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York University New School of Medicine to Combat Family Physician Shortages across Ontario

Feature Story on page 16

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Letter from the Editor



As the season of light returns and another year draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on how quickly time passes and how each season brings its own meaning and purpose. There's something about this time of year that gently encourages us to slow down — to take a breath, reflect with gratitude, and hold close the traditions and people who bring warmth to our lives.

We begin this season with reflection, as we honour Remembrance Day and keep in our hearts all those who served

and sacrificed for the freedoms we enjoy today. Their courage and selflessness continue to inspire us, reminding us of what truly matters.

As December unfolds, so do the celebrations that bring light and love to even the darkest winter days. Homes will soon glow with the candles of Hanukkah — a tribute to faith, resilience, and the strength of tradition. Many of us will gather to celebrate Christmas, filling our homes with familiar music, laughter, and the company of family and friends. Whether we're continuing cherished traditions or creating new ones with children and grandchildren, this season reminds us that connection — not perfection — is what sustains us.

This issue also shines a spotlight on a proud milestone for our community: the opening of York University's new medical school, right here beside Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital. It's an incredible achievement — one that marks a new chapter for the future of healthcare in Ontario.

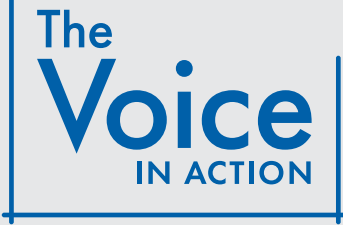
At a time when access to family doctors is such a concern for so many, this medical school will help close critical gaps by training physicians who understand not only medicine, but people. Rooted in compassion, innovation, and service, York University is preparing a new generation of doctors who will care with both heart and expertise. That's something we can all celebrate, right here in our own city.

For me personally, this season carries special meaning. It will be our first Christmas without my mom. The holidays feel different this year — quieter, softer — but they've also reminded me that love doesn't end. It lingers in the people we gather with, the recipes we cook, the stories we retell, and the traditions we carry forward. We hold close those who are with us, we honour those we miss, and we lean on the friends who have become family along the way.

As you move through the weeks ahead, I hope this season brings you peace, comfort, and beautiful moments shared with the people who matter most.

With warmest wishes,


Josie Alonzi



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"The winter season reminds us of the comfort of home, the joy of sharing, and the strength of community. I wish you peace, good health, and happiness as we celebrate the simple pleasures that bring us together."
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Maybe It Wasn't the Food—Maybe It Was Everything Else

By Dr. Sarah Capetola, ND

I just got back from a trip down south—the kind of trip where the sun resets your mood, your shoulders finally drop, and dinners somehow taste better, even when they're simple. Fresh ingredients, slower meals, ocean air, walking everywhere—my gut felt amazing. Then I flew home, and within 24 hours: bloating, fatigue, and a stomach that felt like it forgot how to function. Sound familiar?

With holiday travel around the corner, a lot of people are about to feel this body whiplash—going from warm, relaxed

environments to airports, winter, stress, and five different family events in three days. And here's the thing: we tend to blame food first. We think, "It must have been what I ate." But discomfort isn't always about what's on our plate—it's about what's on our system.

Your gut doesn't just digest food—it digests life. Through the vagus nerve, the gut is constantly listening to your environment, scanning for safety. When you're relaxed, digestion flows. When you're rushed, tense, dehydrated, or running on caffeine and adrenaline, digestion slows. On travel days, your body isn't malfunctioning—it's adapting. Cabin pressure reduces oxygen uptake. Stress diverts blood away from digestion. Sitting stagnates the colon. Dehydration thickens bile flow. Your body is responding logically. Intelligently. Protectively.

Down south, my routine was unintentionally gut-friendly: real food, natural movement, deeper breathing, earlier dinners. On travel days? Not so much. And during the holidays, even if we're not getting on a plane, we often live like we are—fast days, full schedules, emotional buildup, and no time to pause. The gut feels every bit of it.

Maybe this season isn't about more control. Maybe it's about more connection—to the body, to breath, to cues we've learned to ignore. The gut doesn't ask for perfection—it asks for presence.

Because most of the time, it isn't the food at all—it's everything else.

Dr. Sarah Capetola, ND helps people reconnect with their bodies through simple, science-informed strategies that support gut health, stress resilience, and whole-body wellness—without perfection.

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C'era Una Volta Natale/ Once Upon a Time Christmas

by Gianna Patriarca

Anyone you encounter, on any occasion, and inquire what their favourite time of year is, you are bound to hear a common response, "Christmas."

Ever wonder why? Is it because at that time of celebration we are able to expose the strongest potential of humanity's 'GOOD DNA'? Or is it the gifts we receive, the lights, the decorations, the liquor, the food, the holiday, the partying and the family interactions? Of course it is all of these. Certain practices and traditions are imbedded in our skin, our memory and our tongues that they are impossible to put aside and must be enjoyed. In the name of Christ we allow ourselves the pleasures of life and there is nothing wrong with that. But where does the question of spirituality and faith in Christianity enter? Humanity has many Gods. A subject I cannot attempt to discuss in this limited space. Let's agree that Christmas is a time when humanity is in touch with their giving side, their charity, their vulnerabilities, their kindness and all of these are expressed in a multitude of ways to unite, to help and to embrace the power that comes with the gift of Love. Even during the inhumane time of war the guns were quiet on Christmas Day.

We are such complex creatures and such simple ones also. Why do we practice such contradictions in life? How easily we forget what is good in us, what we can do with the power of positivity and kindness but fall back into the darkness that is so magically lifted and disposed of by the spirit of Christmas. The sadness and evil of this world could be erased if each day was lived as Christmas.

I have experienced 70 Christmases and more in three different countries at different stages of my life and often less celebratory or joyful, but they have always filled my heart with a warmth that has no description.

As a child in my hometown in Italy, a small Medieval town cradled in the Valley of the river Liri, the arrival of Christmas was a religious but also a magical time. Perhaps because there is magic in religion when you are a child. The mundane and ordinary takes on a different colour, a different texture. The anticipation of that holy baby's birth is the heartbeat and imagination of every child. The stories, the angels, the songs are the first literature to young ears and hearts. The bells of our town church echoing through the countryside, calling us to prayer, set in motion the wings of angels. I walked beneath the black shawl of my grandmother, cuddled and protected, into the stone church warmed by hundreds of candles, and by the voices in harmony of friends, neighbours and townfolk all in the trance of song and prayer. Something that remains in my memory to this day and as a mother I have tried to give to my own child a similar experience in her young years. Now as an elderly woman I wonder where those Christmases have gone. Perhaps they are re-created in shop windows with little glass creatures and decorative little houses you can buy and prop up on the mantle and fall into a dream. The faces of many churches in this urban city are now just bricks that front condominiums and townhouses and sold at high prices. The consumerism of 'things' has replaced the magic we felt inside. Yes time moves on, the world changes, traditions become diluted. Perhaps what remains is the memory but that too will fail. Write down the history, paint it, sing it, make poetry, make music leave our children an inheritance of the magic we were lucky to experience so they too can share the gifts we were given in our cultures. Merry Christmas.



Mamma's Hands at Christmas

my mother's hands at Christmas
were always busy mixing sweet dough
with raisins, vanilla and rum
sprinkling icing sugar on lemon cookies
changing the water for days on the salted cod
grinding almonds and walnuts into
a cauldron of honey while Jesus
kept watch above the fridge
the egg noodles she worked with her palms
till the flour was smooth yellow and silken
long beautiful ribbons of soft dough
naked and gold on the linen tablecloth
and she did it all with a song
tu scendi dalle stelle
there are new cooks
in my mother's house this year
I handed over the keys to strangers
who will never know the love left
well baked inside her old stove
my hands are busy in my own kitchen
this Christmas I am the cook
without Jesus above my fridge
without mamma's songs
I hope the noodles turn out light
and the cod is not too salty



Gianna Patriarca
Poet / author / educator
of 13 books including the
award winning
*Italian Women and
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From Bretton Woods to Today: Canada’s Legacy of Leadership

by *The Honourable Senator Tony Loffred*

Canada has a proud history of supporting the world’s poorest and most vulnerable nations – not only in times of crisis, but through sustained, long-term efforts to reduce poverty and promote economic growth.

Two global institutions play a central role in advancing this mission: the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The WBG focuses on long-term development – reducing poverty, building resilience, and promoting sustainable and inclusive growth in developing countries – while the IMF works to ensure global financial stability by supporting sound macroeconomic policies, facilitating international trade, and assisting countries in crisis through financial and technical assistance.

Established in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference to drive postwar reconstruction, these institutions were tasked with fostering global growth, prosperity, and monetary stability – a mission that remains as vital today as it was then. Canada was a founding member of both institutions.

As a former federal finance minister once observed, Canada – among the largest shareholders of the WBG and IMF – has both a strong voice and a responsibility to ensure these institutions remain relevant and effective.

In that spirit, and as Chair of the Canadian Chapter of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (PN), I recently travelled to Washington, D.C., at my own personal expense, to attend the institutions’ annual meetings.

It is always a great opportunity to engage, dialogue and strategize with parliamentary colleagues and senior management at the WBG and IMF.

This year marked an important moment of renewal, refocus and reengagement for the Parliamentary Network, with the election of a new Board of Governance in September.

Over two days, a select group of legislators from around the world discussed how the PN can better support the work of the WBG



Senator Tony Loffreda



and IMF, ensuring their programs and policies respond effectively to today’s complex global development challenges.

In my remarks to international colleagues and in my meeting with the International Finance Corporation Managing Director, I emphasized that the strength of these institutions rests on three pillars: partnership, accountability, and innovation. I underscored the importance of transparency, robust parliamentary oversight, and the need to accelerate the mobilization of private capital for sustainable development and inclusive growth in emerging economies.

With new leadership in place, I also called for internal reforms to drive stronger results, smarter interventions, and better value for every dollar invested. As a major financial contributor, Canada must remain an active and reliable partner, committed to ensuring that our investments deliver meaningful impact for the communities that need them most.

I strongly believe that supporting smaller and more vulnerable states is not only an act of solidarity, but also an investment in global stability, resilience, and shared prosperity.

Canada’s commitment to the Bretton Woods Institutions was further reaffirmed by Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne, who was also in Washington, and engaged with G7 and G20 counterparts on debt sustainability and crisis resilience in developing and emerging economies. Following these meetings, Minister Champagne announced that Canada will contribute \$12 million to help establish a new Forum for Crisis Resilience at the World Bank, and an additional \$2 million to the Bank’s Debt Management Facility to enhance debt transparency.

As I reiterated in Washington, Canada stands ready to collaborate, co-invest, and champion reforms that make the WBG and IMF more transparent, agile, and impactful. Our shared goal is to translate global commitments into measurable results that improve lives and strengthen economic confidence around the world.

It’s an ambitious mandate, but one Canada is no doubt ready and willing to fulfill. Indeed, I look forward to seeing how Prime Minister Carney will meet that challenge with the new Liberal Government’s first budget next month.

Highly anticipated, I hope the budget will fulfill the Liberal Party’s campaign promise to maintain Canada’s international humanitarian assistance budget at no less than \$800 million per year – a reflection of our enduring leadership and compassion. I hope the government will also reiterate its commitment to global development efforts.

For more than seventy years, Canada has been an influential and respected voice within the World Bank and the IMF. That reputation endures.

My week in Washington reaffirmed that Canada remains what it has always been: a principled leader, a thoughtful convenor, a trusted partner, and a steadfast contributor to the collective effort to build a more stable, prosperous, and equitable world. We are, and we will always be, a champion for multilateral cooperation in pursuit of humanity’s shared progress.



Does Money Buy Happiness? How the Blue Jays Did a Lot More with Less A first-hand account of Game Seven of the 2025 World Series

By *Anthony Macchia*

Excitement and passion for baseball have reached new heights. Not just Toronto or the GTA, but all of Canada — and much of the world — had their eyes on the Canadian baseball club making history this fall. The energy inside Rogers Centre was electric, reminiscent of the Toronto Raptors' NBA championship in 2019 and Joe Carter's legendary walk-off home run in 1993. Once again, Toronto was on the verge of celebrating another championship in a major sport.

The 2025 Toronto Blue Jays were just two outs away from that victory — until an unfortunate home run by Los Angeles Dodgers shortstop Miguel Rojas in the ninth inning changed everything. Rogers Centre went from ecstatic to anxious in a matter of moments, as the Dodgers seized momentum and forced extra innings. The two teams traded blows inning after inning, until Dodgers catcher Will Smith stepped to the plate in the top of the eleventh.

Shane Bieber was on the mound for Toronto — a strategic decision, as the former Cy Young winner had been strong throughout the postseason with a 3.57 ERA and a 1.02 WHIP. But fate had other plans. After two balls, Bieber hung a slider over the heart of the plate, and Smith sent it deep to left field, giving the Dodgers a 5–4 lead.

The Blue Jays still had one more chance in the bottom of the eleventh. With two runners on, catcher Alejandro Kirk came to bat. A base hit, even a sacrifice fly, could have tied the game — but luck had run out. Kirk grounded into a double play, sealing the Dodgers' second straight World Series title.

As fans filed out of Rogers Centre, the heartbreak was palpable. The dream had slipped away. Another season had come to an end, and as the cold Toronto air rolled in, attention inevitably turned back to the Maple Leafs. Yet this ending felt different. This wasn't just another early playoff exit that Toronto sports fans have come to dread. This was a World Series run — a championship-caliber team that united an entire country for a brief, unforgettable moment.



It was a modern “David vs. Goliath” story: the powerhouse Los Angeles Dodgers, with their \$321 million payroll and a fanbase from a nation of 340 million, facing off against the Toronto Blue Jays, a smaller-market team with a \$233 million payroll representing just 41 million Canadians. In this story, David ultimately fell to Goliath — but not without proving that heart and belief can rival even the biggest budgets.

The sting of the loss will linger, but so will the pride. From finishing last in the AL East just a year ago to becoming Division Champions, American League Champions, and World Series finalists, this Blue Jays team has redefined expectations for the franchise.

With Vladimir Guerrero Jr. signed long-term and key players like Alejandro Kirk and Andrés Giménez under contract for several more years, the foundation for continued success is strong. The hope now is that pending free agents such as Bo Bichette — who hit a crucial home run in Game Seven — and veteran pitcher Chris Bassitt will choose to re-sign and keep this championship-caliber roster intact.

The Blue Jays' 2025 season revealed a new formula for success: doing more with less. Many fans remember the frenzy earlier this year when people tracked flights from Los Angeles to Toronto, hoping that baseball's biggest superstar — the modern “Babe Ruth” — would sign with the Blue Jays. Instead, he inked a record-breaking 10-year, \$700 million deal with the Dodgers. After that, many in Toronto feared the window for contention had closed.

But the Blue Jays chose another path. They bet on themselves — and on Vladimir Guerrero Jr. — to become the face of the franchise and the leader Toronto needed. That bet paid off. The team's deep playoff run proved that belief and development can rival any big-money signing.

When asked about his future after the Game Seven loss, Bo Bichette told The Athletic's Mitch Bannon, “I've said I wanted to be here from the beginning.” Both Bichette and Guerrero were drafted and developed by Toronto — and both want to stay. That commitment, more than any payroll number, is the true key to long-term success.

So, does money buy happiness? In baseball, it might help you buy championships. But as the 2025 Toronto Blue Jays proved, money is only one part of the equation. Determination, grit, and belief in one another defined their season. The Blue Jays nearly conquered baseball's biggest stage — not by buying stars, but by betting on themselves.



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Inkwell Literary Festival: A Celebration of Words, Imagination, and Community

The inaugural Inkwell Literary Festival made a powerful debut this fall, transforming Vaughan into a vibrant hub of creativity, conversation, and community spirit. Held over a lively weekend, the festival brought together authors, writers, readers, and literary enthusiasts for an inspiring celebration of storytelling in all its forms.

From the moment the doors opened, there was an unmistakable buzz of excitement. The festival officially kicked off on Friday, October 3, with a captivating keynote by Mrs. Doubtfire actress-turned-author Lisa Jakub, whose reflections on authenticity, creativity, and the power of storytelling struck a deep chord with audiences. Her words set the tone for the weekend — one that celebrated connection and the courage to share one's voice. On Saturday, October 4, attendees were greeted by rows of vendor booths featuring local authors, booksellers, and artisans. The marketplace proved to be a highlight in itself, offering everything from author-signed books and handcrafted jewelry to interactive displays that invited visitors to explore the literary world in fresh and engaging ways.

Throughout the weekend, a variety of events and workshops brought the community together. Highlights included children's story times, author spotlights, and a writing workshop hosted by York University's Creative Writing Department, where participants had the chance to learn directly from established authors and industry professionals. For emerging writers, the sessions offered both inspiration and practical guidance to refine their craft. The festival's founder, Mark Pagliaroli, emphasized the inclusive spirit at the heart of Inkwell, noting, "Everyone has a story to tell." His words reflected the festival's mission to create a space where writers and readers of all backgrounds could connect through their shared love of storytelling.

The weekend concluded with the Short Story Contest Awards Ceremony, which drew a packed house of more than 100 guests — many of them eager contestants awaiting the announcement of the grand prize winners. Sponsored by York University's Faculty



of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, the event was hosted by Antonio Michael Downing, host of CBC Radio's The Next Chapter. Downing spoke passionately about his latest book and shared heartfelt words of encouragement with the crowd.

The contest itself was made possible through the generous support of TD Bank (Pine Valley & Highway 7 branch), which sponsored the contest awareness campaign. Inkwell received nearly 80 submissions from aspiring writers across southern Ontario, with participants ranging in age from 14 to 78.

The Inkwell Literary Festival proved that storytelling continues to have the power to unite communities, spark conversations, and inspire change. With its blend of creativity, inclusivity, and community focus, it has set a strong foundation for years to come — and left everyone eagerly anticipating what stories the next chapter will hold.



Tis' the Season

Happy Hanukkah Celebration!

Celebrate Hanukkah with hands-on activities, festive fun, and creativity! A joyful gathering for families to connect, create, and celebrate the season together.

Bathurst Clark Resource Library Wednesday, Dec 10, 6 pm

Carrville Library Sunday, Dec 14, 10 am

Pierre Berton Resource Library Thursday, Dec 18, 6 pm



Jingle Bell Bash

Delight in the magic of Christmas! Jingle all the way with fun stories, songs, and festive activities!

Maple Library Wednesday, Dec 17, 10 am

Pierre Berton Resource Library Wednesday, Dec 17, 10 am

VMC Library Thursday, Dec 18, 10 am



Silent Holiday Reading Party

Join us for a night of low-key but fun games about books, enjoy holiday treats, or simply unwind and read together with your fellow booklovers.

VMC Library Thursday, Dec 18, 7 pm





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prosperous and joyful
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May it be filled with happiness,
success, and wonderful memories.
Happy Holidays!*

From The Vaughan Chamber of Commerce



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MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

Your friend,

Stephen Lecce



Vaughan Gears Up to Host 2026 JCC Maccabi Games® & Access

In summer 2026, Vaughan will welcome more than 20,000 athletes, coaches, families, volunteers, and spectators from across North America for the JCC Maccabi Games® & Access, the largest Jewish youth sporting event in the world.

For the first time in forty years, the Games are returning to the Greater Toronto Area, proudly hosted by the Schwartz/Reisman Centre and Prosserman JCC. More than 2,000 teen athletes from 75 communities across North America, South America, Europe, and Israel will compete in Olympic-style events across Vaughan's premier athletic facilities, representing their home communities through sport, service, and shared values.

"The City of Vaughan is home to one of the largest Jewish communities outside of Israel, and we're committed to fostering an inclusive, tolerant and welcoming city for all," said Gila Martow, Ward 5 Councillor for the City of Vaughan. "Hosting the JCC Maccabi Games® is a reflection of that spirit, it brings people together through sport, teamwork and community pride."

First launched in 1982, the JCC Maccabi Games® began with just 300 participants. Since then, the event has grown exponentially, with thousands of teens taking part every year. Co-sponsored by the JCC Association of North America, Maccabi World Union, Maccabi Canada and Maccabi USA, the Games have become a cornerstone youth event that combines athletic excellence with cultural connection and leadership development.

Athletes will have the opportunity to compete in a range of sports including basketball, soccer, baseball, tennis, swimming and more. But the Games are about more than medals, are about more than just medals, they feature an inspiring Opening Ceremony, meaningful JCC Cares community service projects, and vibrant social programming that celebrates Jewish pride, teamwork, diversity, and inclusion.

Partnering with the Miles Nadal JCC, organizers are also



proud to welcome JCC Maccabi Access as part of the 2026 Games. JCC Maccabi Access is a meaningful and inclusive experience designed for athletes aged 13 to 23 with intellectual and developmental disabilities. With one-to-one support, Access athletes participate in both unified and specialized programming, joining thousands of peers in celebrating sports, friendship, and community.

Over the past 40 years, more than 130,000 teens have taken part in the JCC Maccabi Games®, gaining not only athletic experience but also lasting friendships and a sense of global community. For many participants, the event serves as a formative experience that goes far beyond competition.

As preparations begin for 2026, excitement is building across the city. Local volunteers, sports organizations and community groups are expected to play a key role in bringing the event to life. As preparations begin for 2026, excitement is building across the city. Local volunteers, sports organizations and community groups are expected to play a key role in bringing the event to life. Community members interested in learning more about athlete tryouts, volunteering, or hosting visiting teens can visit torontojccmaccabi.com for updates and opportunities to get involved.

"There's a tremendous sense of excitement as we prepare to bring the JCC Maccabi Games® & Access to Vaughan in 2026," said David Brinder, Games Director. "The City of Vaughan has been a true partner in helping us realize our vision, and together we're preparing to welcome the world to a celebration of community, resilience, and joy."

For Vaughan, hosting the 2026 JCC Maccabi Games® & Access represents an opportunity to showcase the city's facilities, community spirit and commitment to youth development. As one of Canada's fastest-growing and most diverse cities, Vaughan is ready to welcome the world, and to make the 2026 JCC Maccabi Games® & Access an unforgettable celebration of sport and unity.





York University's new School of Medicine to Combat Family Physician Shortages across the Province of Ontario

By Antonio Rosa

Since the establishment of a dedicated Faculty of Health in 2006, York University has been a leader in providing interdisciplinary health education and research with a variety of high-quality academic degree programs. Building on this foundation, York has been working to launch a new School of Medicine and was delighted to welcome the Ontario Government's \$9 million investment in startup funding which directly supports the planning and development phase. The funding was announced as part of the 2024 budget that focused on the government's mandate, "Building a Better Ontario" for current and future generations.

The new School of Medicine promises to address the need for family doctors in Ontario with a clear focus on

community-engaged patient care supporting the growing and urgent primary health-care needs of underserved communities, including in northern Toronto, York Region, Simcoe County, the District of Muskoka, and surrounding rural areas. Rhonda Lenton, President and Vice-Chancellor of York University recognized Premier Ford and his government for being responsive to the need for more family doctors in Ontario, and for making a commitment to creating a healthier future by expanding medical education.

MPP for King-Vaughan Stephen Lecce recently said, "...I ensured that Ontario's government stepped up in a big way to build York University's new School of Medicine, with a focus on training more family doctors, right here in our community. Backed by our government's investment and a powerful new partnership with the Ontario Centre of Innovation, Vaughan's medical school will lead in cutting-edge research, enhance access to primary care, and meaningfully improve the quality of life of local families. Beside this medical school will soon include a modern long-term-care home and seniors center, all focused on delivering better health care closer to home."

The City of Vaughan within the Regional Municipality of York has taken an active role in making the project a top priority for many years and has provided land on which the new School of Medicine building will stand in the Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct, a City-led effort to develop a world-class destination for excellence in health care and health innovation on the 82-acre site, currently home to



York University's new School of Medicine a top priority for Minister Steven Lecce MPP for King-Vaughan



York University's new School of Medicine partners include: Mackenzie Health, Southlake Regional Health and Oak Valley Health.

Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital.

Imagine the endless possibilities of expanded experiential learning opportunities where individuals gain knowledge and new skills that connect theoretical concepts to real world situations.

Vaughan Mayor Steven Del Duca recently said, "...I was delighted to be a part of revealing the new sign to mark the site of the future York University School of Medicine in the Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct. This represents another milestone in realizing our ambitious vision of becoming a leading destination for health-care excellence and innovation."

York University is working with leading Ontario health care partners Mackenzie Health, Oak Valley Health and Southlake Health to develop a transformative approach to medical education that immerses students in real-world settings where they learn from, and contribute to, interprofessional teams. By training in the communities they will serve, learners build lasting relationships with patients and care providers improving outcomes for all.

"Our government is taking historic action to strengthen Ontario's health care workforce through the largest expansion of our medical education system in over a decade. We are proud to partner with York University as it unveils the sign for its new School of Medicine, training the next generation of primary care physicians. By continuing to grow the health care workforce across the province, we are ensuring more connected, convenient, and accessible care for communities in every corner of Ontario."

- Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier & Minister of Health



Vaughan Mayor Steven Del Duca a proud supporter of York University's new School of Medicine establishing its new home in the City of Vaughan.



Nolan Quinn, Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security supports York University's groundbreaking work to strengthen medical education.

"Our government is making historic investments to protect Ontario's health care by expanding opportunities for students to go to medical school here at home. York University's new School of Medicine will be a vital partner in training the doctors of tomorrow, ensuring communities across Ontario have access to excellent primary care..."

- Nolan Quinn, Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security.

The new School of Medicine at York University will ensure that an increased number of medical school seats become available. This is one of several initiatives planned by the Ministry of Health to ensure that 98% of people in Ontario have access to a primary care doctor over the next several years. "Our plan connects Ontario families to more convenient care, including primary care," said Premier Doug Ford. "As the first medical school in Canada focused primarily on training family doctors, this new school will make an enormous impact in the lives of people in York Region and across Ontario."



York University's new School of Medicine to combat ongoing shortages of Primary Doctors across the Province of Ontario.

The School is slated to welcome its first cohort of students in 2028, including 80 undergraduate medical students to an accelerated three-year MD program and 102 residents into family medicine and generalist specialties such as general internal medicine, paediatrics, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology, and general surgery.



York University's new School of Medicine focusing on training primary care doctors. First of its kind in Canada.



York University's new School of Medicine will become an institution for active research and innovation.



York University's Board of Governors new chair: Antonio Di Domenico

"In the years 2000 and 2001, I was elected as a York University undergraduate student representative on the University's Senate and Board of Governors. Now 25 years and two York degrees later, I am honoured to assume the role of Chair of the Board of Governors." - Antonio Di Domenico (B.A. (Hons.) '02, LL.B. '05)

Antonio Di Domenico's time at York University, began as a political science and law & society undergraduate student before he graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School. He served as an undergraduate student representative on both the York University Senate and Board of Governors. He joined York's Board of Governors in 2017 first serving as a member, on a variety of committees before being elected chair in July 2025. He has also served as a member and vice-chair of the York University Alumni Board and a director of the Osgoode Hall Law School Alumni Board.

Di Domenico is a Partner and Co-Leader of Fasken's Competition, Marketing and Foreign Investment Group. As former counsel to Canada's Commissioner of Competition (Department of Justice Canada) and having served as counsel in many of Canada's most significant competition matters, he is widely recognized as one of Canada's leading practitioners in competition law and litigation. He also currently serves as a Director on the Italian Chamber of Commerce of Ontario and the Hockey Association for the Developmentally Challenged. Di Domenico's dedication to serving communities and giving back, together with extensive leadership experience is an important asset as the University advances the new School of Medicine in the City of Vaughan.

Give the gift OF GIVING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

Support the development of York University's new School of Medicine to be established in the City of Vaughan.

Together, we can ensure more Ontarians have full access to a family Physician. In the spirit of generosity, scan the QR Code. Your heartfelt contribution will prepare the next generation of primary care Physicians.



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Navigating Family Relationships During the Holiday Season: Embracing Connection and Reducing Stress

By Dr. Mary Marano

The holidays are supposed to be a time of joy, celebration, and family connection. Yet, for many, they are a time when tensions boil over, old wounds resurface, and stress reaches its peak. The picture-perfect holiday meal can quickly dissolve into a battleground of unmet expectations, unspoken frustrations, and awkward silences. How do we prevent the season meant for connection from turning into a source of emotional exhaustion?

The answer lies in embracing the reality of holiday stress, instead of fighting it. The truth is, no holiday season is perfect, and that's okay. Families are complex, relationships are evolving, and stress is unavoidable. But with the right mindset and practical strategies, we can navigate these emotional minefields and create a season that brings us together, rather than tears us apart.

Understanding how to navigate these dynamics—whether it's including in-laws, respecting adult children's boundaries, or managing holiday stress—can help foster a sense of connection, not conflict. Let's explore some strategies for making this holiday season smoother for all.

1. Normalizing Holiday Stress

The holidays naturally come with higher expectations: from gatherings to gift-giving to family traditions. It's important to remind ourselves that stress during this time is normal. Normalize the feeling by acknowledging that it's okay to feel overwhelmed and that you're not alone. It's essential to create space for self-care and set realistic expectations for how much you can handle.

Tip: Identify one or two key activities that bring you joy and focus on them rather than trying to do it all.

2. The Importance of Boundaries

Family time is a cornerstone of the holidays, but it's essential to recognize the role boundaries play in keeping relationships healthy. Whether it's managing time commitments or setting emotional boundaries, clear communication is key.

Tip: Before the holidays, discuss expectations with your family. Make it clear what you're comfortable with in terms of visits and commitments, especially if you're trying to avoid holiday burnout.

3. Including In-Laws

In-laws can sometimes feel like outsiders, especially during family gatherings with long-standing traditions. The holiday season is a great time to ensure that they feel like a valued part of the family. Involving in-laws can mean honoring their traditions and finding ways to integrate them into your family celebrations.

Tip: Collaboratively create new traditions that include everyone, giving each side of the family a chance to share something meaningful.

4. Respecting Adult Children's Autonomy

As children grow into adulthood, their lives, schedules, and needs evolve. While the desire for traditional family celebrations may remain, it's important to respect your adult children's decisions and plans during the holiday season. They may be navigating new family dynamics, jobs, or even geographic distances.

Tip: Be flexible and open to modifying old traditions to accommodate their lives. Prioritize connection over rigid expectations.

5. Fostering Communication

Open communication can be the difference between a smooth or stressful holiday season. Create an environment where family members feel free to express their thoughts, ideas, and concerns. This includes giving space for different viewpoints and being willing to compromise.

Tip: Make sure each family member has a voice in how you celebrate the holidays. This can be done by scheduling a family meeting or check-in where everyone gets to share their expectations.

6. Strategies for Managing Stress

Managing stress is essential to enjoying the holiday season. Here are some practical ways to stay grounded:

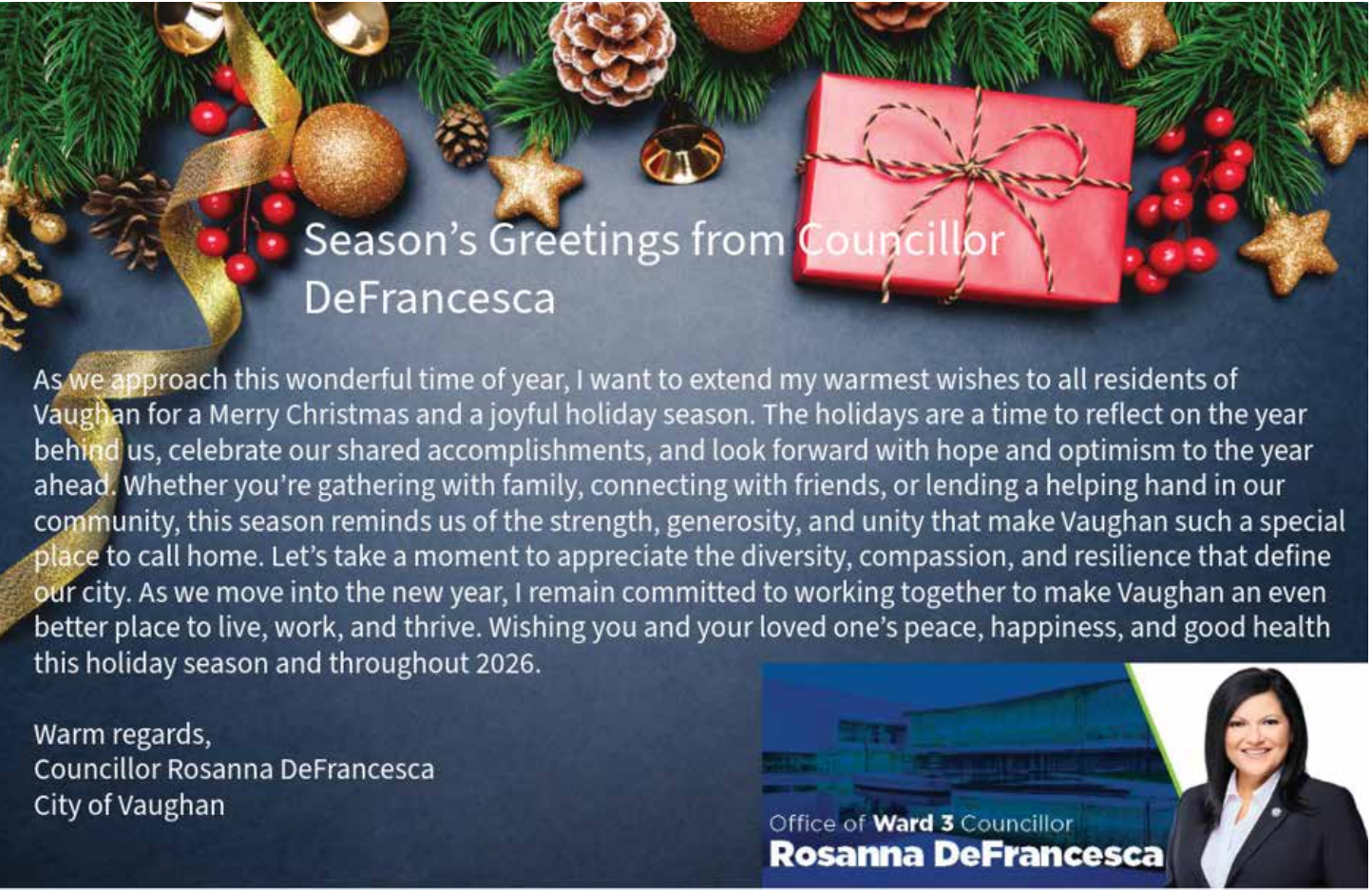
- **Take Breaks:** Step away from gatherings when you need personal time.
- **Manage Time Wisely:** Don't overcommit to every event. Prioritize what matters most.
- **Practice Gratitude:** Focus on the positive aspects of the holidays and what you're thankful for.

Tip: Encourage everyone in the family to take part in stress-reducing activities, like a family walk or quiet time for reflection. The holiday season doesn't have to be a time of dread or endless stress. It's not about creating a flawless experience or keeping everyone happy—it's about finding ways to connect meaningfully, even when things don't go as planned. Families are beautifully imperfect, and so are the holidays.

By normalizing stress, setting boundaries, respecting everyone's needs, and practicing open communication, we can transform these moments of tension into opportunities for deeper connection. Instead of striving for perfection, aim for presence. Focus on the memories you're building, not the missteps that may happen along the way. This year let's embrace the messiness of family life and remember that the true magic of the holidays isn't found in the perfect meal or perfectly coordinated schedules—it's in the love we share, even when things get tough. The holidays are not just about surviving; they're about thriving together, one imperfect moment at a time.



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Giovanni Battista Viotti

(12 May 1755 – 3 March 1824)

The Italian Composer who some believe to have composed the FRENCH NATIONAL ANTHEM “La Marseillaise” is the national anthem of France. It was written in 1792 by Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle in Strasbourg after the declaration of war by the First French Republic against Austria, and was originally titled “Chant de Guerre pour l’Armée du Rhin” (War Song for the Army of the Rhine).

The French National Convention adopted it as the First Republic’s anthem in 1795. The song acquired its nickname after being sung in Paris by Fédéré (volunteers) from Marseille marching to the capital. The anthem’s evocative melody and lyrics have led to its widespread use as a song of revolution and its incorporation into many pieces of classical and popular music.

The Italian violinist Guido Rimonda pointed out in 2013 that the incipit of “Tema e variazioni in Do maggiore” of Giovanni Battista Viotti has a strong resemblance to the anthem. This incipit was first thought to have been published before La Marseillaise, but it appeared to be a misconception as Viotti published several variations of “La Marseillaise” in 1795[5] and wrote as a note “I have never composed the quartets below” (Je n’ai jamais composé les quatuors ci dessous).

Giovanni Battista Viotti (12 May 1755 – 3 March 1824) was an Italian violinist whose virtuosity was famed and whose work as a composer featured a prominent violin and an appealing lyrical tunefulness. He was also a director of French and Italian opera companies in Paris and London. He personally knew Joseph Haydn and Ludwig van Beethoven.

Viotti was born at Fontanetto Po in the Kingdom of Sardinia (today in the province of Vercelli, Piedmont, Italy). For his musical talent, he was taken into the household of prince

Alfonso dal Pozzo della Cisterna in Turin, where he received a musical education that prepared him to be a pupil of Gaetano Pugnani. He served at the Savoia court in Turin, 1773–80, then toured as a soloist, at first with Pugnani, before going to Paris alone, where he made his début at the Concert Spirituel, 17 March 1782. He was an instant sensation and served for a time at Versailles before founding a new opera house, the Théâtre de Monsieur in 1788, under the patronage of Louis-Stanislas-Xavier, comte de Provence, the king’s brother, whose court title was Monsieur. There he mounted operas of his friend Luigi Cherubini, among lesser lights. When the French Revolution took a radical turn and, though his opera house was renamed the Théâtre Feydeau, former royal connections became a dangerous liability, he moved in 1792 to London, making his début at Johann Peter Salomon’s Hanover Square Concert, 7 February 1793. In London he went from success to success, as a featured violinist for Salomon’s concert series, 1793–1794; as musical director of the new Opera Concerts in 1795; as a star in the benefit concerts for Haydn, 1794 and 1795; as acting manager of Italian opera at the King’s Theatre, 1794–1795; and as leader and director of the orchestra, 1797. He was invited to perform in the houses of the London bon ton, including for the Prince of Wales.

Then, with Britain at war with Revolutionary France, he was ordered to leave the country, under suspicion of Jacobin sympathies. Period papers hint at an intrigue in the favour of Viotti’s rival, Wilhelm Cramer, who had led the Opera House orchestra before Viotti took over. The Morning Post and Gazetteer in its issue of Friday, 9 March 1798, reported that “the Duke of L... and the Earl of C... have been particularly active in entreating his Majesty to order Viotti out of the kingdom”. This may refer to Francis Osborne, 5th Duke of Leeds, and to Philip Stanhope, 5th Earl of Chesterfield. Pierre Rode, Viotti’s favourite pupil, was expelled from England, too, and may have left the country some days previous to Viotti who awaited the outcome of his case, after several gentlemen and even Princess Elizabeth spoke in his favour. But finally, Viotti left England with a packet ship on 8 March 1798. He lived on the estate of a rich English merchant, John Smith, in Schenefeld (Pinneberg) near Hamburg from ca. March 1798 to ca. July 1799. Between March and May 1798 he gave private lessons to the 13-year-old virtuoso Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis. After that, according to two papers issued in February 1800, he seems to have lived incognito on the estate of his English friends, William and Margaret Chinnery, at Gillwell House, where he lived officially from 1801; according to another paper he was still in Schenefeld in April 1800. He gave up giving concerts to run a wine business but used to play in private concerts. In July 1811, he became a naturalised British citizen, after his friend, the Duke of Cambridge, a younger brother of the Prince of Wales, had interceded on his behalf. In 1813, he was one of the founders of the Philharmonic Society of London. Viotti didn’t perform as a soloist anymore but as orchestra leader and chamber musician. After his wine business failed, he returned to Paris to work as director of the Académie Royale de Musique, from 1819 to 1821. He returned to London in November 1823 together with Margaret Chinnery and died in her presence on 3 March 1824.



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Our Community In Action



Thank you for making our second annual Prosecco and Pearls event in support of Sarcoma Research Canada a huge success. Your contribution truly helps drive our mission forward. There can be no cure without research, and no research without your support.



Celebrating Vaughan's Volunteers! Founded by Mario Ferri in 2006.



Blue Willow's walk to school Brought to the community by the residents of Sir Lancelot Court, Bolton.



Sovereign order of St. John of Jerusalem Knights of Malta took place at Saint Clair of a Assisi church followed by reception at venue event space Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo, and Mario Cortellucci.



Thornhill Woods haunted house, Chris Ainsworth Councillor raised \$127,000 for the Vaughan Food Bank. "We Scare because we care"



Radio Maria Canada celebrated their 30th year in Canada on Friday October 17, 2025 at the Venetian Banquet and Hospitality Centre. Many listeners follow the Radio Maria program. I dedicated this photo of the group in attendance to my mom Maria who recently passed and was a advise listener to the program.



Successful 13th Annual Breast Cancer Pink Diamond Gala



Tina Consales, president of CIBPA and guests

Our Community In Action



October 16, 2025 -
A fantastic evening
celebrating the 20th
Annual Villa Marconi
Raising the Roof event!

Congratulations to the organizers and the many dedicated volunteers whose hard work and commitment made this milestone celebration such a success. Together, the community and the many supporters/ sponsors raised over \$169,000 in support of Villa Marconi, a remarkable achievement that will have a lasting impact. Well done to everyone involved.



Villa Marconi Construction Volunteers

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