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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

**W**ELCOME to 2010 and the first issue of *The (new) Philanthropist*. We hope that *The Philanthropist / Le Philanthrope* will contribute to the strengthening of the nonprofit sector by creating space for reflection, conversation, and debate. In this first issue we present an impressive group of contributors who explore different aspects of the challenges and opportunities facing the nonprofit sector in Canada.

In our feature article, Tim Brodhead describes the current context and lays out major challenges and promising new directions for nonprofit organizations in Canada. Other articles pick up on some of the themes and issues raised in Brodhead's article:

- from Gavin Perryman, a first-person look at these issues from the perspective of organizations on the ground;
- Colleen Kelly, longtime head of Volunteer Vancouver (now Vantage Point), and Virginia Brown argue that the differentiation between volunteers and staff is outdated and counterproductive;
- Violetta Ilkiw looks at the development of the youth-led sector;
- Yves Vaillancourt paints a big picture of what is underway across the sector in Quebec; and
- Malcolm Burrows discusses major shifts underway in the philanthropy world.

Two articles check in on how Canada's sector is doing relative to other countries: Mandeep Tiwana and Clare Doube look at the ways that civil society is under threat in different parts of the world including Canada, while Susan Phillips argues that the Canadian stance toward the sector is one of active neglect. Susan Carter's article takes a look at small and medium-sized nonprofits during tough times.

Also in this issue is Sandy Houston's review essay on two recent books – Michael Edward's *Just Another Emperor*, and *Grassroots Philanthropy* by Bill Sommerville, both veteran grantmakers.

Rounding out the new look to *The Philanthropist / Le Philanthrope* are the first of what we expect to be regular columns: Our first column on "Social Media" is by Havi Echenberg who focuses on new technology and using platforms like "Facebook" to bring individuals together. Robert Hayhoe introduces our second column, "Law," and speaks to how the law affects the sector, specifically the Income Tax Act's

treatment of endowments. And in our “What the Numbers Say” column Michael Hall provides a broad overview of the role nonprofit organizations play in our economy. A “Point / Counterpoint” column may also become a regular feature. In the first, Bob Wyatt and I go head-to-head on the issue of whether in fact there is a nonprofit sector. We may do this again in future issues – there is certainly no shortage of topics on which to disagree!

So with lots to think about and talk about, we are very interested in hearing from you – do you agree or disagree with the opinions presented here? What issues are you interested in? Who would you like to hear from? Would you like to write a column on a particular issue? Please let us hear from you.

Interesting activity is percolating throughout the sector and our next issue will focus on new ways of working.

DON BOURGEOIS

*Editor*