

## **Michelle Wagner / New Love Foundation Project:**

### **About:**

BY HELPING CHILDREN DISCOVER THEIR NATURAL TALENTS, NEW LOVE FOUNDATION NURTURES THEIR GROWTH TOWARDS A BRIGHTER FUTURE!

Our mission is to provide enriching opportunities for underprivileged families in Belize; with programs for children in the arts, music, photography and sports, alongside occupational opportunities for adults seeking gainful employment.

### **Vision:**

New Love Foundation believes that partnering with local public schools and organizations can bring communities together for positive change by utilizing the strengths of their children, who are often an overlooked, yet very valuable resource. By focusing on developing young talent we believe we can help make a significant impact in our communities and in turn, assist in shaping how others view us in the world.

Our partnering companies, schools, and growing team of volunteers meet regularly to discuss what avenues we need to take to ensure that our children's talents are our top priority along with fostering and nurturing their needs to excel.

*"Together, we can nurture the talent of the future and bring the empowering force of music and the arts to a new generation."*

**- Andrew Lloyd Webber**

### **Founder:**

*"IF I CAN HELP ONE CHILD TO DISCOVER THEIR GOD-GIVEN TALENT, THEN MY JOURNEY HAS BEEN COMPLETED!"*

**- Michelle Wagner**

Originally born in Belize City, Michelle Wagner, is a Christian and humanitarian worker currently residing in Brooklyn, New York with her two daughters. She attended Marxe School of Public and International Affairs at Baruch College in New York City, which provided the education necessary to successfully navigate the worlds of business and philanthropic development that Michelle has worked in for many years. After two decades of developing and growing small retail businesses, Michelle answered her true calling and is now currently operating the day-to-day affairs of New Love Foundation.

### **The Story on NLF:**

Unable to ignore a homeward yearning, Michelle decided to return to Belize in 2009 to volunteer her time with a global charity that had an upcoming event in Belize City. During her time volunteering, a young boy approached her one day asking for money because he was hungry. After talking to the young boy and giving him some money to eat, she knew in that instant that home was where she would one day want to spend all of her volunteering time.

Over the next year, Michelle's interaction with the young boy replayed endlessly in her mind as if the memory was stuck on repeat like a beloved song. What Michelle took away from this phenomenon was an unflinching resolve to go back home to Belize and make a change in young children's lives. With no money to embark on such an ambitious journey, she reached out to close friends to assist her on her mission. With a steadfast determination to make this mission a success, Michelle faced many tough obstacles along the way, but was able to persist in forming her foundation.

In 2010, New Love Foundation was officially formed in Belize City. Not having any knowledge of how to run a non-profit organization, Michelle decided the best way to learn was by DOING, so she started holding small charitable events in the city of Belize. Focusing her efforts first on a small community in Belize City, Michelle began helping children enroll in school while providing vital financial aid to their parents so they may register their children for enrollment.

However after operating successfully for two years, New Love faced a financial crisis that forced Michelle to put the school assistance program on hiatus until she could secure additional operational funding. Undeterred and driven to turn things around, Michelle in time persevered and was able to get New Love's financial footing back on two feet.

Without missing a beat, Michelle continued to organize charitable events in Belize City; one of which was a prominent clothing drive, now held every two years that brings families together from all around Belize City. Michelle also began holding an annual Christmas party for the local children's schools, which has swiftly become a very popular affair. In addition to her organizational duties at New Love, Michelle also volunteers at some of the local primary schools and the Belize Central Prison for women on her yearly trips to Belize.

In February 2015, New Love Foundation's base of operations was relocated to the SPEAR Building in the City of Belize, to operate their offices and programs more effectively. In the interim as the building was being prepared, Michelle and her Board members sat down to revise the charity's mission and their vision for its future.

With their new facility complete, New Love Foundation's renewed purpose is to ensure their community's many young children all have an opportunity to develop their talents and gifts. With our faith in God, New Love Foundation will not stop assisting these children and their families until a secure and lasting change has occurred within the community.

### **The Store:**

Much like the Foundation itself, New Love's secondhand children's clothing stores rely largely on the generous support of many in order to succeed in their mission. New Love partnered with several New York City private schools to secure much of its inventory of newborn through size 12 clothing for its stores by receiving clothing and apparel collected during annual public school clothing drives. All of the proceeds received go right back into the operation of the business.

We strongly encourage families to get involved by donating softly-worn children's clothing and footwear to New Love or by getting your local public or private schools to hold annual clothing drives to donate to the Foundation. The more avenues for donations we can secure, the more we will be able to continue our mission of helping the families of Belize to achieve a better way of life and a fruitful tomorrow.

Another way our stores help the community is by offering employment to local men and especially women who are unable to get jobs otherwise, due to a lack of sufficient experience. While employed with us, we ensure that every employee gains experience in each department of the business, which allows them to either grow with us as we expand, or venture to other occupational opportunities. We believe that the skill-sets they have learned with us can be applied to other jobs, creating a well-rounded and valued employee.

**The Talent:**

New Love's Board of Directors are all dedicated to ensuring that the foundation's mission stays on course and that the communities in Belize continue to not only thrive, but grow towards a brighter future.

**Website:**

[www.newlovefoundationbelize.com](http://www.newlovefoundationbelize.com)