Santiago/La Vega mentor teams to begin preparations for mentors to lead the July summer institutes' workshops. This is a big step for those who just a few years ago couldn't imagine leading a presentation let alone develop the content.

Mentor training in Balanced Literacy with the book 'Un Leon en Cabarete', will provide the 30 plus mentors with a well-defined and needed tool for improving literacy strategies in their districts and regions. The book, produced in the DR by the DREAM Project, lends itself for use across many grades, purposes, and tasks.

Meetings with TMA partners and collaborators in the DR and hopefully visits to the mentors' schools are also planned.

In July, two teams will travel to Santo Domingo and Santiago. Applications are now available on our website for candidates desiring to participate in professional learning communities, mentorship, cooperative learning strategies, assessment, and instructional leadership. The teams are self-funded and focus as much on cultivating professional collegial relations as on the tasks being undertaken throughout the week. Ultimately, their role is to support the continued professional development of teachers and instructional leaders in the Dominican Republic.

[Click here](#)
for a team
application



Thank You DREAM Project

Special thanks to DREAM Project in Cabarete, Dominican Republic for their generosity in providing literary resource materials to all 30 of our mentors in Santo Domingo and Santiago/La Vega. One sample is the Un Leon en Cabarete that will be used by our Program Committee in balanced literacy training with mentors. *Gracias!*



facebook.com/TMA-Teacher-Mentors-Abroad

Welcome New Board Member

Juan Pablo Liriano Santana, a native from the Dominican Republic, immigrated to Canada in 1976.

He completed a Master's in Theology at the University of Toronto and pursued a career in education.

Juan Pablo taught for twenty-one years at the secondary level before retiring in 2007.



In 2003, he invited some of his colleagues, friends, and family members together to found Canadian Aid For Education (CAFE). Their mission is to provide education opportunities to vulnerable people in the developing world. After serving on a TMA team in 2006, Juan Pablo and his wife Betty Anne Platt advocated for and led the expansion of TMA's work to Santiago in 2015. They have been TMA site liaisons and coordinators in Santiago/La Vega ever since.

Juan Pablo believes that education is the key to a better tomorrow. Education empowers people to break the chain of poverty and equips them with the necessary tools to control their lives and destiny and to live a life with dignity.

Thank You St. Paul's

TMA is grateful for the very generous donation of \$5,000 from St. Paul's Leaskdale to support the development of our Intercultural Sensitivity workshop.

TMA and St. Paul's have a long history together. It began in 2005, at the conclusion of a kids camp led by a youth team from St. Paul's and sponsored by José Lopez' church in Hainamosa, Dominican Republic.

A group of educators who provided the snack program for the camp had observed Canadian team leaders using strategies they felt would be valuable in their classrooms. They asked if a team of Canadian educators would come and share their best practices with them. This was the seed for TMA's beginning.

We share a common desire for intercultural sensitivity in our respective works. St. Paul's has a continuing relationship with DR as does TMA!

Mil gracias, a thousand thank you's, St. Paul's!

TEACHER MENTORS ABROAD

Dedicated to improving the quality of education in under-resourced communities

Contact us: info@teachermentors.ca
www.teachermentors.ca
15920 Lakeridge Rd.
Sunderland, ON L0C 1H0