



Story by Andrea Lefebvre
 Photos courtesy Sarah Fernandes

Mission of mercy

Georgetown woman an Urban Angel to those in the Philippines



Sarah Fernandes (left) and her sister Trish handing out candies they brought from Canada to some students at the school.

Sarah Fernandes always knew mission work was in her future. The Georgetown resident assumed that one day, when her two daughters were grown, she would pack her bags and lend a helping hand somewhere in Africa.

However, Fernandes's future in international outreach arrived a little sooner than anticipated and took her to the opposite side of the globe. In February 2011, she took time off from her job at a local bank, kissed her husband and daughters goodbye and jumped on a plane to the Philippines with Urban Angels, a group from St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto that travels to the impoverished Asian country once a year to provide free medical services to people who might not otherwise be able to see a doctor.

Fernandes went into that first medical mission thinking she'd do it once

and get it out of her system. Instead, she discovered a passion for international outreach that she is sharing with—and spreading to—her friends, family and community.

"(Mission organizer) Zenny (Gepliano) laughed every time I said I'd only do it once. She kept saying, 'You'll see.' She was right," Fernandes says. "This work has enriched me as a person. Next to raising two incredible daughters with my wonderful husband, this has been the most rewarding experience of my life."

Fernandes traveled back to the Philippines in February of this year for her second medical mission with Urban Angels. Her husband, Paul, plans to join her on next year's trip. But Paul isn't the first of Fernandes's family members to volunteer with the Urban

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