



**EMBARGOED UNTIL 1:00AM
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**Coast Mental Health Announces
Second 2008 Courage To Come Back Award Recipient
Zosia Ettenberg named as recipient in Medical category**

VANCOUVER, B.C. April 8, 2008 – Coast Mental Health announced the second of six award recipients of a 2008 Courage To Come Back Award. **Zosia Ettenberg of Langley** has been named as the 2008 Courage To Come Back Award recipient in the Medical category. Recipients in the remaining four categories will be announced weekly leading up to the awards gala on Thursday, May 8th.

Zosia is truly an inspiration to all who are privileged to know her. Born in Quebec to a loving Polish /Swiss family, she was stricken by polio at 6 months of age and began the first of many long hospital stays, surgeries, and rehabilitation sessions. Zosia did not walk until she was nearly four but even then was already forming her life's mission: to be a Physiotherapist. She graduated at 20 from McGill University with distinction, not once requesting accommodation or adaptations for her disability.

For twenty five years, Zosia progressed in her career, eventually reaching a senior management position, all the while donating her time and expertise to her favourite charities. In 1978 she met and married the love of her life, Mel, and they together eventually adopted two young brothers from Poland to raise as their own. Disaster struck in 1992 when Zosia, appearing in a local play, literally "broke a leg," which was repaired. Ten years later she had a knee replacement and was left with a dislocating knee cap. Finally, after a lifetime of working to avoid it, was forced to use a wheelchair while she waited three years for the surgery to repair it. Soon thereafter she was diagnosed with diabetes, an illness she successfully manages to this day.

In late 2002 her beloved husband was diagnosed with cancer, and Zosia struggled to care for him, given her limited mobility and ill health. She lost her job and was forced to go on disability, caring for Mel until his death in 2003. Even that could not keep this indomitable woman down – she ran for nomination for a seat in BC's provincial legislature in 2004 and continued her lifelong volunteer work helping others.

Zosia's trials were not yet over. In 2005 she was diagnosed with breast cancer and suffered through surgery and chemotherapy. She was offered a job and – unbelievably, still on chemo – wrote and passed her licensing exams to become a health plans broker and consultant. A year later, she was earning enough income to get off disability and works today from her home, even winning her company's "Top Individual Sales" award in 2007.

"You can't control what life gives you," Zosia says, "but you can control how you respond to it. Never give up. Believe in yourself. Accept help if you need it. There are a lot of people who love you and want to help you. Let them, and thank them."

Zosia is an amazing woman, and we at Coast are honoured to have her as our 2008 Courage To Come Back recipient in the Medical category.

Zosia will receive her Courage To Come Back Award at the 10th Anniversary gala dinner at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver on Thursday, May 8th. For tickets, call 604-675-2327 or purchase online at www.coastmentalhealth.com.

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About Courage To Come Back:

The Courage To Come Back Awards celebrates its 10th Anniversary in 2008 recognizing people who have valuable lessons to share as they have courageously battled back from illness, adversity or injury. Through Courage, British Columbians are acknowledged for their accomplishments, positive attitudes and willingness to give back to their communities. Awards are given in six categories including: mental health, physical rehabilitation, medical, addiction, social adversity and youth. Since 1999, only 60 recipients have been chosen from over 1,400 nominations received across the province.

About Coast Mental Health:

Since 1974, the Coast Foundation Society has been providing high quality housing, employment programs, social opportunities and other community mental health services for people with serious and persistent mental illnesses. Coast Mental Health Foundation was formed in 2001 to raise funds for community mental health services and to educate the public about the needs of people with a serious mental illness.

Through presenting the stories of six amazing recipients each year at The Courage To Come Back Awards, Coast Mental Health Foundation strives to offer hope to all those suffering from illness, adversity or injury and demonstrate that all people have value and dignity.

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