

For Immediate Release

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Men Get Depression Special Documentary Screening Event

DENVER, Colo. May 20, 2008 – Depression is a serious but treatable health condition that affects more than 6 million men nationwide. Undiagnosed or untreated it is a leading cause of suicide. Data supports this, listing Colorado as having the 8th highest suicide rate in the nation among men 25-54 years of age. ⁽¹⁾ In order to address this issue and to help men become educated about depression, the Carson J Spencer Foundation, Mental Health America of Colorado, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill - Colorado and Rocky Mountain PBS announce the preview of **Men Get Depression, Tuesday, May 20** at the Regis University Student Center. **The evening begins at 6:30 p.m. with a reception at the Dayton Memorial Library, followed by the screening at 7:00p.m.**

This one hour documentary explores the stories of men who tell about their experiences with depression. Profiles include a former NFL Quarterback, a Fortune 500 CEO and an Iraq War veteran who each openly describe how depression affected their lives; how they learned they had a treatable condition and finally found the help that made recovery possible. Leading medical authorities on depression offer commentary on the causes of depression, its symptoms and treatments.

The challenge for making this film, said Grady Watts, producer, writer and director, was getting a handle on what keeps people from recognizing their own depression. Often this awareness is on a collision course with their culture's stereotypes of masculinity. Tom Johnson, one of the featured men, is the epitome of corporate success as the former publisher of the Los Angeles Times and CEO of CNN. Yet he knew that if word got out that "you had depression, it could be held against you." Layered over this was his belief that it was important to work through problems that "nothing should show on the surface." Richard, a chef from Puerto Rico, attributed his initial hesitation to Hispanic culture: "You don't discuss your problems." The same, James said, if you're African-American. And David, a psychologist of Korean ancestry, said an Asian man seeking help for mental health problems jeopardizes family honor where, it seems, he is being punished for his ancestors' transgressions along with his own."

"The mind set about depression in our society, and for men in particular, is that admitting to it is sign of weakness. Our goal through sharing this documentary and having open discussion is to dispel this myth," states **Sally Spencer Thomas, Executive Director of the Carson J Spencer Foundation** and sibling survivor of her brother's suicide in 2004. "Depression is a *real* and *treatable* condition. We believe in educating about depression, encouraging men to seek treatment, helping families and friends to be supportive and ultimately lives will be saved."

Immediately following the screening will be a group discussion led by a panel of mental health experts and men who will share their own personal stories and perspectives.

Seating is limited, call 303-458-4941 for more information or to RSVP.

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1. 2005 CDC Suicide Death Data