

The South Asian NEWS

TORONTO EDITION

Also published from Calgary, Edmonton

Vol: 05 No 35 | Friday, October 02, 2015

www.thesouthasiannews.com

Personality of the Week



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Saving Lives, you've got to have the heart for it!

For over 12 years, The Mikey Network has installed life-saving MIKEY Automatic External Defibrillators in schools across Ontario. **Jude Paul Fernandes** quizzes **Eva Naumovski**, Mikey Networks President about how saving lives is not only about our youngsters taking the initiative, but it's something that all of us as informed citizens need to be participants, and not mere spectators. Motivator, collaborator, and always cheerful, here's an insight into the woman who started her career with the Mikey Network, and has been an inspiration to the generation next ever since

Tell us about your background, work experience, and why you decided to take over a leadership role at the Mikey Network?

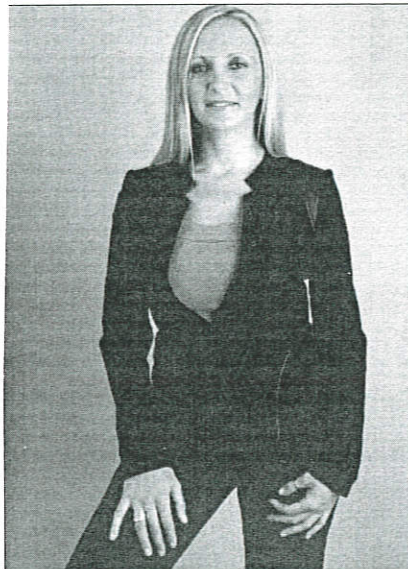
I joined the Mikey team when the charity was founded and since then have been part of this great life saving network. The charity was started by Heathwood Homes and The Heron Group in memory of our dear friend and partner Michael Salem. Mike died on a golf course tragically and we always kept wondering if an AED would have helped him survive, and maybe live his life to the fullest. When the thought fructified and we decided to implement the life saving devices into effect we called it 'The Mikey Network'. This is obviously named in his memory. Over the last 13 years we have placed over 1850 Mikeys in public places but best of all we have saved many people. The success of The Mikey Network is a result of a collective effort of all the selflessly dedicated people in our organization. My role at the network has always been hands-on—right from our charity events, to public presentations to digital media. I can't wait for what the next chapters for Mikey will accomplish for us and for those whose lives are co-dependant on what we do.

Can you give us true incidents about the Mikey Network saving lives...

Our most impressive stories have to be how many young people we have saved with a Mikey. The myth about Cardiac Arrest is that it effects only the elderly population, or those in their fifties and beyond. But seriously that couldn't be further from the truth. 6 of our survivors have been children under the age of 18, one being only 3 months old. Five of our survivors were helped in a School and we have 4 survivors that have lived to tell the tale, and surprisingly that happened in one location: Variety Village.

Talk to us about the involvement of high school children in the mighty Mikey Network

Mikey's new chapter is our Mikey Young At Heart App. This app consists of videos and questionnaires on CPR and AED that teaches them basic life saving skills. Students can use the APP anywhere—on their Smartphone's, tablets, laptops, whenever, wherever. It's actually interactive and great fun. As students complete the program they earn Volunteer hours towards their 40 hours required for graduation. Students can earn 4.5 hours annually by completing the program and they can repeat the course each school year. The app is free and available on Google play and iTunes. For those students wanting to do more we encourage them to become a Mikey ambassador at their school and



Eva Naumovski, Mikey Networks President

promote the program to their peers. It is truly amazing to see these young people step up and take on a responsibility and to a certain extent a grown-up leadership role once they are convinced about how important their contribution truly is.

Is it your vision to have Mikey connect with schools all over Canada, and if that be the case, how will you implement the strategy?

We launched the app this September and hope to have all the school boards participate in the GTA by the end of the year. Our next goal would be Ontario, ... and of course all across Canada in the near future. Based on the success of this program I can foresee us creating a similar app for adults. The ripple effect that this can create is what a life-saving network should in hindsight be all about. All of us need to get involved, irrespective of our age group.

Give us a rundown about all the Mikey Network programs, about all the milestones that have been achieved so far

We encourage everyone to visit our website to get all the details. There's a wealth of information out there that I just cannot elaborate in a few sentences...but to be fair to those of us who are busy and may not have the time or access, here are some of the highlights:

Mikey Young at Heart – Here, we place Mikey AEDs in Schools and are now teaching High school students basic CPR and AED skills through the APP

Mikey's Kids – We are extremely happy about this one because we place Mikey AEDs with families who have a child who has been diagnosed with heart disease and who would otherwise have had to stay in the hospital. With Mikey's Kids at least the family can rally together, love and support their child, no matter what, through good days or bad.

Mikey on Board – In this initiative, we place Mikey AEDs on vehicles that drive in communities. Our biggest partner in this initiative is Two Men and A Truck as they carry these life saving machines on all their vehicles

Mikey on the GO – This is pretty interesting, and the farthest you can go with the life saving apparatus, as we implement Mikey AEDs on all Go transit stations and trains

Mikey Cops are Tops – In this case we place Mikey AEDs at all Toronto Police Stations, provincial courts and collision centers, and last but not the least is

Mikey goes to Camp – placing Mikey

AEDS at Kids Camps

How involved are the parents and the community? Can you relate real time experiences of involvement?

We are all becoming more familiar with seeing defibrillators hanging on the walls of schools, arenas and offices. Sure, we have heard they're easy to use - but there are still questions. Would I know what to do? Would I be able to use the defibrillator? Could I save a life? The Mikey App will give everyone the confidence to say "Yes!" to all these questions.

At the end of the day, we are all part of a community, parents, children, teachers or leaders: All of us learn from each others life-changing experiences. That's why it's so important that we set a good example, even when we sense that we are not watched by others. I definitely hope parents and teachers who see this interview encourage their teens to download the app to learn these life saving skills, and vice versa. I think our biggest networker, so to speak, for the

Mikey Young at Heart App outside of the school system is naturally the social media content that young people get their news feed from. Students are glued to their phones, tablets and computers and they all feed off each other's interests. One mighty Mikey networker among 10 peers can surely create a storm. We need young people to rise up to their true potential, and be our spokespersons.

Talk to us about your multiple roles, about how easy or difficult it is for today's woman to make a mark in the corporate world. And how do you juggle between the duties expected of you at work, and those at home?

I have been very fortunate to work in a company that embraces women and youth. I started at The Heron Group of Companies as a student and have climbed the ladder one step at a time. Juggling life and work is always interesting, and it's a good thing that I don't tire easily and like to be busy. At the end of the day, it's all about balance and embracing opportunities that present themselves. Nothing is ever going to be perfect from the get go, but we strive to make that happen, and that in itself gives one a sense of achievement. I always wake up every morning feeling excited about what the day will bring. And simple though it may sound, it's always great to keep smiling... Trust me, it's contagious!

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