

The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health Proudly Announces the 2014 Champions of Mental Health Awards Recipients

(Ottawa, Ontario) April 1, 2014. Today, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) officially announced the winners of the *Champions of Mental Health Awards* for 2014. The annual *Champions Awards* celebrate individuals and organizations whose outstanding contributions have advanced the mental health agenda in Canada in the past year. This year, new categories were introduced to recognize youth and workplace mental health initiatives to offer a broader range of opportunities for recognition.

“Choosing the winners was incredibly difficult,” stated Florence Budden, CAMIMH Campaign Chair 2014. “There is so much inspiring work being done across the country to support mental health and to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. These awards are incredibly important to recognize the remarkable work being done.”

Each year a gala is held in Ottawa to honour the recipients. The gala, presented by Bell as part of the Bell Let’s Talk mental health initiative, will be held May 5th, 2014 at the Château Laurier. CAMIMH would like to recognize its corporate sponsors who make the *Champions Awards* a success each year, in particular Bell (Presenting Sponsor) and Lundbeck Canada (Premier Sponsor).

The winners of the 2014 Champions of Mental Health Awards are:

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| Community Organization: | Artbeat Studio Inc., a community based, peer driven initiative providing studio space, classes and mentorship to individuals living with mental illness. |
| Community Individual: | Mr. Brett Batten, an individual who shared his journey with mental illness and his experiences with the correctional system to educate Members of Provincial Parliament and communities across Ontario. Additionally he works to inform Federal Politicians about the topic of individuals found Not Criminally Responsible. |
| Media: | Ms. Mary Walsh, a comedian and mental health advocate. |
| Parliamentarian: | Dr. Harold Albrecht, Member of Parliament for Kitchener-Conestoga, who sponsored Bill C-300, calling on the government to develop a Federal Framework on Suicide Prevention. |
| Workplace Mental Health: | Mrs. Barbara Campbell, Mentor/Coordinator for the Men at Risk program dedicated to educating employees about mental health and ultimately reducing the stigma so that people will seek treatment for mental illness. |
| Youth: | Samantha-Maria Figueroa, Simarjeet Gill, Jennifer Pazdor and Stephanie Zabar, students from Sisler High School in Winnipeg, Manitoba and the Save Our Minds Project who are creating digital applications to provide information and |

solutions for families and parents who know someone who is experiencing mental illness.

“We are very proud to recognize this outstanding group. Their dedication and hardwork is truly inspiring, and will advance the mental health agenda in Canada,” concluded Budden.

The *Champions of Mental Health Awards* are made possible through the generous support of our sponsors: Bell Let’s Talk, Lundbeck Canada, the Mental Health Commission of Canada and Canada’s Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D). Tickets and tables for the gala are on sale now! To purchase tickets for the awards please visit camimh.ca.

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Established in 1998, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is an alliance of mental health organizations comprised of health care providers and organizations representing persons with mental illness and their families and caregivers. CAMIMH’s mandate is to ensure that mental health is placed on the national agenda so that persons with a lived experience of mental illness and their families receive appropriate access to care and support.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact:

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