

A DONOR STORY

TOM & DEBRA MAURO GIFT \$120,000 TO THE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE OF KELOWNA

MEET TOM & DEBRA MAURO

Tom and Debra Mauro have spent some part of each of the last 35 years calling Kelowna home. While their primary residence is in Calgary, the couple has resided part time here for more than three decades. ‘Kelowna has brought our family so much joy,’ says Debra. ‘We have made so many beautiful friendships here, it really is a place we are proud to include in our definition of home.’



A HISTORY OF GIVING

Growing up in Canada both Tom & Debra came from strong philanthropic roots. ‘We both grew up watching our parents give back in any way they could. It was part of our upbringing, to understand that doing good, giving back, was part of the formula for a life well lived,’ shares Debra.

Following their parents lead the Mauro’s have always been dedicated to making a difference and have focused their philanthropic energy in the areas of: families, education and protection. ‘We have been involved in a lot of great projects over the years’ recalls Debra, ‘but the big change came for us in

1991, when we built the first Miracle Home in North America. We built that first home through very purposeful collaboration and with the commitment of some generous community partners, and then we raffled it off, raising over a million dollars for the Children’s Hospital. That project really ignited a fire, because we saw what was possible, the difference we could make.’ On the heels of that success the Mauro’s continued on to build a second Miracle Home raising another \$1 million dollars to support the Sheriff King Home.

PIONEERING CHILD ADVOCACY

The Mauro's played a pivotal role in the development of the Sheldon Kennedy Child Advocacy Centre, of Calgary AB. "It started when I took a trip to Phoenix in the early nineties" shared Debra. "I had the opportunity to tour Childhelp there and was truly blown away by what I saw. I left there deeply committed to bringing that model to Calgary, I felt our community deserved it, deserved a better way." It took time, perseverance and collaboration at the highest levels to bring the Sheldon Kennedy Child Advocacy Centre to life but now it operates as a leading Centre of Excellence in response to child abuse. "We are incredibly honoured to have been part of that story."

A \$120,000 gift to the CAC of Kelowna.

Tom and Debra first heard about the Child Advocacy Centre project in Kelowna in the Fall of 2016. "We knew immediately we needed to get involved," recalls Debra "we hoped that through our experience in Calgary we could help move the project along." And get involved they did, the Mauro's have selflessly committed endless time energy and experience to cause and continue to do so.

In addition to their collaboration Tom and Debra generously wrote a cheque for \$120,000 towards the \$6 million-dollar campaign. "We gave because we believe it's time for a better solution here in Kelowna. shared Debra. "I have no doubt that this community will come together to find the six million dollars needed to change the lives of these children," said Tom. "This is a generous community filled with people who want to do good. Writing cheques is the easy part, ending child abuse is the hard part. But this is how we start."

WHY, AS A PART TIME RESIDENT, DID YOU CHOOSE TO SUPPORT THE CAC OF KELOWNA?

Debra: ~ "Child abuse does not have boundaries, neither should giving. This isn't about geography, it's about need. We have been a part of building a CAC in Calgary and we have seen it change lives."

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE A CAC IS IMPORTANT FOR KELOWNA?

Tom: ~ "The thing is, people believe child abuse is a strictly blue-collar crime. It's not. The truth is shocking, it can happen to anyone. Building a place where kids feel safe enough to tell is part of breaking the cycle."

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO THE COMMUNITY ABOUT THE NEED FOR A CAC?

Debra: ~ "It's really hard to have these conversations and to hear these horrible stories of abuse, it's easier to ignore it. If people want to understand what is going on these conversations must be had, difficult as that may be. The conversation is bigger than the Centre itself. The stories start to change when we start really talking as a community, it needs to be open and honest and brave. Kids won't know there is a safe place unless we talk. Talking about abuse is how we break the cycle and how we stop predators in our community."

