

February 26, 2018

LOCAL PARAMEDIC RALLIES IN SUPPORT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) has received a \$6,615 donation from local paramedic, author and mental health advocate Natalie Harris in support of the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Child and Youth Mental Health Program.

“We are so thankful for not only the funds raised by Natalie, but also for her advocacy,” says Eric Dean, RVH Foundation Chief Executive Officer. “By sharing her own story about mental illness and the care she received at RVH, she is encouraging people to speak up about their experiences and empowering them to seek help.”

The funds were raised through Natalie’s recent event, an Evening for Mental Health. A sold out crowd of close to 300 people enjoyed an evening featuring keynote speakers Sean McCann, formerly of the band Great Big Sea, and Michael Landsberg, Canadian sports journalist and founder of #sicknotweak, who both shared their personal journey with mental health.

The event raised an equal amount for #IVEGOTYOURBACK911, a campaign which brings awareness to Emergency First Responder’s mental health.

“It takes a village to care for those suffering from mental illness. Part of that village includes RVH,” says Harris. “Having the ability to care for young people battling with their mental health here, in Barrie, is so essential for their recovery.”

The Simcoe Muskoka Regional Child and Youth Mental Health Program officially opened on December 19, 2017. The unit features eight inpatient beds, child and youth friendly décor, and a day program so kids can get the help they need and return home each night.

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In photo: **Mary Webb, Child & Youth Mental Health Program and Adult Crisis Services, Natalie Harris, Eric Dean, RVH Foundation CEO accept proceeds from paramedic, mental health advocate, and author Natalie Harris’s Evening for Mental Health, supporting the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Child and Youth Mental Health Program.**

For more Information:

Jane Cocking
Manager, Corporate
Communications
705 728 9090 ext. 41611

About RVH:

RVH is a regional health centre in Barrie, Ontario, located 80 kilometres north of Toronto. As the largest hospital in the region of Simcoe Muskoka, RVH’s team of over 350 physicians, 2,500 employees and 850 volunteers provides exceptional care and specialty services to almost half a million residents, including cancer care, stroke services, orthopaedics, intensive care, mental health and interventional radiology. RVH is focused on delivering high-quality, safe care that puts patients and their families first. For more information visit www.rvh.on.ca