



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Resilience, Recovery and Awareness: CAMIMH Announces the *Faces of Mental Illness* for 2018

(TORONTO, ON) July 17, 2018 – Today, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) proudly announces the five Canadians who have been selected for the 16th annual *Faces of Mental Illness* campaign.

“This year the focus of our campaign will be to push for mental health parity,” said Fred Phelps CAMIMH Campaign Chair. “These five individuals are bravely sharing their personal stories and will inspire Canadians and policy-makers to recognize that mental illnesses deserve treatment, funding and dedicated research similar to any major health issue.”

The *Faces* campaign, presented by Bell Let’s Talk, will tell the stories of five Canadians who are living with mental illness, and underline the importance of proper diagnosis and treatment. Each year, CAMIMH receives hundreds of nominations filled with inspiring stories of resilience and recovery about individuals who want to raise awareness across Canada.

“Bell Let’s Talk is proud to support CAMIMH and the *Faces of Mental Illness* campaign,” said Mary Deacon, Chair of Bell Let’s Talk. “By openly sharing their struggles with mental illness, these outstanding Canadians are helping to reduce the stigma of mental illness in Canada. Congratulations to the 2018 *Faces of Mental Illness*.”

The 2018 *Faces of Mental Illness*:

Shania Pruden (Winnipeg, MB) Shania is an Indigenous rights activist, blogger and youth motivational speaker living with OCD and depression. She started her blog to raise awareness about Indigenous rights in Canada, and is now focused on writing about mental health, truth and reconciliation and youth empowerment.

B Adair (Hardisty, AB) After a number of traumatic calls as a paramedic in a rural community, B began struggling with PTSD, anxiety and depression. B faced the challenges of living in an isolated community where mental health services were not adequate and coming out as transgender was difficult. B is now in recovery with his mental illness and takes pride in being an advocate for people in rural areas who struggle with their identities and mental illness.

Frédéric Tremblay (Québec, QC) OCD has been part of Frédéric’s life since adolescence. His mental illness spiralled out of control during his late-twenties and for the subsequent 10 years. Frédéric sought treatment from psychologists and psychiatrists and now works to help people living with OCD cope with the disorder and lead a stable life.

Sylvie Mercier (Montréal, QC) Sylvie began experiencing symptoms of bipolar disorder later in life, and it took her some time to recognize and accept she needed support. Her diagnosis and path to recovery was challenging and took a toll on her family. Sylvie now lives in recovery and continues to work in health and wellness.

Julie Keddy (Digby, NS) Not knowing why she was having negative spiralling thoughts for much of her life, it was a relief for Julie when she was diagnosed with anxiety, OCD and depression. With counselling and medication she now lives in recovery. As a teacher in a rural community, Julie helps provide support for students struggling with mental illness.

The *Faces* will be featured in a national media outreach and advocacy campaign, which will include videos that will be shared with Parliamentarians at an event during Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW), October 1 to 7, 2018. MIAW encourages action and engages Canadians in a public conversation about mental illness.

CAMIMH would also like to thank its generous sponsors who make this campaign possible: [Bell Let's Talk](#), [the Mental Health Commission of Canada](#), [Lundbeck Canada Inc.](#), [Innovative Medicines Canada](#), and [Impact Public Affairs](#).

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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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