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Margaret Trudeau One of Four Inspiration Award Winners at Premier Gala for Mental Health

OTTAWA – Former first lady Margaret Trudeau is one of four winners of a 2007 Inspiration Award, presented at the Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health's prestigious annual Gala celebration.

Mrs. Trudeau is being recognized with an Inspiration Award in the community category for her courage in stepping forward last May to publicly share her personal struggle with mental illness.

“While encouraging support for the new Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre that recently opened in Ottawa, she also became a determined champion of those reluctant to seek help because of the associated stamp of stigma and discrimination,” said David Coffey, Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Directors.

This year an Inspiration Award is being presented to Jackie Schroeder, who speaks openly to high school students about what it's like to live with a mental illness in order to remove the fear of people living with schizophrenia and provide encouragement and hope to others.

Another Inspiration Award is being given to Gerry McGee, who is dedicated to breaking down the stigma of mental illness through personal example and by co-founding the Depression and Manic Depression Support Group of the National Capital Region, now known as Mood Disorders Ottawa.

The final Inspiration Award in the personal category is being handed to Heather Hennigar, who courageously volunteered to become the face of mental health for the Foundation's innovative ‘You Know Who I Am’ fundraising campaign.

The winner also recently penned a four-part series for the Ottawa Citizen detailing her dramatic journey from early despair with post-partum depression through to hope, recovery and advocacy today.

“Between these shining examples of the hope and healing that is possible for those who live with a mental illness and the opening of our new state-of-the-art facility last November, we have a lot to celebrate in 2007,” said Tim Kluge, President and CEO of the Foundation.

Now in its ninth year, the Gala attracts hundreds of influential leaders from the business, political, public and not-for-profit communities.

One of the region's most exciting social events, the annual Inspiration Awards Gala is a key fundraising activity for mental health research, programs and patient care.

This popular evening combines culinary delights, incredible entertainment, networking opportunities and a Silent and Live Auction featuring exclusive premium packages, as well as a raffle for a \$5,000 Holt Renfrew Shopping Spree.

“Any contribution to the Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health is a sincere acknowledgement of the excellent patient care and advanced research being carried out by dedicated staff across the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group,” said Mr. Kluge.

The Foundation funds innovative research such as gene mapping of mental illness, the purchase of advanced medical technology, and specialized professional training for staff which ultimately improves care for residents across Eastern Ontario.

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For more information, please see the attached profiles of the 2007 Inspiration Award winners or contact:

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