

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### A record \$3 Million Raised for Mental Health at the Courage To Come Back Awards

**Vancouver, BC (May 11, 2018)** – A record \$3 million was raised at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Courage To Come Back Awards on May 10 at the Vancouver Convention Centre with over 1,800 people gathered to celebrate the extraordinary stories of triumph over adversity of the five inspiring awards recipients.

Each year, Coast Mental Health organizes this coveted awards gala, an inspirational evening to recognize five truly remarkable British Columbians. Funds raised will go directly to Coast Mental Health to support those living with mental illness. The event was chaired by Lorne R. Segal, O.B.C., D.Litt. (Hon.), LL.D. (Hon.), President of Kingswood Properties Ltd., and attended by many of British Columbia's most notable business leaders and philanthropists.



After sharing their stories of how they have 'come back to give back' in their communities, each of the five Courage To Come Back Award recipients received a stunning glass sculpture designed by renowned Musqueam artist Susan A. Point. This year's recipients are as follows:

- Josh Dahling – Burnaby (Addiction);
- Ingrid Bates – Abbotsford (Medical);
- Suzanne Venuta – Comox (Mental Health);
- Jim Ryan – Chilliwack (Physical Rehabilitation); and
- Alisa Gil Silvestre – Burnaby (Youth).

Suzanne Venuta, the award recipient for Mental Health, perfectly captured the essence of the evening: "If there's only one thing you remember from my speech tonight, may it be this: that connections save lives. It did mine. Connections are what hold hope together and hope allows us to dream." For more inspirational stories of these five courageous individuals, visit <https://couragetocomeback.ca/2018-recipients/>.

**The Courage To Come Back Awards** ([www.couragetocomeback.ca](http://www.couragetocomeback.ca)) - Rising above adversity in life often means overcoming the challenge of maintaining mental health despite unfathomably difficult circumstances. Celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> year, the Courage To Come Back Awards recognize the lives of five remarkable individuals whose stories inspire acts of courage and compassion, and ensure that Coast Mental Health can continue to provide compassionate, meaningful support for anyone with the courage to come back from mental illness.

**Coast Mental Health** - Coast Mental Health is the largest provider of community-based services for people living with mental illness in British Columbia. We are an established leader in our field, known for high quality, innovative programs and research. As a critical link between hospital services and our communities, Coast Mental Health provides housing, support, and employment programs and services for individuals affected by mental illness making lasting recovery possible. Each year, we provide essential services to over 4,000 clients living with mental illness so they can find their meaningful place in our communities – a place to live, a place to connect, and a place to work. Coast Mental Health Foundation raises funds exclusively for Coast Mental Health. To find out more about the life-changing programs and services offered by Coast Mental Health, visit [coastmentalhealth.com](http://coastmentalhealth.com).

**Media Contact:** Isabela Zabava, Executive Director, Coast Mental Health Foundation  
[isabela.zabava@coastmentalhealth.com](mailto:isabela.zabava@coastmentalhealth.com) | (604) 349-2217