



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

NAME: Cassandra Lewis, Administrator

PHONE: 905-850-3030

EMAIL: info@hatsonforawareness.com

**CAMH NAMES HATS ON FOR AWARENESS CO-FOUNDER AS DIFFERENCE MAKER
Enza Tiberi-Checchia Recognized as a Canadian Leader in Mental Health**

November 28, 2017 (Toronto) – Co-Founder of Hats On For Awareness (HOA), Enza Tiberi-Checchia has been named one of Canada’s leaders in Mental Health by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

Marking Canada’s 150th birthday, CAMH put out a cross-country call for people influencing change in addiction and mental health. Named “Difference Makers,” CAMH is recognizing 150 Canadians making a difference in every province across the nation.

More than 3,700 nominations were put forward and a prominent national committee co-Chaired by Sandi and Jim Treliving selected 150 Difference Makers.

Tiberi Checchia was nominated by HOA co-founder Benny Caringi and friend Nikki Bettinelli.

“I don’t know anyone who deserves this title and recognition more,” said Caringi. “She has made a difference in so many people’s lives just by speaking out about her own experience with mental illness and now encouraging others to share their stories, break down barriers and end the stigma attached to these debilitating diseases.”

“Enza has taken her mental illness and has used it to transform herself,” Bettinelli added.

“She understands that it is her purpose to use mental illness to connect with others and share stories in order to help those who are suffering see the light. She provides hope, she inspires and she teaches that everyone has a path for a reason.”

Her path has not been easy. In 1988, at the age of 23, she suffered her first major depressive episode and six months later, her beloved father, Giovanni Tiberi, lost his battle with depression and took his own life.

Enza has experienced over half a dozen major depressive episodes between the ages of 23 and 42 but she does not let that define her. She is a mother, a business owner, has served on



boards of directors and is now using her voice to talk about mental illness in person at high schools and detox facilities, as well as through her new online platform, a blog called Mi Etcetera.

After she lost her father, she realized she did not know enough about the signs of depression or mental illness and made a promise to prevent this from happening to other families. This promise cultivated in the creation of Hats On For Awareness in 2009. Co-founded with Caringi, it is now a successful registered charity based in Vaughan, Ontario, that to date has raised and distributed more than \$750,000 to further the reach of mental health programs which enhance the lives of those living with and affected by mental illness and addictions.

“When we started this charity nearly a decade ago, I knew I wanted to help others recognize and understand the signs of mental illness but what I didn’t know and what I’m deeply grateful for, is how much this network of supporters and like-minded benefactors has filled my heart and ignited my soul into my life’s work to change how we see and treat mental illness,” said CAMH Difference Maker Tiberi-Checchia.

“HOA’s vision of ‘mental wellness for all’ is possible and it begins with people who speak out and people who are willing to listen. We will get there, together.”

HOA has hosted its annual Hatsquerade Gala, organized by a volunteer board for nine years. This year’s sold out Gala raised \$145,000 and more than 950 supporters attended with the mandate of wearing a hat to show support and raise awareness.

Recipients of donations to HOA include the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) of which HOA fulfilled a \$270,000 pledge toward a dedicated volunteer lounge and a patient room, Jack.org’s National Student Summit, a pledge of \$150,000 to Humber River Hospital’s Mental Health and Addictions Program and most recently support of ‘What’s Up’ walk-in clinics.

For more information about Hats On For Awareness, visit www.hatsonforawareness.com. #TALKHATSON. To request an interview or photo, please contact info@hatsonforawareness.com