



Press release

For immediate release

Bal des lumières raises \$1,430,000 for Montréal mental health foundations

New record for Québec's largest fundraising event in support of mental health

MONTRÉAL, March 24, 2016 – With the theme “United for mental health,” the second Bal des lumières held last night at the Bell Centre raised \$1,430,000 for the Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Montréal Foundation, the Douglas Mental Health University Institute Foundation, and the Mental Illness Foundation.

More than 850 guests attended Bal des lumières, including Gaétan Barrette, Minister of Health and Social Services, Jacques Daoust, Minister of Transport, Sustainable Mobility and Transport Electrification, and Montréal Mayor Denis Coderre, setting a new record for fundraising in support of mental health in Québec, surpassing the \$1.1 million raised at the first Bal in 2013. Co-chaired by George Cope of Bell, Serge Godin of CGI, Geoff Molson of the Club de Hockey Canadien, Bell Centre and evenko, and Louis Vachon of National Bank, the extraordinary evening was hosted by Bell Media's Isabelle Racicot and featured a fundraising auction and performances by DJ Ève Salvail, Brigitte M, Dominic Lacasse, Diva5 and Luc Langevin.

“It is truly impressive to see so many Québec leaders come together to send a powerful message of support to all those who struggle with mental illness,” said George Cope, President and CEO of BCE and Bell, and honorary chair of the Bal des lumières. “The Bal is a unique and powerful event that raises significant funding for these three world-class Québec mental health foundations, while helping to reduce the stigma around mental illness. Together, we are shining a warm and welcoming light to ensure that mental illness will never again be relegated to the shadows of society.”

This unprecedented mobilization has a profound impact because the three recipient organizations cover such a wide spectrum of mental health initiatives: awareness, innovative treatments, quality care, leading-edge research and social integration. “I am delighted to see a second Bal des lumières take place,” said Gaétan Barrette, Minister of Health and Social Services. “The event's resounding success illustrates just how much people care about mental health. We are fortunate to be able to count on renowned researchers, experts and professionals, as well as leading organizations such as the Douglas Mental Health University Institute Foundation, the Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Montréal Foundation and the Mental Illness Foundation. I would like to thank their members for everything they do, which makes an impact both here and abroad.”

Montréal Mayor Denis Coderre emphasized the importance of fighting stigma: “The spirit of cooperation that brought these three major foundations together tonight has resulted in unmatched mobilization, which in turn will lead to innovative treatments, quality care and increased awareness. Montréal is an inclusive city focused on its people. We value warmth, solidarity, openness and tolerance, all of which our citizens take to heart. Mental illness can affect anyone; we must keep fighting prejudice.”

With the money raised, the Douglas Mental Health University Institute Foundation will continue its vital research into preventing and treating mental disorders such as depression, anxiety and eating disorders. The Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Montréal Foundation will continue to improve the quality of life of its clients through rehabilitation, working towards maintaining a solid link with their community and therefore stimulating their social reintegration. The Mental Illness Foundation will build on the success of its Partners for Mental Health program. Created for secondary 3, 4 and 5 students and reaching 50,000 young people across Québec each year, the program raises awareness of the signs and symptoms of depression.

The chairs of the three foundations, François Castonguay, Marisa Giannetti and Don Bastien wish to commend the leadership and tireless efforts of the evening's co-chairs, George Cope, Serge Godin, Geoff Molson and Louis Vachon. They also extend their warmest thanks to the committee of ambassadors, Maria and Vincenzo Guzzo of Guzzo Cinemas, Grace Di Meo of DNA Capital and Luc

Bachand of BMO Capital Markets, who rallied the business community to this important cause, and Artistic Director Denis Bouchard, who created a truly magical event.

Created in 1993, the **Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Montréal Foundation** helps the largest French-language psychiatric institution in Canada attain its objectives. The Foundation supports research, clinical care and education efforts to advance practices that benefit patients. The Foundation also funds rehabilitation and social reintegration activities to support individuals in their recovery.

The **Douglas Mental Health University Institute Foundation's** mission is to support the Douglas Institute, a Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal facility. The world-class Douglas Institute is affiliated with McGill University and the World Health Organization. Its teams of specialists and researchers are continually increasing scientific knowledge, integrating this knowledge into patient care, and sharing it with the community in order to educate the public and eliminate prejudices surrounding mental health. The Douglas Institute treats people suffering from mental illness and offers them both hope and healing.

Founded in 1980, the **Mental Illness Foundation** promotes mental health, raises public awareness of the importance of preventing mental illness and helps alleviate the suffering of those affected. This mission is clearly reflected in its Partners for Life program, which aims to help young people, parents and secondary 3, 4 and 5 faculty understand mental illness and, more specifically, depression in teenagers. Every year, the Mental Illness Foundation supports 50,000 young people and adults, and its activities are entirely funded by public donations. The Foundation also has an online directory of resources with more than 1,000 mental health organizations.

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Photo : Bal des lumières raised \$1,430,000 for three Montréal mental health foundations. From left to right: **Daryl White**, CEO & Group Head of BMO Capital Markets; **Martine Turcotte**, Vice Chair, Québec, Bell; **Jacques Daoust**, Minister of Transport, Sustainable Mobility and Transport Electrification; **Mary Deacon**, Chair of Bell Let's Talk; **Michel Tourangeau**, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors, Fondation l'Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Montréal; **George Cope**, President and CEO, BCE and Bell; **Donald Bastien**, Chair of the Board of Directors, Mental Illness Foundation; **Serge Godin**, Founder, Executive Chair, CGI; **Geoff Molson**, Owner, President and CEO of the Montréal Canadiens, the Bell Centre and evenko; **Monique Vallée**, City Councillor, Montréal / Manager of social and community development and homelessness; **Louis Vachon**, President and CEO, National Bank; **Marisa Giannetti**, Chair of the Board of Directors, Douglas Mental Health Institute Foundation; **Dr Gaétan Barrette**, Minister of Health and Social Services; and **Denis Coderre**, Mayor of Montréal.

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Sources:

fondationdouglas.qc.ca
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