



From Tweet to Action: Toronto Twitterati Raise Funds for Haiti

TORONTO, Feb. 5 /CNW/ - Toronto's social media communities used the power of their Twitter streams to organize HaiHaiTO, a volunteer-run fundraising party in support of the Canadian Red Cross relief efforts in Haiti.

HaiHaiTO takes place on Thursday, February 11 from 7 p.m. at the Courthouse, located at 57 Adelaide Street East in Toronto. Tickets can be purchased at <http://www.haihaito.com>

Speakers from Pierspective Entraide Humanitaire, Toronto Haiti Action Committee, and Canadian Red Cross Disaster Management team will take the stage at the event, followed by special performances of Haitian folkloric dance.

The appeal of a night of great music and performances, prizes, interactive media, and the chance to put a face to twitter avatars sealed the deal for over 100 people who already bought their tickets. HaiHaiTO organizers have yet to meet in person - every detail of this event was coordinated online.

"These pictures and video coming out of Haiti of children suffering the effects of a catastrophic earthquake made me feel that my personal donations just weren't enough. Inspired by success of similar events, I reached out to the Toronto tech community for help in organizing HaiHaiTO. The rest is history," commented Tim Yull, one of the organizers behind HaiHaiTO.

"We have seen a tremendous impact through the efforts of those actively using social media to increase awareness and motivate action to help the people of Haiti," said Ron Kelusky, director general for the Red Cross in Ontario. "The support of HaiHaiTO organizers and participants will help the Red Cross continue to provide for immediate needs including shelter, clean water and medical support as well as address longer-term needs of the affected communities as we help them rebuild and recover."

HaiHaiTO partnered with GenYTO, a local group of young entrepreneurs from the Toronto startup tech and marketing community. HaiHaiTO organizers also secured sponsorships and donations from a number of companies, including Freshbooks, Torch Partnership, Burst Technology Marketing, Acuity Forums, Flip Video and others.

For information about sponsorship, donations and ticket sales, visit the www.haihaito.com for full details, or search for messages tagged #haihaito on Twitter.

About GenYTO

GenYTO is a monthly networking event that brings together some of the most innovative minds from the Toronto startup, tech and marketing community in a casual setting. The group also engages in fundraising activities for charities. <http://www.meetup.com/GenYTO>

About the Canadian Red Cross

The Canadian Red Cross is a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The organization brings urgently needed relief items, reunites families and helps rebuild communities in situations of war and natural disasters. The Canadian Red Cross supports and manages development and rehabilitation programs, ranging from primary health care to water sanitation. Each year, the Canadian Red Cross sends about 100 professional relief workers on overseas missions. <http://www.redcross.ca/>

About Pierspective Entraide Humanitaire

Pierspective Entraide Humanitaire is a charity that provides supplies and funds to a host of Haitian organizations, including hospitals, shelters for the elderly and orphanages in Haiti. <http://www.haitiaide.ca>

About Toronto Haiti Action Committee

Toronto Haiti Action Committee is a social justice organization that is committed to raising awareness about a range of issues that govern Haitian social, economic and political affairs. www.thac.ca

For further information: Elena Yunusov, (416) 817-4296,
elena@communicable.ca