

Donato Tramuto Calls on Leaders to Make Their Values Public in Open Letter to Schools and Organizations

Global health activist and TramutoPorter Foundation co-founder urges institutions to publish values statements and accountability measures before September's National Compassionate Leadership Week.

Maine, United States Oct 8, 2026 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.IssueWire.com)) - A Call for Transparency

Donato Tramuto, global health activist and co-founder of the TramutoPorter Foundation, is asking schools, nonprofits, and workplaces to do something many have never done: write down their values and make them public.

The open letter, published ahead of National Compassionate Leadership Week in September, challenges leaders to move beyond internal mission statements and post clear, measurable commitments where employees, students, and communities can see them.

"We talk about values in board meetings and leadership retreats," Tramuto writes. "But if the people we serve don't know what we stand for, those values are decoration, not direction."

The letter does not call for lengthy documents or consultant-driven processes. It asks for three things: a short list of core values, specific behaviors that reflect those values, and a way for people to give feedback when actions and stated principles do not match.

Why Now

The push comes during the Foundation's 25th anniversary year. Since 2001, the TramutoPorter Foundation, previously the Tramuto Foundation, has supported nearly 140 organizations and provided scholarships to more than 200 young people globally. Approximately 93 percent of direct contributions to the Foundation come from its co-founders, Donato Tramuto and Jeff Porter.

Tramuto points to the launch of National Compassionate Leadership Week, which was approved by The National Day Calendar in 2023 and takes place during the second week of September each year. The week was created to spotlight leaders who make values visible through action, not just rhetoric.

"Compassionate leadership is not about being nice," Tramuto says. "It's about being clear. People deserve to know what drives the decisions that affect their lives."

The letter arrives as trust in institutions continues to decline. Employees report feeling disconnected from organizational missions, and students say they do not see school values reflected in day-to-day policies. Tramuto argues that published values, paired with accountability, can close that gap.

What the Letter Asks For

The open letter outlines a straightforward process. Leaders are asked to answer three questions:

What do we stand for? A short list of three to five values, written in plain language.

What does that look like? Specific examples of how those values show up in hiring, budgeting, conflict

resolution, and communication.

How will we stay honest? A public method for raising concerns when behavior does not align with stated principles.

Tramuto does not prescribe a format. Some organizations may publish values on a website. Others may include them in handbooks, post them in hallways, or discuss them at the start of meetings. The medium matters less than the commitment to visibility and follow-through.

"If you say you value kindness, people should be able to point to a decision you made and see kindness in it," Tramuto writes. "If they can't, either the value is wrong or the decision is."

Grounded in Experience

Tramuto's own story informs the letter. He lost most of his hearing at age 8 and struggled with a speech impediment. He failed fifth grade while his twin brother advanced. He was bullied by classmates and family members. The experience taught him that values matter most when they are tested, not when they are convenient.

On September 10, 2001, a toothache caused him to change travel plans and fly out that evening. His two friends and their three-year-old son, who had been visiting his home in Ogunquit, Maine, continued on the original schedule. They died in the attacks of September 11. That moment reshaped Tramuto's understanding of purpose and legacy.

"I learned that we do not get endless chances to live aligned with what we believe," he says. "Every choice is either moving us closer to our values or further away."

A Movement, Not a Mandate

The open letter is not a policy proposal or a regulatory requirement. It is an invitation. Tramuto hopes that by National Compassionate Leadership Week in September, dozens of schools and organizations will have published their values and accountability structures.

The TramutoPorter Foundation launched its Compassionate Leader of the Year Award program in 2023. Recipients have included St. Joseph's College in Boston, the JDRF Illinois Foundation, The Northern Lighthouse, and Wells Maine High School. Each was recognized for making values actionable.

The Foundation also runs a signature scholarship program, in full operation since 2002, that emphasizes mentoring. Students can reach out to any Foundation Board member at any time, a policy that reflects the value of accessibility.

Tramuto is clear that publishing values will not solve every problem. But he believes it is a necessary first step.

"You cannot build a compassionate organization in secret," he says. "People need to know what you believe, and they need permission to remind you when you forget."

To read more, visit the website [here](#).

About Donato Tramuto

Donato Tramuto is a global health activist, co-founder of the TramutoPorter Foundation, and founder of Health eVillages. Based in Ogunquit, Maine, he has dedicated more than two decades to advancing compassionate leadership, health equity, and educational access worldwide.

Contact:

Info@tramutofoundation.com

Media Contact

Donato Tramuto

*****@donatotramuto.com

<https://donatotramuto.com/>

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