

Stories of success motivate youth at second annual *Inspire 2012*

Hundreds in attendance given the opportunity to hear and get advice from industry professionals and leaders

By Rosanna Bonura

Continuing their mission to positively impact the lives of youth, the dedicated team behind the *Inspire* movement held their second annual conference *Inspire 2012* on June 17th at the Hilton Garden Inn in Vaughan. The event was yet another success with 500 people registered the evening prior. This demonstrated a significant growth and continued interest in the one-of-a-kind event which included an interactive session with guest speakers, all Canadian success stories in their respected fields who shared their stories, offered advice, and took questions from those in attendance. The event also included a lunch session, which offered further networking between guest speakers and youth.

Inspire events continue to help youth realize their skills and reach their fullest potential as they embark on their professional and future career paths. The messages of leadership, success and following dreams is what make these events unique and truly inspirational as its name suggests, a vision from *Inspire's* committee who includes Luciano Volpe, Lawrence La Pianta, Rob Grossi, Gianni Creta, and Rino Spano, in addition to a dedicated student committee. "The students we had at this event were really keen and responded positively to the speakers which spanned different areas of life—media, medicine, arts and entertainment and business, so it was a great mix," says Luciano Volpe, Founder & Committee Chair, *Inspire*.

The event was emceed by Rick Campanelli (host of *ET Canada*) and included guest speakers Raine Maida (Lead singer of Our Lady Peace), Sue Sgambati (Crime Specialist for CP24), Frank Carnevale (CEO of Bridgepoint Group Ltd.) and Dr. Jonathan Cardella (Vascular and Endovascular Surgeon, Humber River Regional Hospital).

The June 2012 *Inspire* event was made possible by an impressive lineup of sponsor partners, which included: Scotiabank, the CIBPA, Extreme Pita, Z103.5, Hilton in Vaughan, Ferrero Canada, GEOX Canada, Marketwire, Longos, Pizza Nova, Molisana Imports, Astley Gilbert and Carino Agency in addition to a dedicated advisory board



Above: Luciano Volpe, Founder & Committee Chair, *Inspire*; On right: Journalist Sue Sgambati and Dr. Jonathan Cardella (Photos: Tandem-Renzo Carnevale)



who include: Enrico Colantoni (Lead Actor, *Flashpoint*), Rick Campanelli (host of *ET Canada*), Rita DeMontis (National Food Editor at *Sun Media*) and Alex Rechichi (Founder and President of *Extreme Brands*).

New and exciting to *Inspire 2012* was the introduction of *Inspire* Education Bursaries thanks to sponsors CIPBA and Z103.5. Youth in attendance at the event were eligible to apply and receive the bursary. *Inspire* Internship offerings were also made possible the day of the event, again through the support of the sponsors. Internship spots will allow youth to work with *Inspire's* continued program.

Tandem had the opportunity to speak with two of the event's guest speakers about their experience and thoughts on the *Inspire* initiative.

How does it feel to have been selected to be a

speaker at *Inspire 2012*?

"I was honoured to be among the quality of people that were there. That was a pretty impressive list of people" (Dr. Jonathan Cardella, Vascular and Endovascular Surgeon, Humber River Regional Hospital).

"It was great and it was an honour and thrill to be able to talk to young people because they inspire me" (Sue Sgambati, Crime Specialist for CP24).

What message do you hope you provided those in attendance, many of whom were students?

"To never give up on your goals and that good things happen to people who work hard. To work hard and to persevere, that on its own is a talent and a talent that everyone has within them. It's probably one of the single determinants to being successful" (Dr. Jonathan Cardella).

"To be determined and show perseverance and not give up" (Journalist Sue Sgambati).

Why do you think an event like *Inspire* is important for our community?

"I really believe that students and young people are the future. My actual goal in doing something like this is that I hope I'm going to motivate someone to someday be my boss. That's the way I look at the circle of life, that a person will hopefully take my message and become inspired to do something better than what I'm doing- that to me is a great reward. Young people have the ability to do that so I think it's important. Even if you inspire one person out of that crowd to do something great, that's worthwhile. I also think when you do something like this you're putting yourself out there to someone who needs a mentor. I know when I was young I needed mentors to provide advice and guidance on a number of different fronts so I think the unwritten expectation with something like *Inspire* is that you can provide mentorship to people, and I think teaching and mentorship are really important" (Dr. Jonathan Cardella).

"I think it's important because young people need to know that there are very few correlations in life and that often involves a lot of hard work to try and get to where you want to go, but that they shouldn't be afraid of that. If they find something they love it won't seem like work at all" (Journalist Sue Sgambati).

Expect bigger and more exciting initiatives and events from *Inspire* in the future, as they plan on expanding their target audience Luciano Volpe tells *Tandem*. "We now have the experience of two annual events and three university based events and we've also gained lots of momentum with the new and exciting sponsors that we have on board. With their support we'll be able on a more strategic level, grow the program and reach different demographics including different ages." ♦

For more information on *Inspire* visit: www.inspiretoronto.com or connect with them on Facebook: www.facebook.com/inspire.to and Twitter: @Inspire_Toronto