

SUPPORTING *the* LifeQuilt

No family should suffer the trauma of burying their child, particularly if their loss is to hazardous working conditions. With this premise in mind Toronto visual artist, Laurie Swim first approached the Industrial Accident Prevention Association (IAPA) and the Workers Health and Safety Centre (WHSC) in June 2001 for support to create a quilt mural, a unique and permanent memorial to honour Canadian young workers aged 15 to 24 who have been seriously or fatally injured in the workplace. As such it would be a quilt to remember, but it would also be a quilt to help raise awareness of young worker health and safety and in the doing, go some way towards promoting action on the issue. Understanding the power of art to inspire the IAPA and WHSC set out to form the Friends of the LifeQuilt Committee.

The Honourary Chair of the Friends of the LifeQuilt Committee is Rob Ellis. Rob's 18-year old son David was tragically killed during his second day of work at a bakery. The LifeQuilt Committee itself represents a partnership as extraordinary as the quilt itself. We are a growing group of volunteers drawn from public and private sector organizations across Canada, united in the belief that injuries in the workplace are unacceptable and completely preventable. Our efforts are also giving birth to a new organization, one founded by and for families and friends of workers affected by life-altering occupational tragedies like the Ellis'. This new organization is working to form a national community, supporting those attempting to cope with the aftermath of these tragedies and those seeking to voice their own message for health and safety awareness and accountability.

Meantime though, the Friends of the LifeQuilt Committee are asking the public and other concerned organizations for their help in building our remarkable memorial to young workers. Our project is relying on volunteer support plus financial and in-kind donations. To date it has received many generous donations and in-kind services such as: creative design, the development of all promotional materials and the development and maintenance of the LifeQuilt web site. But the job is far from complete.

We are yet looking for affected young workers and their families to participate in the quilt, either by offering their own name and injury for inclusion in the quilt focal piece, or by honouring the life of a loved one in one of 100 commemorative blocks. We are determined to include worker tragedies from every region of the country. To realize our goal, further promotional efforts will be required. As of November 2002 we have achieved approximately 40 per cent of our two main targets. We have secured the names of 45 fatally injured young workers and created commemorative quilt blocks for each of them. We have also raised 40 per cent of the total budget — some \$180,000 — necessary to complete this special project. **But time remaining is short. We aim to unveil the completed project by April 2003. We need your help today.**

Becoming a LifeQuilt Sustaining Partner

Fourteen organizations have signed on as full sustaining partners of the LifeQuilt. Each of these organizations has generously donated a minimum of \$5,000 or equivalent in-kind services. Can you or your organization match this generosity? Can you help us lend humanity to the often faceless occupational injury and fatality statistics? While giving has its own intrinsic rewards; just the same, the Friends of the LifeQuilt will recognize all those who give at the partnership level by:

- Publishing the partner name on printed materials promoting the LifeQuilt
- Publishing their logo on the LifeQuilt web site
- Linking their web site to the LifeQuilt web site
- Presenting the partner with a visual reproduction of the completed quilt, signed by the artist
- Providing them a beautifully crafted, burnished gold LifeQuilt pin
- Providing them with the opportunity to showcase the LifeQuilt, subject to availability, once within a two-year period.

To date LifeQuilt partners include:

- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
- Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union
- Fuel Advertising Inc.
- Industrial Accident Prevention Association
- Laurie Swim
- littleHawk e-communications
- Occupational Health and Safety Council of Ontario
- Office of the Worker Advisor
- Ontario Ministry of Labour
- Ontario Teachers' Federation
- Siemens Canada
- United Steelworkers of America, Canada
- Workers Health and Safety Centre
- Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

Organizational Sponsors

For those organizations unable to partner with the LifeQuilt, but still wanting to get involved, the Friends of the LifeQuilt invite you to sponsor one of 100 commemorative blocks honouring the life of a fatally injured young worker with a donation of \$1,500. We will recognize all organizational sponsors by:

- Publishing the sponsor name on the LifeQuilt web site
- Presenting them with a visual reproduction of a commemorative quilt block
- Providing them a beautifully crafted, burnished gold LifeQuilt pin
- Providing them with the opportunity to showcase the LifeQuilt, subject to availability, once within a two-year period.

Individual Sponsors

Individuals can also help demonstrate the value of one and power of many. Each donation of \$20 will sponsor one of 4,000 ribbons to be stitched to the focal piece, all bearing the name, age and type of injury of a seriously injured worker. We will recognize these sponsors by:

- Providing them a beautifully crafted, burnished gold LifeQuilt pin
- Communicating regular updates through an online community forum.

Other means of support

In addition to financial support there are other practical ways in which to support this extraordinary project. You might also consider:

- Helping to secure the name, age and type of injury for an affected Canadian young worker
- Spreading the word through a variety of media including newsletters, other mail packages, e-mail distribution lists, electronic chat forums, web site links
- Volunteering to help construct the quilt
- Providing other in-kind services.

To learn more about the **LifeQuilt** or the many ways to get involved, please refer to our web site at www.youngworkerquilt.ca. Or call the IAPA at 1-800-669-4939, ext. 458 or the Workers Centre at 1-888-869-7950, ext. 3039.

