

THE MULTIFACETED RICHNESS OF GIVING

INTERVIEW WITH MARIA LUISA SICCARDI TONOLLI, MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF MEDACTA GROUP AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE MEDACTA FOR LIFE FOUNDATION – Article written by Elisa Bortoluzzi Dubach, TICINO WELCOME

Maria Luisa Siccardi, when and how did your passion for philanthropy come about?

"My passion for philanthropy is rooted in a natural vocation. It is a feeling I have had since my teenage years. I have always researched social issues and was active in volunteer work during my university years. There is a force that is activated in me whenever I am confronted with events that touch the most fragile people, or when I learn about semi-hidden realities of the society around us. I strongly believe in the value of philanthropic action, especially when it is organized, systemic, and networked. I believe in the multifaceted richness of giving. There is an ethical and religious motivation, as well as the example of my family, who has always supported those in difficulty. There is a deep sense of recognition rooted within all of us. The same actions that we take today through the Foundation are possible thanks to the valuable work that day after day my parents, my brothers Alessandro and Francesco, and all the employees of Medacta Group SA have been doing with commitment, dedication, and great passion for more than two decades."

What motivated you and your family to establish the Medacta for Life Foundation? Was there a particular event?

"The Foundation was established in 2011, and its first initiative was the My Baby corporate nursery. Completely absorbed in my work, I look around, and in Medacta, there are many young women like me. I know how challenging it is to reconcile professional and private life. Hence, we took the decision to create a corporate daycare center, which was also immediately open to local families and their needs. The goal is to support parenthood, promote women's re-entry into professional life after maternity leave, and promote work/training-family reconciliation. Seamlessly, the project, which is the Foundation's most active manifestation, expands year after year: today, My School Ticino includes a Nursery School, a Kindergarten, an Elementary School, an Extracurricular Service, and a language school. The school currently has more than 200 children enrolled, including children of company employees and local families."

What is the statutory purpose of the foundation?

"The main purpose of the Foundation is historically related to the managing of the corporate nursery. From here, the statutory purpose expanded naturally toward school services in general and the realization of socially beneficial projects for the surrounding area in Switzerland and worldwide. Our interventions revolve around three major areas:

- New Generation Development: My School Ticino
- Participation in social projects: My Giving
- Medical mission support: My Mission

With the main focus on early childhood, the Foundation invests constant energy and means in the generations that represent our future. My School Ticino is the most significant expression of this effort. The school emulates the example of the corporation of striving, not only for the welfare of the subjects it serves, but also

towards innovation and excellence. We propose a new model of education, complementary to what is already offered in the area. My Giving is the area of the Foundation which is active for systemic philanthropy, especially at the local level, granting support to various entities and associations dedicated to protecting, assisting, aiding, and promoting initiatives for children, youth, and families. We are dedicated to actions that aim to enhance health, sports, and good living practices. Last but not least, we care a great deal about the preservation and enhancement of the land and the environment, focusing on issues related to sustainability. Finally, My Mission supports humanitarian initiatives worldwide, intervening in case of emergencies, but especially supporting volunteer surgeons who wish to provide free care to communities in disadvantaged countries.

With the support of Medacta International SA, we also provide medical implants and tools to underprivileged communities."

What made you precisely choose these areas of support?

"In addition to the part that is more medically related and close to the work of the company (My Mission), early childhood and schooling are the areas closest to my heart, as they are fundamental to human beings. Both through My School Ticino and the work of My Giving, I am moved by the prospect of a better world, to be built all together: children and youth are our future. The greatest success for me would be a more conscious and united society that leaves no one behind."

What projects does the foundation currently deal with?

"After My School Ticino, our most active project, we are very close to two entities in particular in the area: the Ticinese Fostering Families Association (ATFA) and the newly formed ConTatto Association. In collaboration with ATFA, I strongly desired and initiated the project called Famiglia Affidataria Professionale (FAP), the first step toward the reality of Family Homes. Active since 2020, FAP has taken care of 13 minors. It is intended to be a different and professionalized approach in support of the insufficient number of foster families in Ticino. Meeting Point is the other beautiful project created with ATFA. The first Meeting Point opened its doors in March 2022. It is physically a place, a safe and neutral space for parents and minors in difficult family situations to meet.

Here, they benefit from the mediation of qualified practitioners who provide the child with protection and support and the adult with educational support.

ConTatto is the association I co-founded to ensure the continuation of the Educativa Territoriale project launched in 2021 (2021-22 for the experimental phase; 2022-25 pilot phase). With the municipalities of Chiasso and Mendrisio, Educativa Territoriale aims at implementing structured actions and services to support families with children between 5-10 years old who show educational fragility. The goal is to help them prevent more serious future situations (dropping out of school, violence, foster care, etc.) by intervening directly with the families in their homes.

For the FAP and Educativa Territoriale projects, I see two areas of great success: first, having established and worked in a very successful collaboration between the public and private sectors: the Foundation, the municipalities, and the Canton. In recognition of their value, both projects have obtained economic support from the Canton following the experimental phase supported by us in collaboration with other private individuals. This path, we hope, will also be realized for the Meeting Point. The Territorial Education project is also monitored by SUPSI, for concrete measurability of the impact of the actions in the field, an exemplary case of systemic philanthropy. From the entities we support, I expect them to gradually become more trained

and structured, to make clear the high value of the projects they initiate so that both the Public and other private entities contribute more and more to their support. This is the way of operation that I am most familiar with and have been carrying on for more than a decade since the days of the Birth House project. Being able to establish well-structured actions from the beginning and co-funding their experimental phases in collaboration with all three institutions, I have the certainty of seeing the results and their social utility, which is later recognized by the Public Entity and thus carried forward more broadly for the benefit of the entire community. I am deeply grateful for what we can do with our Foundation, where the economic effort invested is also the work of the daily labor of my family and the employees on our side in the company. A virtuous circle that ennobles by giving value."

What is your vision for the foundations in Ticino?

"I am convinced that for the diverse philanthropic actions carried out by ours and other foundations to become increasingly effective, it is necessary to collaborate and find common ground, increasing public-private collaboration as much as possible. I am very pleased with the birth of ASFESI, an association representing the grant-making Foundations which is active in Italian-speaking Switzerland. Beyond validating and protecting its practices with authorities and the public, this is a concrete and decisive step toward the systematization of our work: dialogue and cooperation for effective, targeted, measurable, and continuous actions. In a word, systemic."

Who is Maria Luisa Siccardi Tonolli?

A member of the Board of Directors of Medacta Group SA, Vice President of the Medacta for Life Foundation, and Founder of My School Ticino, Maria Luisa was born into a family with strong traditions. She graduated in Economics and at the beginning of her career in banking, in the year 2000, she accepted the family challenge to participate in the founding of Medacta International SA. This company has become a global leader in its field of specialization, focusing on the design, production, and distribution of orthopaedic products, as well as on the development of innovative surgical techniques. She primarily manages the company's financial strategy. Also, as the head of the Family Office since its establishment in 1999 following the sale of a previous family business, Maria Luisa has been handling wealth management, real estate, tax, and legal affairs for all members of the Siccardi family. Since its creation in 2011, she has also been leading the Medacta for Life Foundation, which acts as a catalyst for the company's philanthropic activities and, consequently, for the family itself. In 2019, she oversaw the process of Medacta Group SA's listing on the Zurich Stock Exchange. More recently, she stepped down from her operational role in the company to take on the position of Board Member, with responsibility of ESG matters.

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