

# Accident survivor happy to be back at work

BY SHANNON WALTER  
Special

Elizabeth Kiriakou stepped back into Markham's Liz & Paul Hair Designs in March after a six-month absence, happy to be getting on with her life after losing her mother, Luba Agapi Amba, following a devastating ambulance accident last September.

"It's been a very emotional time for me," said Kiriakou. "Some days I just work a few hours. Luckily my family has been very supportive."

One of Kiriakou's children expressed the joy her mother felt returning to work.

"My mother was just happy to return to see her clients and friends," said her daughter Menka Kostoff.

"But she still can't work full-time due to her injuries."

Kiriakou had been riding in the ambulance with her ailing mother when it went through a light and was hit by a car making a left-hand turn on Sept. 26.

Trapped inside the wreckage for 25 minutes, Kiriakou sustained several injuries from which she has yet to fully recover.

"She has aqua therapy six days a week and also physiotherapy," noted Kostoff.

This constant schedule of rehabilitation has resulted in her working only three half-days each week.

Having been in an ambulance only once before and never in a car accident, Kiriakou was terrified.

The threat of being forced to retire was a horrible thing for her to deal with," she noted.

Amba, who died (but not as a result of the accident) was said to be speaking to Kiriakou for 20 minutes during the ordeal, noted Kostoff.

Karen Robertson, who had entered the ambulance to help, told the family Amba was speaking to her daughter as they waited to be rescued.

Kiriakou does not recall her mother talking, as she was in the front seat, but explained: "I went through hell myself."

On the bright, Kiriakou received many letters of support since the accident.

"My life was turned upside down," she recalled. "I just want to thank everybody for being so supportive."

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