

# President's Message

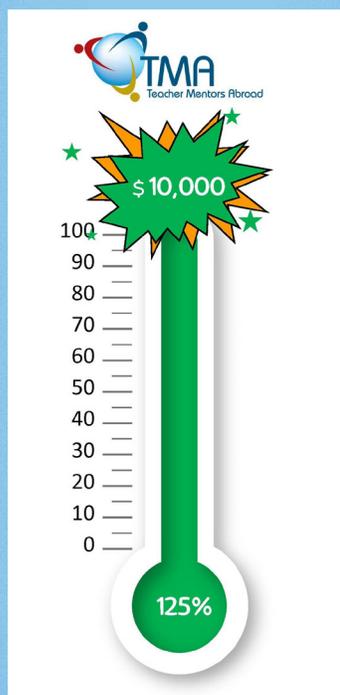
TMA is a very small organization, led entirely by volunteers. Educational reform intended to improve the quality of education in the Dominican Republic is an outsized task for even the largest and best-funded organizations. Therefore, TMA continuously seeks out others whose goals align with ours.

In this issue you'll meet exceptional individuals joining our Board and hear about new partnerships with an organization, equally passionate about education improvement.

We have an expression in Spanish, 'mi granito de arena'. It translates as 'my grain of sand' and is used to describe an action, however small, that adds to something very big. Read on and thank you for your continued support!

~ Nancy Threan Loraine

## TMA 20X20 FUNDRAISER



## ZOOM WITH DOMINICAN MENTORS

In November, the TMA Board of directors, members of the Program Committee (PC) and our Dominican (DR) Mentors, met through Zoom for introductions and to share experiences of life during the pandemic. The session was instructive and informative. We learned that the potential of having a summer virtual conference was not feasible as the technology needs were unavailable. PC has revisited how to support our DR Mentors using other formats and options.

## A Day in the Life of a DR Teacher During the Pandemic

This Zoom call between Program Committee and Santiago and Santo Domingo Mentors was designed to gather data on what might be possible through remote learning.



This is what we learned:

- Currently students are learning from home. None of the students are going to school and the Mentors felt it unlikely the students would return to school this year.
- Teachers are engaged in the online learning but there are many challenges.
- Many families do not have the technology they need for online education.
- Internet connectivity is not reliable.
- Lessons are delivered to students through the television and/or radio.
- Curriculum is delivered through these medium multiple times a day for the various grade levels.
- Parents go to the school for food and booklets are distributed to them for their children to complete. The booklets support the learning delivered through the television and the radio.
- The booklets are returned to the school for assessment and evaluation.
- Many students are unable to complete the booklets without support and sometimes parents are unable to support their children with the learning.



facebook.com/TMA-Teacher-Mentors-Abroad

WINTER 2021



## WELCOME TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

José Antonio Lopez Ventura

José is a visionary. He is also an electrical engineer, lawyer, pastor and community activist in Santo Domingo Este, Dominican Republic, who has dedicated his life to serving others. José and his wife Gloria have hosted TMA teams since our inception and he articulated what TMA could become before we formally existed. An essential partner, José is known for his wisdom and commitment to education. His quotes are a poignant reminder of what TMA represents.



*"Education is the greatest agent of change. Why? Because it is the only tree whose fruit has the colour, smell and flavour of freedom". ~ José Lopez*

## ¿Usted habla español?

TMA is looking to build a translator/interpreter team! There will be small and large projects requiring translation support and we are always looking for Spanish speaking individuals to serve in an interpreter role. If you would like to support TMA in this capacity, please visit our website and apply.

## WELCOME HONORARY MEMBER



Laura Elliott is a highly recognized educator for her leadership, commitment to engaging community, and academic excellence. Her senior leadership experience extends to all levels of the education system in Ontario, having served as Director of Education with Thames Valley DSB, Superintendent of Education

with Durham DSB, Manager of Membership Records with Ontario College of Teachers and as an Education Officer with Ontario Ministry of Education's Student Success Branch. Her service with the Council of Ontario Directors of Education, Ontario Public Supervisory Officers Association, the University of Western Ontario Senate and Ontario Tech University Board of Governors provide a wealth of strategic thinking and commitment to all students' learning and success that will richly enhance TMA's future directions.

*"I am looking forward to contributing to this wonderful organization, and working alongside a highly engaged and positive team, to support educators in the profession. It is such a privilege to be invited to support TMA as an Honorary Member." ~ Laura Elliott*

## TMA STRATEGIC PLAN

TMA is a small organization determined to make a difference in the Dominican Republic. Since good planning leads to purposeful action, we are focused on developing a strategic plan that states the specifics of what we intend to achieve and thus allows us to evaluate our progress.

TMA plans are based on input from many different people: board directors, community members, educators, and people familiar with the Dominican Republic. There is no shortage of ideas.

Our current Strategic Plan concludes in June, 2021. We have reviewed our achievements, learned from our experience, and begun discussing the next three-year plan. We will include expansion of successful directions like the mentor program that trains Dominican Republic educators to provide pedagogical leadership for their colleagues. We will also include newer priorities like partnering with other organizations to achieve what a small organization cannot accomplish alone.

The Strategic Plan will guide us in challenging times and help us realize our best intentions.

*~ Pauline Laing, Consultant*

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE UPDATES

### New Connections

- We have connected with two potential DR partners whose vision and goals to improve the quality of education in the Dominican Republic align well with those of TMA. We see great potential for collaboration and our team is excited to pursue these partnerships.
- Peace Learning Centre now owns the copyright of the Tribes books that we use in our workshops in the DR. Two exciting things have happened through this connection:
- Two of our members and a Dominican mentor, Andres, are participating in the training of Tribes. We will feature Andres in our next newsletter once he has completed his Tribes training.



*Denise  
Taylor-Edwards  
(top left)*

- An invitation was extended to our committee to have one person participate in the re-writing of the 2014 edition of the Tribes Resource. Denise Taylor-Edwards will be part of a team with the University of Indianapolis to complete this writing task.

## THANK YOU

Bonnie Noble has been an instrumental member of the Program Committee for many years providing guidance, wisdom, skills and talents. She served on numerous summer teams, often in the capacity as Team Leader, and provided workshops to administrators in the Dominican Republic. A true TMA champion, she readily recruited team members and made presentations to potential funding organizations. As Bonnie leaves to devote her time to family and pursuing personal endeavours we will miss her and wish her well.



## TEACHER MENTORS ABROAD

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

Contact us: [info@teachermentors.ca](mailto:info@teachermentors.ca)  
[www.teachermentors.ca](http://www.teachermentors.ca)  
15920 Lakeridge Rd.  
Sunderland, ON L0C 1H0