



*A bracelet on the wrist of every Canadian  
and one African country AIDS-free.*



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **First Mural of Hope Completed at Family and Children's Services**

**27 February 2013.** Bracelet of Hope is pleased to announce the completion of its first **Mural of Hope**. Sponsored by the RBC Foundation, "Growing Together" was painted by Guelph artist Marnie Dallan and presented to Family and Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County.

The Murals of Hope programme is an innovative approach to engaging the Guelph community in Bracelet of Hope's efforts to address the AIDS pandemic in Lesotho, Africa. A donor makes a contribution to Bracelet of Hope; Bracelet of Hope then arranges for a volunteer to paint the mural for a local community organisation. It's a win-win-win approach as the work in Lesotho benefits from the donation; the community organisation benefits from the mural; and the community of Guelph benefits over time from a growing visual display of hopefulness in our surroundings.

We are grateful to the RBC Foundation for sponsoring this first Mural of Hope. The mural's placement at the offices of Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County (F&CS) is very appropriate as Bracelet of Hope and Family & Children's Services share a commitment to keeping children and youth safe, strengthening families and building community. The two organisations recognise the importance of addressing the social factors that affect health and well-being, with a focus on issues associated with poverty.

Daniel Moore, Executive Director of Family & Children's Services says: "We are very pleased to host the first Mural of Hope in Guelph. Marnie Dallan's painting is beautiful to look at and offers a message about communities helping children and families in need that is as relevant for our work here in the Guelph-Wellington community as it is in Lesotho, Africa. The mural is a wonderful message of Hope and we are proud to partner with the Bracelet of Hope organization."



In Marnie's words, the mural is "about hope, the hope that families and communities will grow strong together, and help each other in times of need." "The bracelet of hope sweeps through the centre of the mural connecting the people of Canada to the people of Lesotho, Africa. This mural is about teaching our children that we are all sharing this earth, so we must protect and support each other to create healthy lives for everyone. When you work together, you can accomplish anything!"

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For more information about "Growing Together" and the Murals of Hope programme, please contact:

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## Background Information

**Bracelet of Hope:** Founded in 2005 by local family physician, Dr. Anne-Marie Zajdlik, Bracelet of Hope is a Guelph-based, grassroots organisation that engages Canadians in the fight against AIDS in Africa. Bracelet of Hope works with community groups in Lesotho, Africa who are on the front lines of the fight against AIDS. The organisation works in three main areas:

- **Health:** Bracelet of Hope is developing a wellness centre and clinic in Lesotho that will pilot a holistic and comprehensive approach to treating those with HIV.
- **Homes:** Bracelet of Hope supports a Foster Home programme and a Mobile Mom programme that care for some of the 200,000 children in Lesotho who have lost one or both parents to AIDS.
- **Jobs:** Bracelet of Hope works with community groups to establish income-generating activities that enable members of the groups to earn a living and thereby better deal with the impact of AIDS.

**Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County** (also known as the Children's Aid Society) was established in 1894. Formed as a registered not-for-profit (charitable) organization to support families and protect children and youth (birth – 16) from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse or neglect, Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County (F&CS) receives core funding from the province through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services for mandated child protection services: investigation, ongoing support for families with child protection issues, foster care and group care.

The Agency recognizes the importance of identifying high risk families in the community and working with them in a holistic and preventative manner before costly intrusive intervention is required. Working in partnership with other agencies such as Guelph Police, Trellis, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health, the Boards of Education and citizen led Neighbourhood Groups, F&CS builds accessible networks, resources and supports to help families obtain what they need, when they need it to keep their children safe and well. The Agency also offers tuition support to youth in foster care wishing to pursue post secondary education programs and provides support for talented youth in care endeavoring to fulfill the dreams they have for themselves. These much needed programs are not currently funded through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

"So when you don't have the privilege of having a family...youth ask. "Who is going to buy my birthday cake this year? Who is going to remember me?" *Delia, 35, Former Youth in Care*

For more information about Family & Children's Services please contact:

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## Guelph Artist, Marnie (Fulcher) Dallan



Born and raised in Burlington, Ontario, Marnie Dallan moved to Guelph in 2005 in order to fulfill her dream of being a fulltime mother and artist. Everyday life and nature fuel her inspiration and her artwork can be described as colourful, joyful, whimsical & imaginative. Marnie loves to experiment with different mediums. Acrylic, oil, and felting wool are her latest passions. Her colourful creations are available for viewing as part of the 2013 Guelph Studio Tour.

[www.guelphstudiotour.ca/artists/marnie-dellan/](http://www.guelphstudiotour.ca/artists/marnie-dellan/)

"My artwork is a colourful celebration of our world. Each painting I create represents a unique time and experience in my life."