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Thank you for those kind words of introduction.

You know, it's been just under a year since I last spoke with you and shared what was going on with The Centre on Philanthropy.

I had just been appointed the new Chairman of The Centre and told you about extensive research that we had undertaken as well as some significant findings regarding volunteerism in Bermuda.

I also laid out a plan of critical next steps that The Centre was planning to take in order to begin to fulfill its mission of helping to create a more caring, giving Bermuda.

I want you to hold on to that concept – a more caring, giving Bermuda – as I tell you about what The Centre hopes to do in the months and years ahead.

I know there's not a person here, or listening to me speak on the radio, who doesn't want to see Bermuda be better than it is today.

No one likes to hear about the latest victim of drug abuse, or domestic violence, or homelessness.

No one enjoys hearing about students in our schools who are at best, insolent, and at worst, physically aggressive.

No one takes pleasure in knowing that far too many members of our aging population are truly frightened about where they're going to live and how they will pay their bills.

But for all the upsetting examples of suffering or hardship in our community, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of examples of Bermudians giving of themselves to make a difference.

They may be giving funds or they may be giving precious time, but they are *giving* – in large numbers, and often.

Just a reminder of some of the statistics associated with volunteerism in Bermuda:

- Approximately 44% of the adult population living in Bermuda is involved in volunteer activity.
That's over 15,000 people
- 2.7 million hours are volunteered each year. This represents 4% of total working hours in Bermuda

- The dollar value of volunteering is \$68.4 million or 2% of Bermuda's gross domestic product
- The same percentage of Bermudians and non-Bermudians volunteer their time

Yes, volunteerism is alive and well in Bermuda.

And volunteerism is at the heart of what drives philanthropy.

Without volunteers, The Third Sector would cease to exist.

And with it would go The Bermuda Red Cross, PALS, TB Cancer & Health, Meals on Wheels, The Women's Auxiliary of the King Edward VII Hospital, and the rest of the 399 charities currently holding a valid registration.

Just think for a moment what Bermuda would be like without these organizations, and what services would disappear with them.

It's a bit frightening, isn't it? We take so much of this volunteering for granted.

It's not hard to make the argument for nurturing a vibrant Third Sector. But the dream of a more caring, giving Bermuda needs to be translated into a sustained reality, and that's the role The Centre will play.

When I stood before you last year, I told you that The Centre on Philanthropy plans to advocate, collaborate, facilitate and to educate to help make Bermuda better.

As we advocate, collaborate, facilitate and educate, we want to harness the island's wonderful spirit of volunteerism. It represents the very best of Bermuda.

We want to help to organize this spirit, and use it to fuel the development of a thriving, organized and effective Third Sector.

So - how are we going to do this?

Well, I will share with you what was shared just yesterday with some of the island's charities, donors, volunteers and government representatives at a Town Hall meeting.

I opened yesterday's meeting, but it was led by the new Executive Director of The Centre on Philanthropy, Pamela Barit Nolan.

Pam joined us in November. She's a Bermudian who has been working for the last 20 years or so in the financial sector in the US and who has been involved at a governance level with a number of non-profits organizations.

Pam brings organizational skills, business smarts and a caring and committed heart to what she's doing at The Centre. We are lucky to have her with us.

Now to our plan:

The Centre is building its programmes on four pillars of focus: advancing knowledge, skills and performance; fostering partnerships; acting as a unifying voice of the Third Sector; and supporting and increasing volunteers.

I'd like to stress that we don't police or enforce anything.

One of our first initiatives to help foster partnerships is a workshop that we will hold in June for donors and faith-based organizations. This workshop will be led by Pastor Gary Simons, head of the Cornerstone Ministries and a member of The Centre's Board of Directors.

Pastor Gary has just returned from the White House National Conference in Washington, DC where faith-based and community initiatives were discussed. He'll share what he learned at that conference and lead a discussion on how the island's donors and faith-based organizations can work more effectively and collaboratively together.

To educate the community about the Third Sector, we're helping to produce a quarterly newsletter that will appear in The Royal Gazette. Government, donors, charities and volunteers are working together

to produce this newsletter which will first be published in June.

To advance knowledge, skills and performance, we will produce a fundraising toolkit for charities. This toolkit will provide information about creating a fundraising plan, leveraging Boards, and writing effective grant applications. Charities have told us they need help with the basic aspects of raising money.

To reinforce the information in the toolkit, we will organize be a workshop to go through the material and discuss effective development strategies.

We're going to update the successful *Ready, Set, Go* handbook that gives charities important information about how to get up and running.

To support and increase volunteers, we'll produce a best practices guide for corporate donors and develop materials for companies that will encourage their employees to volunteer their time.

The number one reason given by the island's volunteers for not donating more hours is lack of time, so we will encourage companies to institutionalize volunteerism as a part of their corporate culture.

As we continue to develop volunteerism in Bermuda, we're going to tap into global research and look at local organizations that are volunteer driven- organizations - like YouthNet and Habitat for Humanity- to catalogue effective volunteering practices. We'll post this information on our website so that charities can easily get information about how to manage their volunteers.

One of the most significant initiatives of the next 12 months will be the launch of a campaign for volunteerism in Bermuda. This will be a multi-faceted plan to inspire more island residents to get involved in the Third Sector. We'll also tap into the island's executive workforce and match their talents with the charities who need these types of professional services.

We will also be establishing a Third Sector Conference which will be held every two years. The objective of this event, which will be held for the first time over a two-day period in June, 2007, will be to develop skills and knowledge in Bermuda's Third Sector. We'll invite recognized leaders from around the world to speak and will arrange for breakout workshops to build collaboration between the island's charities, and with the non-profit and donor communities.

We've identified a good mix of programmes and services, and I'm confident that under Pam's able management and with support from her staff, we will deliver tangible added value. We know the island's charities, donors and volunteers want these programmes and services, and we know they want The Centre to take them on, because we asked them.

We wanted to make sure that we are giving the members of the Third Sector what they need to be as effective as possible.

We also had a very productive meeting two weeks ago with Premier Alex Scott and members of his Cabinet. We feel that many of the initiatives we have planned dovetail with Premier Scott's Social Agenda. Working together, we can only support and enhance what Government is doing to improve the wellbeing of Bermudians.

In the final analysis, everything we do will be tested against the values that our Board has adopted:

Accountability

Authentic Collaboration

Compassion

Courage

Excellence

Fairness and objectivity

Integrity

Leadership

Performance, and

Transparency

This isn't lip-service to a lofty set of intangibles. I know I can state unequivocally that each and every member of the Board of The Centre on Philanthropy has taken these values to heart, and if we aren't accountable, fair, objective and transparent, if we aren't performing, or displaying courage and

leadership, or if there is no integrity or compassion, or if our collaboration isn't authentic, then we aren't being true to our mission and we need to reassess what we're doing.

As I said at the outset, we want to create a more caring, giving Bermuda. We feel it must be done and we feel it can be done.

I closed last year's speech with a quote from Margaret Mead and I'm going to use the same one again, because it still is one of the most powerful sentiments I've heard about how to effect meaningful change:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

We're not trying to change the world, just a blessed island in the middle of the Atlantic that should serve as a model to the rest of the planet about how to be your brother's – and your sister's – keeper.

Thank you.

