

CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

The fiscal year just ended---2019-2020---was without a doubt the most challenging in the history of The Vitanova Foundation, and one that demonstrated three important things about this organization which I believe merit the attention of all members.

Firstly, that our founder---the late beloved Franca Damiani Carella---has since 1987, created a unique and powerful model of addiction treatment with the help and support of hand-picked staff whom she inspired, taught, and mentored. Thus, her vision continues, and in very good hands. I salute in particular, Franca's successor as executive director, Cindy Cepparo, who along with her staff is doing so wonderful a job sustaining that vision. Franca would be exceedingly proud.

Secondly, that vision has inspired support from the local community to a degree that is rarely seen among agencies of comparable size. And indeed, the substantial growth over the last few years in both donations and the proceeds of fundraising activities in support of Vitanova reached an unexpected plateau last December. At the 33rd annual Celebration of Life, a special guest---Mr. Jack Oliveira, Business Manager of Local 183 of the Labourers' International Union of North America (otherwise known as LIUNA)---announced an annual grant to Vitanova in the amount of \$500,000. These funds will support the completion of Franca's chapel and the realization of her next project, a shelter where mothers can receive the treatment they need without separating from their children. We are immensely grateful to LIUNA, and indeed to all donors, supporters, and sustainers for their support for Franca's vision.

Thirdly, that the biggest challenge to global health in more than one hundred years has been met by Vitanova in a unique way, one that demonstrates the flexibility of Franca's treatment model and the ability of her successor and staff to literally turn that model on a dime, to ensure continuity of service. You may be surprised to learn that individual counselling sessions, day treatment groups, aftercare and family support are all continuing on a virtual basis. Indeed, virtual participation has led some clients who live a distance from Vitanova to re-connect via Zoom on a regular basis after several years of separation. I end this report with a request that all of us, no matter whether physically present at Vitanova or only virtually so, stand for a minute of silence, to reflect on our collective encounter with the woman who founded this organization and directed its noble work for nearly 33 years---Franca Damiani Carella.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Grando, Chair of the Board