

TOGETHER WE HUG!

I recall eighteen years ago, when I first understood the devastating effects that brain tumours had on children and their families. On my family.

Following Meagan's diagnosis, the path we walked was lonely. How could this happen to a little child, and so quickly? I was shocked, but I was equally determined that I must do something to change the statistics about paediatric brain tumours.

Our steps together have significant impact, drawing attention to brain tumours, and the effects they have on too many. Together we fund essential research, fostering that collaborative effort and shared knowledge that leads to improved outcomes and quality of life for children.

Together we are stronger.

I am inspired by the compassion and strength of the Meagan's Walk community. I look forward to Meagan's Walk and Hug on Saturday, May 11th and to seeing you there.



Denise Bebenek, Founder – Meagan's Walk



**MEAGAN'S
WALK®**
CREATING A CIRCLE OF HOPE



REGISTER NOW

**TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
EARLY BIRD
REGISTRATION UNTIL
APRIL 9TH**



CONGRATULATIONS DENISE!

Rotary Club Lifetime Achievement Award

Each year the Rotary Club- Toronto West hosts the Youth Impact Awards event, honouring individuals who bring lasting change to communities through a positive impact on youth, and demonstrate leadership by promoting the importance of helping and empowering youth.

In recognition of her inspiring work and tireless service to the community, Rotarians celebrate Denise as the recipient of the Rotary Club's Lifetime Achievement Award. When presenting the Award to Denise, Rotary Club President, Stephen Thiele said, "While undertaking a huge task to move a mountain...and let's make no mistake, she has moved a mountain, she is someone whom I instantly knew is humble, caring and compassionate."

Rotary Club Paul Harris Fellowship

Mary Lou Harrison, Rotary District Governor, also presented Denise with The Paul Harris Fellowship, whereby Rotarians recognize an individual from outside the Rotary Club. This exceptional honour is bestowed on those who demonstrate a shared purpose with the objectives and mission of Rotary Foundation to build world understanding and peace.

Well done, Denise, and thank you, Rotary Club – Toronto West!

*Rotary Club - Toronto West President, Stephen Thiele, presents Denise with the Lifetime Achievement Award.
Photo Credit: John Stevenson.*



Meet Cienna's Rocking Runners - Cross Canada Support for Meagan's Walk!



Left to Right: Kelton & Zoey (Cienna's siblings), Cienna, and Rochelle



The Team at Meagan's Walk



In Rehearsal for the Wawota Gala

Cienna's Rocking Runners is a team hailing from Wawota, Saskatchewan, and has participated in Meagan's Walk for the past five years. The team members walk in memory of Cienna Friesen, who died at the age of 7, following a diagnosis of Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG).

The team's membership numbers have ranged from 11 to 20. In addition to the pledges collected by the participants who gather to walk, Cienna's Rocking Runners hosts a fundraiser each spring. The Wawota Gala, now in its sixth year, is a child oriented Dinner Theatre, complete with a four course meal, mocktail bar, face painting, photo booth and entertainment.

Rehearsals for this year's Gala are well under way.

With a population of 700, the whole town of Wawota embraces and supports Cienna's Rocking Runners. Tickets for this year's Gala, to be held on April 13th, sold out in just one hour.

Cienna's Rocking Runners and the team supporters have already raised over \$65,000 for Meagan's Walk and paediatric brain tumour research. They return to Toronto this year for Meagan's Walk 2019. Zoey, Cienna's younger sister, will assist in cutting the start line ribbon, to begin Meagan's Walk this year.

THANK YOU!



BLUE ANT PLUS



CLICK TO WATCH THE VIDEO

Countless hours were dedicated to the filming and production of our new promotional video.

Thank you to our friends at Blue Ant Plus for all their time and support. We couldn't have done it without you. And to our Meagan's Walk Heroes and Arts Ambassadors. Your participation means the world to us!

You are invited to join us for The Crane Ceremony

Date: Friday, April 12, 2019
Time: 1:00 pm to 1:45 pm
Place: Young People's Theatre
165 Front Street East, Toronto
RSVP: schools@meaganswalk.com
Space is limited.



[Click for directions](#)



Meet Dr. Lorena Baroni - Meagan's Walk Neuro-oncology Fellow



Dr. Lorena Baroni travelled from Argentina to Toronto last June, to commence her one year Fellowship at SickKids. She is now the fifth of the Meagan's Walk Neuro-oncology Fellows.

Having studied medicine at the University of Buenos Aires, Dr. Baroni was appointed staff physician in the neuro-oncology department of the Hospital Garrahan in Buenos Aires. She also trained in clinical paediatrics, followed by a three year haematology-oncology Fellowship, as well as one year of additional training in paediatric central nervous system (CNS) malignancies. The Hospital Garrahan is a national referral centre and treats 45% of all paediatric patients in Argentina who have been diagnosed with CNS tumours. Dr. Baroni is dedicated to the care and cure of children with these types of tumours. Targeted treatments and

new therapies are essential to improve outcomes and quality of life for her young patients. Through her work as the Meagan's Walk Fellow, Dr. Baroni will deepen her knowledge of neuro-oncology, including the study of the molecular biology of brain tumours. She values her opportunity to participate in this international collaboration.

Upon returning to Argentina, Dr. Baroni will share her new knowledge and experience with her colleagues in the expanding neuro-oncology program, which has a multi-disciplinary approach. This includes a "twinning" program with other oncologists in other hospitals, to help them with the diagnoses and treatments of their patients.

Dr. Baroni's ability will help already established molecularly informed protocols that can be applied then nationally. Resources can be allocated across the country, and her expectation is that she and her colleagues will see results that are improved and comparable to those achieved in North America and Europe.

Dr. Baroni is in Canada with her family: her husband and two young children. A highlight of their stay has been their first time experiencing snow, embracing the winter!

MEAGAN'S WALK IN THE SCHOOLS - HUGS START EARLY!

Meagan's Walk will partner with the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) this year in the first ever Board office hug. On April 23rd at 10am, we will join teachers, students and administrators from across the city in a symbolic demonstration of hope and support for all children.

The TCDSB has been a long standing supporter of Meagan's Walk and believes in our mission and school program that promotes "Kids Helping Kids". Focused on empowering children and youth to take an active leadership role within their school and community, the program teaches compassion, acceptance and inclusion, encouraging students to support each other and to share their gifts with others in need.

Our school calendar is filling up fast. So if you are a teacher, administrator or parent interested in or are planning a hug in your school then please share the information with us at schools@meaganswalk.com so that we can help support and track your campaign.



Your 2019 Mompreneurs Momentum Award Winner Is....



We are pleased to announce that our Founder, Denise Bebenek, has been recognized as one of Canada's top women in business by her peers and the community. Denise was awarded the 2019 Mompreneur® Momentum Award on March 2nd at the 7th annual National Mompreneurs Conference held in the Toronto area.

The Momentum Award recognizes a service-based business that is non-profit, charitable or benefits the community at large. The award is valued at over \$5,000 and carries with it the distinction of being Canada's top Mompreneur in this category.

Over 1,250 women were nominated, and 152 entrants advanced; after accumulating points based on support from over 20,000 public voters within one week, as well as impression ratings from a selection committee, the finalists were narrowed down to just 28 finalists in the five categories.

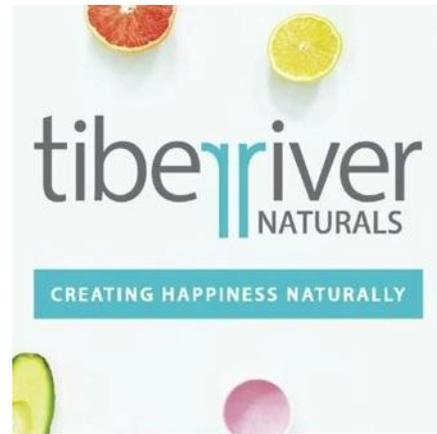
Denise comments: "I am humbled to receive this award in recognition of what we have accomplished for the children who need us. I know there is so much more we can do, and we have only just begun. The world is waiting for the Meagan's Walk Hug".

Congratulations Denise!



Photo Credit: [Trish Beesley Photography & Graphic Design](#)

THE MARKETPLACE



Meagan's Walk is pleased to announce a new partnership with Tiber River Naturals and our wonderful consultant Kelly Ethridge. Tiber River Naturals is an eco-friendly company founded in Winnipeg, which produces handmade bath, body and home care products using only safe and naturally derived ingredients.

The first campaign is now open. Meagan's Walk is proud to partner with a company whose mission is to "Create Happiness Naturally". Ordering is easy! Click on this link to go to the ordering site.

SHOP WITH KELLY ETHRIDGE

Select Shop to browse the products and make your selections (first time shoppers will be prompted to create a customer account). When you are ready to check out be sure to enter **25284** in the Party Code ID box as a portion of your purchase of Tiber River Naturals will be directed to Meagan's Walk.

Stay tuned to our social media for more details on this campaign to benefit Meagan's Walk.

CONTACT US

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Thank you to Meagan's Walk newsletter volunteers, Debbie Tong & Blair Day.