

# Community

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## Blog...

George Clooney is one of the more reliable actors working these days. It's not that all his films are successful – *Syriana* and *The Good German* are obvious disappointments – but, apart from the *Oceans* franchise, he stars in (and, for that matter, directs and produces) films that are worth seeing. Considering his star status, his choice of film work is surprisingly risky and mature. His current film, *Michael Clayton*, has a fairly conventional plot, but it's a dense and complicated film that doesn't pander. Clooney plays the title character, a



firm lawyer who refers to himself as a 'janitor' – he cleans up after people's messes (he frequently works on hit-and-runs). Clayton is suffering from ennui – his job is unsatisfying and he's knee-deep in debt – until he becomes involved with Arthur Edens (Tom Wilkinson), an attorney whose guilt at representing a corrupt and dangerous company in a lawsuit causes him to go insane. Complications arise when Edens' inside knowledge threatens to sabotage the corporation's merger... Read Will Sloan's review of *Michael Clayton* at [www.blogs.insidetoronto.com/reel\\_time/](http://www.blogs.insidetoronto.com/reel_time/)

## On Video...



Crowds gathered at the Scarborough Town Centre to kick off a day of celebration for this year's seven new inductees to the Scarborough Walk of Fame. See this, plus other videos, at [www.insidetoronto.com/video](http://www.insidetoronto.com/video)

## Contests...

- Win a copy of *The Fighter* ([www.bookshorts.com](http://www.bookshorts.com), \$52), deadline Sunday.
- Win a copy of *Maple Leafs Top 100*, Toronto's Greatest Players of All Time ([www.raincoast.com/kids/author-mike-leonetti.html](http://www.raincoast.com/kids/author-mike-leonetti.html), \$50), deadline Sunday.
- Win a pair of tickets to *The Shop* on Main Street ([www.Te-amim.com](http://www.Te-amim.com), \$40), deadline Nov. 11.
- Win a copy of *Dana's Top 10 Table Cookbook* and a whisk ([www.top-tentable.com](http://www.top-tentable.com), \$38), Nov. 11.

# Great idea leads to charitable Ideal-way

'Heart work' gave \$40G in donated goods to clients last weekend

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Rob Pio Hajjar asked one question a year ago, and a charity for the intellectually disabled was born.

"How's business?" Hajjar asked his aunt, Adeline (Addie) Daabous, who runs an international marketing firm.

That particular day, Daabous felt frustrated. Three containers of mahogany shipped from the Congo destined for Baltimore had landed instead in Turkey.

"With a look I'll never forget, Rob said to me: 'I know what you should be doing. You should be working with people like me. Your life will never be better, and God will be happy with you,'" Daabous recalled.

Daabous was in tears. So was Hajjar, who has Down's syndrome.

The die was cast. Ideal-way.ca was launched, with Hajjar its founding director, Daabous its executive director.

"God told me about it," Hajjar explained. "God said my aunt is so special and 'I want her to do this.'"

A devout Hajjar, 30, communes with God for an hour each day. He listens to the Lebanon church on the radio, and prays — for IDEAL: "God, make (Ideal) a miracle."

IDEAL is an acronym for making people with intellectual disabilities feel included, deserving, equal, appreciated and loved. IDEAL also reflects the central Etobicoke family's belief that the intellectually disabled enrich abled lives.

"People always say, 'Take time to smell the roses.' Well, they slow you down in a good way," Daabous said of intellectually disabled people. "You focus on the things that really matter, rather than deadlines. Let's just enjoy things, enjoy people, enjoy the



Guardian photo/IAN KELSO

**TEAM WORK:** Robert Pio Hajjar, founding director of Ideal-Way.ca, a new charity for intellectually disabled persons, sits on boxes full of donated wares as Donald Yeo, CEO, and Addie Daabous, executive director, look on with goods stacked in their storage space.

moment."

Ideal-way.ca's mission is three-fold: to connect intellectually disabled persons and others, to improve their lives by creating and enhancing opportunities for mainstream community interaction, and to educate mainstream social attitudes about people with intellectual disabilities.

"I feel great, happy. Having Down's syndrome doesn't bother me," Hajjar said. "It hasn't stopped me from doing things."

In fact, Hajjar will soon take

on the role of spokesperson for the charity, with plans to speak at education forums, and at public speaking venues at schools and corporations.

Hajjar's donation that kick-started the charity – \$62.05 – one \$50 bill, one \$10 bill, a toonie and a nickel – is framed and hangs in the Ideal-way.ca office.

Last weekend, the charity held a kick-off event, and invited more than 200 clients of Community Living Toronto, Vita Community Living Services and Christian

Horizons to lunch and to "shop for free" from \$40,000 worth of donated items at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 210 on Jutland Road.

"The light we saw that day, the gratitude was very uplifting," said volunteer Jack Dunne, a Re/Max real estate agent whose colleagues donated goods from estate sales. "The place was full of love. It was a tremendous success. Everybody left very, very happy."

Last Christmas, Daabous and Yeo witnessed the same light in 40-year-old Gracie: "Santa, you finally came," she said, when Yeo, dressed as Santa Claus, handed out gifts at her group home.

Much of the charity's work involves the collection by volunteers of donated new and gently used clothing, household items, computer and electronic equipment. This year, Ideal-way.ca has donated \$57,000 worth of goods to intellectually disabled people living in group homes, independent living- and co-op apartments.

Currently, it is Ideal-way.ca that is in need – of warehouse space.

Daabous' and Yeo's 400-square-foot garage is full of boxes of donations, so full Daabous said she has had to pass up furniture donations because they don't have a truck to pick it up, or a place to store it.

Anyone with leads on a large vehicle or warehouse space can contact Daabous at [info@ideal-way.ca](mailto:info@ideal-way.ca), or visit the website [www.ideal-way.ca](http://www.ideal-way.ca)

Overcoming obstacles in business is nothing new to the entrepreneurial couple, who have 60 years business experience between them. Yeo is the inventor of, among other things, the now-ubiquitous Blue Box.

But with Ideal-way.ca, obstacles fall away, Daabous said. She calls the calling "heart work."

"Never in the past have the paths been opened like this," Daabous said of the couple's experience with their businesses. "But this is different. Even if there is a roadblock, immediately as we approach it, the roadblock is removed."

# Broten looking forward to spending more time with children

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McGuinty) to have more time with my boys," she added, referring to two-year-old twins Ryan and Zachary. "I went into the cabinet while I was pregnant, I took just three weeks off after the boys were born... then I woke up one day and they were two years old. I need better balance."

Her new job with "good friend and great guy" Smitherman will ensure she's home in the morning when the boys wake up, and back in time to cook them dinner and tuck them into bed at night, she said. It'll also be a nice new challenge.

"It's a really important profile, the biggest profile with the biggest budget. Really, everything else pales

in comparison to our health," she said. "I'm going to enjoy this new role."

Meanwhile, Etobicoke Centre MPP Donna Cansfield was shuffled from the Transportation profile over to Natural Resources.

"I've been just a tad busy," she said with a laugh.

"But I'm thrilled to have this new

opportunity and great people to work with. The staff both here and at Transportation are just phenomenal."

For now, Cansfield is busy touching base with various stakeholders and getting a crash course in Natural Resources, but in the next couple of weeks she said she'll be out on the road.

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