



-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

**Putting Their Best Face Forward:
CAMIMH Announces the 2012 *Faces of Mental Illness***

(Ottawa, Ontario) August 14th, 2012. Today, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) announced the five Canadians selected for the 10th annual *Faces of Mental Illness* campaign. CAMIMH received 90 nominations from across Canada of people living in recovery from mental illness. Of these, each of whom had inspiring stories to share, CAMIMH has chosen five individuals whose messages speak so clearly to their lived experiences.

“Every year, we are humbled by the stories of our nominees. This year was no exception,” stated Dr. Karen Cohen, Chair of Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) 2012. “Canadians continue to prove that with access to appropriate mental health services and supports, recovery from mental illness is possible. This year’s *Faces* represent courage, strength, and resilience, and we are grateful to them for allowing their personal stories of recovery and triumph to inspire millions.”

“The *Faces of Mental Illness* campaign aims to get people talking about mental illness and recognizing the important role mental health plays in the lives of all Canadians,” continued Dr. Cohen. “By coming forward, our *Faces* help to remove the stigma attached to mental illness. With one in five Canadians with personal experience of mental health problems in a given year, CAMIMH’s *Faces* are our faces. By sharing their stories in such a public way, letting us know what’s worked and what hasn’t worked so well on their journeys of recovery, these five people help significantly to advance the mental health agenda for Canada.”

The chosen *Faces* for the *Faces of Mental Illness* 2012 campaign are:

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| Sandra Yuen MacKay | An artist and author who shares her story widely to educate her community about mental illness, from Vancouver, British Columbia. |
| Alicia Raimundo | A motivational speaker who works with many charities from Pickering, Ontario. |
| Dustin Garron | A student and creator of <i>The Mental Health Project</i> from Renfrew, Ontario. |
| Laurie Pinard | A former government employee who now teaches the benefits of fitness for mental wellness, from Ottawa, Ontario. |
| Chantal Poitras | A volunteer with the Canadian Mental Health Association from Fredericton, New Brunswick. |

Throughout the next year, the five *Faces* will take part in events and campaigns to help deliver the message to all Canadians that recovery from mental illness is possible. The *Faces of Mental Illness* campaign is sponsored by Bell as part of the Bell Let’s Talk mental health initiative and consists of the following elements: a marquee event on Parliament Hill during MIAW; the *Faces* will be featured in national public service announcements aired across Canada; the *Faces* will also take part in a national media outreach campaign to tell their stories and carry on the vital mental health conversation in this country.

**CANADIAN ALLIANCE
ON MENTAL ILLNESS
AND MENTAL HEALTH**



**ALLIANCE CANADIENNE
POUR LA MALADIE MENTALE
ET LA SANTÉ MENTALE**

The *Faces of Mental Illness* and *MIAW* campaigns would not be possible without the support of our generous sponsors: Bell, RBC Foundation, RX&D, and Janssen. To find out more about the *Faces of Mental Illness* or *Mental Illness Awareness Week*, please visit www.camimh.ca.

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Established in 1998, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is an alliance of national 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, please contact:

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