

Abruzzo Earthquake Relief Fund

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Abruzzo Earthquake Relief Fund Makes Strides to Rebuild L'Aquila

AERF and the Università dell'Aquila finalize a funding agreement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 4, 2011 Toronto, Ontario – This morning Senator Consiglio Di Nino, Chair of the Abruzzo Earthquake Relief Fund (AERF), announced an agreement with the Università dell' Aquila to fund the specialized equipment for the Department of Biology and Applied Science at the Research Center of Molecular Diagnostics and Advanced Therapies. In so doing, AERF will help in the reconstruction effort for the university and the city of L'Aquila, which was devastated by an earthquake two years ago.

"I would like to thank the donors, my co-chairs and committee for their generosity, hard work, cooperation and patience during the past two years," says Senator Di Nino. "We looked at many options and chose this project because it will help the university—the centre of economic activity—come back to life, and thus help the city and area affected."

Also present at the press conference was MPP Laura Albanese, who announced a donation from the provincial government. "I am delighted to have been instrumental in the Province of Ontario contribution of \$500,000 to this fund," says Albanese. "I thank Premier McGuinty and the government of Ontario for their generous contribution."

On April 6, 2009, an earthquake struck L'Aquila, in the Abruzzo region of Italy, with devastating effects: over 300 people lost their lives; 1,000 people were injured; 65,000 were displaced or left homeless; 15,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed; and 49 towns and cities were affected. Reconstruction activities continue.

The Università dell' Aquila was severely impacted by the earthquake. Understanding that the reconstruction of the university will assist in the overall rebuilding of L'Aquila, the signed agreement commits that AERF will provide a financial contribution of 1,500,000 EUR (approximately \$2,000,000 CDN) to fund the equipment needed to make the university's Research Centre a centre of excellence.

About AERF

AERF was formed shortly after the Earthquake in Abruzzo to raise funds to assist in the rebuilding of L'Aquila. AERF is led by Villa Charities in collaboration with the following community organizations: Canadian Italian Business & Professional Association, Centro Scuola e Cultura Italiana, Casa Abruzzo, Italian Chamber of Commerce of Ontario, Associazione Culturale Abruzzo Canada, Order Sons of Italy of Canada, Italian Canadian Savings and Credit Union and other members and leaders from the Italian Canadian community.

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Abruzzo Earthquake Relief Fund

SUPPORTED BY: Villa Charities family of organizations including Villa Colombo, VITA Community Living Services & Mens Sana Families For Mental Health, Columbus Centre, Villa Colombo Vaughan
Canadian Italian Business & Professional Association • Centro Scuola e Cultura Italiana • Casa Abruzzo
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Italian Canadian Savings and Credit Union • Other members and leaders from the Italian community and "Friends of Abruzzo"