

Terra - Centre for pregnant & parenting teens

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# promise

newsletter to the community / Issue 5 / December 2009

## Amanda Babichuk Creative Warrior

Amanda Babichuk, owner of d'Lish urban kitchen is an energetic, confident and inspiring role model for young women. This Terra alumni was a single mother at 16. She is a University of Alberta graduate with her Bachelor of Commerce and achieved her entrepreneurial dream when she opened d'Lish. Her business promotes healthy eating for families with limited time and resources using organic and locally sourced food. Amanda is the 2009 recipient of the YWCA Women of Distinction award in the entrepreneur category. Amanda credits Terra with helping her through the challenges she faced as a teen mom.

"Terra gives young parents hope and a sense of community and support. Teen parents need to feel they are not cast aside by the community," says Amanda.

She feels grateful to have completed her high school education with other teens in the same situation. Amanda graduated from Braemar as class valedictorian in 1997. This successful Terra alumni recently inspired teen moms at Braemar School when she shared her story at a school assembly.

"I can't wait until I have more time to give back," Amanda explains.

Terra wishes continued success to this enthusiastic entrepreneur who manages her growing business and is also a devoted mom to her 12 year old son!



Amanda Babichuk at d'Lish urban kitchen  
Photo Credit: Nancy Burns

## Newsletter Going "Green"

In an effort to reduce costs and respect the environment, Terra intends to transition towards electronic distribution of our newsletter in 2010.

Please contact terra@terraassociation.com or phone 780.428.3772 with your preferred distribution method of the Terra "promise" newsletter.

Options are:

-Email (please ensure we have your current email address)

-Paper

-I do not wish to receive the newsletter

## Dates to Remember

Call Terra for more information

Annual General Meeting-Wed., March 24, 2010

Promising Futures-Wed., April 28, 2010

Terra Tours, please call Terra to register,

light lunch included

Dec. 9 at 12 p.m.

Jan. 13 at 12 p.m.

Feb. 10 at 12 p.m.

## Terra Board of Directors

Sylvia Nasser	Chair
Jo Ann Nettleton	Vice Chair
Meghan DeRoo McConnan	Treasurer
Cam Miles	Secretary
Ricki Golick	Board Member
Barb Hoff-Morin	Board Member
Jennifer Jennax	Board Member
Jim Klinge	Board Member
Corinne Petersen	Board Member
DeAnn McNally	Board Member
Regan Ketchum	Client Rep



Photo credit: Kathryn Bell

## Baby Heroes Diaper Drive

Terra launched Baby Heroes, a multi-year social awareness campaign on October 7, 2009. The goal of this three week diaper drive was to support our young parents and raise awareness in the community about the challenges teen parents face daily.

"We are collecting the diapers because they are very expensive and if we can help young parents redirect their dollars for food and winter coats for their kids, then that is a great thing. We also want to help the community better understand that these are young parents and they do need community support," said Terra Executive Director Karen Mottershead.

The campaign launch on October 7th took place at the main drop-off site for Baby Heroes in phase one of West Edmonton Mall and was well attended by media and other agency supporters. Speakers included Karen Mottershead, Terra alumni and owner of d'Lish urban kitchen Amanda Babichuk and honorary patron of the campaign, Mrs. Marie Stelmach.

"Every day the teens at Terra are working hard to build a bright future for themselves and their children. By donating a box of diapers during the campaign, people in the community can be heroes for these young moms and dads as they raise our next generation of caring Edmontonians," said Mrs. Marie Stelmach in a release prior to the campaign launch.

The exciting Baby Heroes diaper drive campaign ran October 7 - 25, 2009. A total of 78 individuals including Terra alumni, ambassadors, staff and community members contributed 800 volunteer hours recording diaper donations at the main drop-off site. Terra thanks West Edmonton Mall for donating use of this site in phase one for Baby Heroes and for their profile of the campaign on Global I on Fashion. Several other local businesses also stepped up as drop-off locations. Thanks so much to Terra supporters Bon Ton Bakery, Kids' Furniture Gallery, d'Lish urban kitchen and Emergia Hair Salon who all accepted diaper donations on our behalf. We greatly appreciate their assistance with the campaign.

The media exposure during Baby Heroes was a crucial component in raising public awareness about Terra and the campaign. Highlights from our media partners include; an interview by Lynda Steele of Global with Karen Mottershead and a Terra ambassador as well as three separate in studio live on air interviews with both K-97 and Capital FM with Terra campaign spokespeople. Citytv, iNews 880 AM, CTV, 630 CHED and Metro all reported on the campaign. Edmonton Journal columnist Nick Lees profiled d'Lish owner and Terra alumni, Amanda Babichuk. Terra staff and supporters are very proud of our September Global Woman of Vision Karen Mottershead whose televised profile prior to Baby Heroes generated interest in the agency.

October 25, 2009 was the final day of Baby Heroes and we had collected more than 86,000 diapers equal to approximately 1,200 boxes for our Terra babies. Numbers were boosted thanks to the REALTORS® Community Foundation who issued a challenge on Capital FM to other realtors to match their 10,000 diaper collection goal. The REALTORS® surpassed their initial goal and dropped off an amazing 22,544 diapers at West Edmonton Mall on the last Friday of the campaign. Edmonton-Calder MLA, Doug Elniski collected 13,064 diapers after a four day social media initiative on Facebook and Twitter. He filled his smart car with donated diapers and drove it through West Edmonton Mall to the drop-off site. Our diaper totals increased dramatically thanks to these generous donations.

Thank you to our sponsors; West Edmonton Mall, Global Edmonton and Newcap Radio Edmonton (96.3 Capital FM, K-97 and 790 CFCW). Special thanks to Marcus Gurske and the staff at Play It By Ear Productions for their expertise and hard work on our campaign. The first year of the Terra Baby Heroes diaper drive campaign was a great success!



Top: WEM diaper collection site on October 23, 2009  
Bottom: Campaign launch. Left to right: Karen Mottershead, ambassador Danielle with Zachary, Mrs. Marie Stelmach, ambassador Melissa with Benjamin, Amanda Babichuk and Sylvia Nasser (Terra Board Chair) Baby Heroes Diaper Drive campaign at West Edmonton Mall site

Photo Credits: Karin Locke



Amanda Babichuk at d'Lish urban kitchen  
Photo Credit: Nancy Burns



## Youth Leadership Wins Gold

On September 21, the Terra Youth Leadership program won a gold Laurel award for innovation and creativity in a not-for-profit organization. Law firm Duncan and Craig has sponsored the awards for the past 15 years. A total of 39 organizations were nominated this year. Approximately 540 people attended the awards luncheon at The Westin Edmonton hotel, including Mayor Stephen Mandel, MLAs and city councillors. Mayor Mandel thanked all the Edmonton and area non-profit organizations. Premier Ed Stelmach announced the gold for Terra.

The awards total \$6,000.00 and are divided among three winners. Dogs with Wings Assistance Dog Society won the silver Laurel award for their program which trains service dogs to calm children with autism. Big Brothers Big Sisters Edmonton & Area were awarded bronze for their 5th dimension after-school homework club.

The Terra Youth Leadership program has 35 teen parent ambassadors who represent Terra at public speaking engagements in the community and as part of the United Way campaign. The ambassadors also assist with agency events like the Terra AGM and annual fundraising breakfast, Promising Futures. Teen parents gain confidence and develop leadership and advocacy skills as ambassadors. Terra is very excited about the gold Laurel award win for the Youth Leadership program!

## Thank you REALTORS® !

Terra appreciates the generous donation of \$15,000.00 from the REALTORS® Community Foundation to support our Family Housing program. This program ensures young parents' smooth transition into semi independent living, assists them with goal planing and budgeting, organizes social activities for Hope Terrace tenants and advocates for support from the food bank and similar agencies.

The REALTORS® distributed \$350,000.00 in grants to 34 charities this year and Terra was the recipient of \$15,000.00. Terra has received more than \$31,000.00 from the REALTORS® since 2007. They have supported our Opportunity House emergency apartment and the Youth Leadership program.

## Melissa's Story

Melissa Mendes has overcome many challenges in her life. She is currently an outreach worker in the Terra Healthy Families program.

Melissa was looking forward to starting high school in the fall of 2001. She loved ballet and was enrolled in dance as one of her options. September also meant the start of another soccer season. Life was exciting! Also, Melissa and her boyfriend had been together for about a year. Then...the two of them made a decision which changed her life. Melissa was so scared when she found out she was pregnant...at 15 years old. Her mom was shocked and Melissa experienced feelings of embarrassment and confusion. She also felt humiliated at her high school.

Melissa connected with Terra and enrolled in Braemar School. The prenatal and parenting classes, labour support programs and home visitation Terra offers were very helpful. Melissa made new friends at Braemar and was treated with respect. Melissa's daughter Jenessa was born on June 24, 2002. Jenessa is the most important thing in the world to Melissa and they both have a wonderful relationship with Melissa's mom. Melissa attended MacEwan after high school and graduated in 2008 with a Mental Health diploma. She is proud to help other teen parents as an outreach worker and understands the challenges teen parents deal with because of her own experience.

In 2003, Melissa was the key note speaker at the United Way launch and a high profile part of the campaign. Terra is so proud United Way chose Melissa again as keynote speaker for their 2009 campaign launch to share her success and show how community help makes a difference. Melissa's story and pictures of Jenessa and her were in 150,000 United Way pledge form packages. Jenessa appeared on billboards across the city as part of the campaign. Photos of several Terra youth leadership ambassadors were also on billboards and campaign communication materials. Terra is proud of success stories like Melissa and our youth leadership ambassadors.

Top: Melissa and Jenessa Mendes  
Bottom: Melissa (centre) and Youth Leadersip ambassadors  
Left to right: Chantelle, Shivon, Ciera, Cassidy and Elysia  
Photos courtesy of United Way of the Alberta Capital Region  
2009 United Way Campaign



## New Potential

The importance of high school completion is well recognized in Alberta: "the ability of every student to successfully complete high school is fundamental to continued success and quality of life" (Alberta Learning, 2001). For teen parents, this statement resonates loud and clear. With the responsibility of raising a child, teen parents often become highly motivated to return to school to secure a stable future for their children. Unfortunately the ability to do so is greatly contingent on the financial systems that support learners attending school. Teen parents are hugely impacted by these systems. The current systems were not designed for the challenging needs of teen parents attending high school.

To identify the financial assistance programs and the policies and impact they have on teen parents, Andrea Mondor Management Consulting Ltd. was engaged on behalf of the Terra board of directors. With the research concluded, Terra hosted a "New Potential" forum in October to share the results with key stakeholders. Braemar School student Dana-lynn shared her challenges at the forum with representatives from: Alberta's Legislative Assembly, Alberta Employment and Immigration, Alberta Health and Wellness, City of Edmonton FCSS, Alberta Health Services, Edmonton and Area Child and Family Services Region 6, Edmonton Public Schools and others.

*"After many tears with my mom and after contemplating the options, I decided to parent my child. Because I was only 14 when my son arrived I did not receive any funding. For two years I did not receive any funding at all because I was not 16. The responsibility fell on my mom. The budget was already tight; she was raising three children on her own without a penny from my dad. The added costs of supporting a baby - diapers, formula, clothing and much more was too much for my mom. She could not afford the day care fee. My message today is that I wanted to be in school and make a better future for my son but it took two years to get here. Teen parents want to be successful. We do not want to live on income supports; we do not want our children to live on income supports. We want to make a better future for our children and we know that means graduating high school"* said Dana-lynn.

The data collected revealed many startling figures. From May 2008 to June 2009, Terra staff saw a total of 192 either pregnant or parenting teens to help them secure financial support to attend Braemar School, 37% were assessed ineligible. Only 41% of the 192 potential students enrolled in studies. By June 2009, only 22% were still enrolled. The most commonly cited reason for withdrawing from school was financial hardship as a result of inadequate financial assistance. A file review for this study indicated 91% of Terra clients reported financial hardship or poverty.

Examination of the provincial and federal government programs teen parents can access for financial supports to continue their high school education identified eligibility criteria that create challenges in accessing financial resources.

- age of the teen parent/age of child
  - being pregnant or parenting
  - who the parenting teen resides with
  - savings/partners income exceeding threshold
  - working more than 20 hours per week
  - if the teen has been out of school for 12 consecutive months
  - is an Alberta resident
  - living on reserve/leaving reserve to attend school
  - not a Canadian citizen or permanent resident
  - in the care of the Government of Alberta a minimum of 546 days between the ages of 13-22 years
- Other issues cited as barriers are varying levels of financial support, personal documents required to apply and application processing time ranging from very responsive to weeks/months in length.

Terra is committed to collaborating with stakeholders and other members of our community to find ways to improve the rates of high school completion for teen parents. We invite you to join us and welcome your ideas.

Sylvia Nasser  
Board Chair

Karen Mottershead  
Executive Director

\*\*A full copy of the report *Improving High School Completion Rates of Pregnant and Parenting Teens* is available at [www.terraassociation.com](http://www.terraassociation.com)

## Sintra Engineering Supports Youth Leadership

Sintra Engineering Inc. hosted their Insurance All Industry Charity Tournament at the Blackhawk Golf Club on August 17, 2009. Approximately 150 individuals participated in the tournament which brings together insurance professionals and vendors to the insurance community for an enjoyable day of golf. Proceeds from the tournament totalling close to \$9,000.00 were donated to the Terra Youth Leadership program.

Terra ambassador Ciera shared her personal story at a luncheon for the golfers following the tournament. She expressed thanks to the organizers and sponsors for choosing Terra as the benefit charity of the tournament. The attendees also received information on Terra programs and services. Terra appreciates the generosity of Sintra Engineering Inc. for their donation of the proceeds from the Insurance All Industry Charity Tournament to our Youth Leadership program.

## Christmas Wish List

### For the children

- baby food and formula/new baby bottles
- baby wipes, baby wash, lotion, diaper cream
- new blankets and sheets
- new clothing for infants and children, newborn to size four (sleepers, pj's, shirts, pants, socks)

### For the parents

- toiletry products, personal hygiene products
- bus tickets/gift cards (suggested value of \$25.00) for Safeway, Wal-Mart, Zellers etc.
- socks, gloves, hats for moms and dads
- new household goods (sheets, towels, face cloths, tea towels, dishcloths, cleaning supplies)

## Philanthropic Ambassadors

The Terra ambassadors won the "Outstanding Youth in Philanthropy" award at the 11th Annual AFP Edmonton & Area National Philanthropy Day luncheon and awards on November 12, 2009 at the Shaw Conference Centre. The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) present this annual award to an individual or youth group who have engaged in acts of charity, give their time and talent to better their community and set an example to encourage other youth to create or join in philanthropic activities. Terra ambassadors were one of five nominees in this category.