

WINTER 2022:

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DONATIONS at work

"Thanks to organizations like Canada Life, advancements for depression research can be made."

~ Katie Dinelle, manager,
Brain Imaging Centre, The Royal

canada **life** TM **funds grants to
translate research into care**

For the last decade, Canada Life has played an integral role in the development of The Royal's Brain Imaging Centre (BIC) by supporting the advancement of depression research at the University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research at The Royal. Their \$1M donation was divided three ways between the BIC, depression research and a new initiative called Translation of Research into Care (TRIC).

The TRIC Grant supports interdisciplinary research projects that have the potential to improve care at The Royal. The six teams receiving funding through the TRIC Grant competition will look to improve diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illness. They also support the meaningful

engagement of clients and families — a key factor driving mental health solutions.

"When clients are engaged in care and research we see consistently better outcomes," said Dr. Florence Dzierzinski, president of the University of Ottawa Institute

of Mental Health Research at The Royal and vice president of research at The Royal. "The TRIC Grant enables deeper integration of clinicians, scientists, clients and their families in a manner that truly facilitates bench-to-bedside research. Through our strategy, *Co-creating access, hope and*

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The BIC has also seen growth in partnerships with researchers at other health care organizations.

PARTNERING in pursuit of better mental health outcomes

When the Brain Imaging Centre (BIC) first opened its doors in 2016, the excitement at The Royal was palpable. Being the first of its kind in Canada dedicated solely to mental health and neuroscience research, the BIC has been key in attracting expert brain researchers from across the country and internationally.

The number of research collaborations and scope of the BIC continues to grow all the time. We currently

By making the invisible visible through advanced brain imaging, we are not only making strides towards transforming mental health research and care, but we are also helping to move the needle on destigmatizing mental illness.

have 40 ongoing studies that are leveraging the PET-MRI technology at the BIC.

One researcher, Dr. Clifford Cassidy, who recently discovered a promising new brain-based biomarker that could help transform schizophrenia diagnosis and treatment, has a new project focused on youth. Participants aged 6-17 will participate in a

study examining how neuromelanin (NM) MRI signal changes as children grow up. NM is one of the few brain chemicals that can be measured non-invasively with MRI. NM is created from dopamine, one of the most important neurotransmitters.

This study could allow us for the first time to assess the function of the dopamine system during normal human development, since pre-existing dopamine imaging tools are not deemed

safe for use in youth. This will in turn allow us to better understand the role dopamine plays in youth with ADHD or who are at risk of developing addiction or schizophrenia.

The BIC has also seen growth in partnerships with local health care organizations. A researcher from CHEO is also benefiting from the BIC. Dr. Andrée-Anne Ledoux, who has ex-

pertise in the field of concussion and mental health, is preparing to start a study entitled “Mindfulness-Based Intervention for Mild Traumatic Brain Injuries.” This study is in children aged 12-18 years old. In this study, Dr. Ledoux hopes to use functional MRI to understand how concussion related disruptions in a specific brain network are mediated by mindfulness-based interventions (MBI).

By making the invisible visible through advanced brain imaging, we are not only making strides towards transforming mental health research and care, but we are also helping to move the needle on destigmatizing mental illness - by demonstrating that like any other medical condition, depression and related mental health disorders have an objective biology.

Our mission is to defeat mental illness, and the philanthropic community has been integral in working alongside us, towards this goal.

The continued success and growth of our Brain Imaging Centre and Research Institute would not be possible without donor support and partnership.



New leadership and exciting vision for the Royal Ottawa Foundation

The Royal and the Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health are pleased to announce Chris Ide as the new Foundation president and vice president for brand and marketing at The Royal.

Ide will lead the development and implementation of the Foundation's operational plan and develop strategies that support the pursuit of ambitious fundraising targets.

"We are thrilled to welcome a strategic, collaborative leader with strengths in both fundraising and team building," Jane Duchscher, chair of the Royal Ottawa Foundation's Board of Directors, said. "Chris brings extensive experience in business planning, managing corporate partnerships and individual philanthropy, with the demonstrated ability to network, cultivate and grow key relationships. These skills will serve the Foundation, the hospital, and our community well as we move forward into a period of growth and innovation."

Ide brings 15 years of experience in fundraising, strategic partnerships and business development. Most recently, he served as vice president of corporate and community partnerships at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)



Chris Ide with his partner Nick, and their five-year-old twin boys, Elliot and Hudson

Foundation in Toronto, Ontario. Prior to that, he held leadership positions with Habitat for Humanity and various educational technology companies.

"We are thrilled to have Chris at the helm of the Foundation and excited to leverage his expertise to help drive our strategy, *Co-creating access, hope and new possibilities*, forward. Together, we will position The Royal to meet the demands of tomorrow while providing exceptional care and support to our clients, their loved ones and our community

today," said Joanne Bezzubetz, president and chief executive officer of The Royal.

"This is an incredible time to join The Royal," Ide said. "I look forward to working in partnership with our board, hospital leadership, research institute, foundation team members, and our community of supporters across eastern Ontario to accelerate research today that will transform mental health care for future generations. The world's best mental health researchers and clinicians work at The Royal. They are the ones who will help solve the global mental health crisis, and I am excited to contribute to their vital work."

COVER STORY: continued

new possibilities, we are redefining how lived expertise can inform and shape care, education and research that advances our understanding of mental health and substance use disorders. I believe that programs like TRIC result in more intentional collaboration and more powerful exploration that has a resounding impact on client care."

Together, donors like Canada Life and The Royal's scientists, clinicians, staff, clients and caregivers are

working shoulder-to-shoulder to help ensure that those struggling with mental illness and substance use disorders receive the care they need, when and where they need it.

"At Canada Life, we believe in supporting the well-being of Canadians and in the value of expertise," said Debbie Down, director, community relations, Canada Life. "That's why we're thrilled to support the innovative TRIC program – because it will bring

together experts who can help make a tangible, positive impact in the mental health journey of Canadians every year. We know that mental health diagnosis, treatment and prevention play a vital part in creating strong and healthy communities."

We are so grateful to Canada Life for the tremendous impact they are having on mental health research at The Royal.

FOUNDATION IN FOCUS



Members of the Family Advisory Council - Michèle Langlois, Juliet Haynes, Dr. Mohammad Ebrahimzadeh, Cynthia Clark, Nancy Myers, and Pari Johnston

Families at the core

In late 2020, The Royal embarked on a journey to transform mental health care both locally and around the globe by leveraging one of our most powerful assets: our clients and their loved ones. Together, we developed our 2020-2025 strategy, *Co-creating access, hope and new possibilities*, to fully unleash the potential and power of The Royal. A key tenet of this strategy is the deep and intentional integration of lived expertise of our clients and their families. This means ensuring clients and families sit at key decision-making tables at The Royal.

The centering of client and family voices is already having a tremendous impact on all areas of The Royal's expertise including, but not limited to, innovative research and the development of unique and personalized treatments, digital health transformation, client care and support at all stages of the continuum. This shift, while delivering results in key areas of care, education and research, is also furthering The Royal's commitment

to becoming a national leader in client and family engagement.

An important partner in this journey is The Royal's Family Advisory Council. The Family Advisory Council was formed in 2006 to serve as the voice of families at The Royal. Members of the Family Advisory Council represent a collection of family members, friends, and loved ones who are supporting individuals through their mental health journey, either through care from The Royal or elsewhere.

"Over the past year, family advisors have had the opportunity to engage with The Royal to shape care on so many fronts influencing direct care, client safety, capturing client and family needs, staff education, family engagement research, and policy touching client and family care experiences," Michèle Langlois, former chair of The Royal's Family Advisory Council, said. "The Royal's commitment, at every level of the organization to engage clients and families, is evident; so much so, that the need for advisors is outpacing

current capacity. The time is ripe for supporters of loved ones with mental and substance use health issues to step forward to lend your diverse voice and talents to help us actualize The Royal's client and family-focused strategy."

Today, we are at the exciting stage of bringing this strategy and vision to life by capitalizing on our strengths and making necessary changes to provide a client experience that is wrapped around each individual's needs. If you are interested in learning more about the Family Advisory Council or interested in joining the council, please contact fac@theroyal.ca

It's important to note that The Royal's donors serve a vital role in The Royal's evolution of serving as partners to shape care, education, and research in the mental health and substance use space. Your unwavering support strengthens our ability to make a difference for thousands of individuals with mental health and substance use health in our region and their loved ones.



Finding beauty through darkness

Illusive is a local, Ottawa based artist who has been pouring their heart and soul into creating emotive and meaningful pieces of art since 2019, through their company Illusive Artworks. They use art as a creative outlet for their own mental illness, while advocating for mental health.

"The opportunity to work with an organization like The Royal is monumental to me," says Illusive. "I'm doing this creative work because I'm taking care of my own mental health, but also trying to encourage active mental health care in others."

Contrary to today's positivity culture, Illusive believes that it's ok to struggle while taking care of your mental health and to embrace difficult times.

"I like to embrace my darkness," says Illusive "I struggle on almost a daily basis with intrusive thoughts, an eating disorder and anxiety – my brain is working against me, but I'm trying to love all those experiences for what they bring me, because I learn from them, I enrich myself by coming through them and every bad experience shows me what I can get through. Let's find the positive in our struggles."

Illusive's father lives with bipolar disorder and substance use disorder and they say that The Royal was one of the few places that helped. Their mother is also an artist.

"I've had a complicated relationship with creativity because of my mental health," says Illusive. "Anxiety is one of my biggest issues, and within that, creativity was actually hard and didn't feel good for a long time – especially growing up with my mother who is an incredibly gifted artist."

Illusive pushed away from art and creativity in their young adult years, feeling as though their art was never good enough.

"There came a time when things got really bad for me and my mental health," says Illusive. "I started needing a place for the 'bad things' to go. I would get a physical buildup of intrusive thoughts, depressive feelings – I feel it like a weight. I started to realize that when I put some of that negativity into a creative expression, the weight would lift a little bit. It didn't matter what I would produce – I could whip the paint on the canvas."

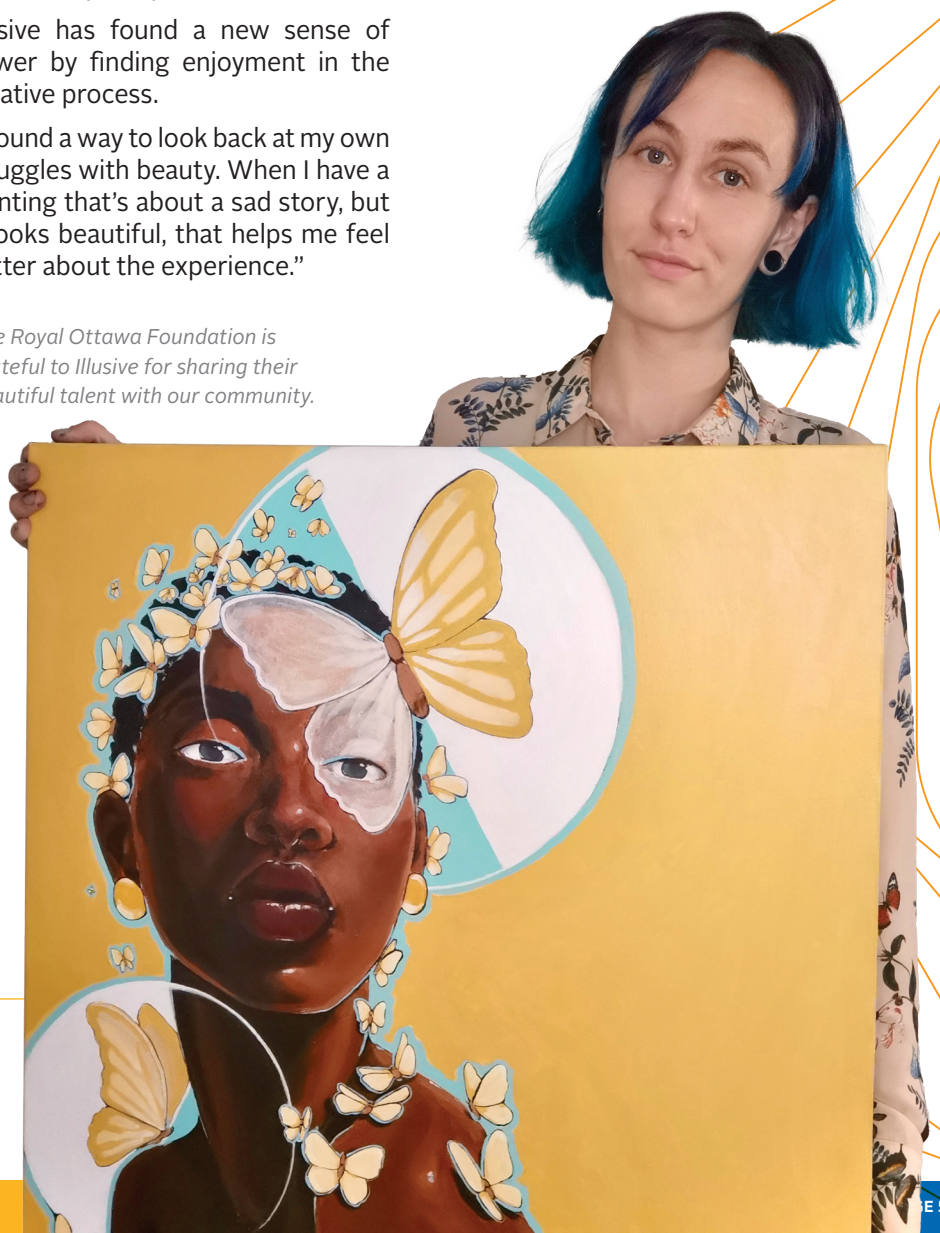
Illusive has found a new sense of power by finding enjoyment in the creative process.

"I found a way to look back at my own struggles with beauty. When I have a painting that's about a sad story, but it looks beautiful, that helps me feel better about the experience."

The Royal Ottawa Foundation is grateful to Illusive for sharing their beautiful talent with our community.

The Royal Ottawa Foundation is so grateful to Illusive for collaborating with us on the beautiful cover art they created for our 2021 Ottawa Business Journal insert.

"It really meant a lot to me to work on this piece, to create it, the process of thinking about everything The Royal means to me was a really powerful process for me as an artist, as well as a blessing of an opportunity."



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How I cope with my depression and anxiety

My name is Maddy Eisenberg - I am a media personality and mental health advocate. I live with depression and generalized anxiety.

For as long as I can remember, depression has walked alongside me. It affects both my mind, and my entire being.

Making friends was never easy. Work was a struggle. I fought with my emotions from a very young age, and never understood why the feeling of “sadness” plagued me at seemingly random points. Having anxiety partnered with depression further exacerbated things.

As I got older, the depression got worse, as it was left undiagnosed and unaddressed. For those who do not live with depression, it can be near impossible to truly understand what it feels like. Even those who live with it will tell you that everyone's experience differs.

Here is the best way I can describe it. Imagine being in a tunnel that blocks everything from view; your life, your family, your friends, and everything else that matters to you. Those things exist outside that tunnel, but they feel very distant and insignificant. You want to leave the tunnel, but if you don't get the help you need, it can feel inescapable.

Approximately three years ago, I actively battled with self harm and suicidal ideation. Even though I experienced a lot of emotional trauma in my life, there was no “major” event that triggered this - it was a culmination of many years of not understanding what was in my mind, and

how to handle it properly. No one ever spoke to me about therapy, medication, or any other mechanism that might have helped me come out of that tunnel in a safer manner.

One night, those thoughts got out of control. My partner, who had witnessed my struggles for a long time, figured the best thing to do was bring me to hospital. He was my brain that evening, because I was in no state to advocate for myself.

After hours of waiting, and multiple visits from doctors and mental health professionals, I was sent home. The experts didn't feel my state of mind was putting myself nor anyone else in danger.

Although I was surprised I wasn't kept overnight, that hospital visit was my wake-up call. Thankfully, I have come out on the other side. That's not to say I am “cured.” There is no “cure” for depression - it will stay with me for life, even though I cope well most of the time.

To help myself now, I attend regular therapy sessions, am more honest with those close to me on hard days, and celebrate the small victories, like getting out of bed in the morning.

One of the ways you can help is by using “person-first language.” An example of this is saying someone “has depression” instead of saying the person “is depressed.” Doing this helps establish the point that those who live with mental illnesses can, and deserve to, exist as a whole person outside of their diagnosis. Words matter.



Maddy Eisenberg - media personality and mental health advocate

Meet Maddy and other community leaders who bravely shared their mental health journeys: theroyal.ca/wordsmatter

THANK YOU SHOPPERS!

Another record breaking event in support of women's mental health at The Royal

Thanks to our incredible Ottawa community, \$819,990 was raised by 6,021 participants and 5,409 donors at the 2021 virtual Ottawa LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart™ Run for Women. Nationally, over 26,000 Canadians participated, raising over \$3.5M for women's mental health initiatives across 18 cities.

Those numbers are impressive but, perhaps even more meaningful is the impact. The 2021 Run for Women saved lives with 68 per cent of participants stating, "participating in the Run for Women has allowed me to take action for myself and my own mental health wellness."

Let's get ready for Run for Women in 2022!

Join us on June 5th to celebrate The Royal's 10th Annual Ottawa LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart™ Run for Women. We are so excited to resume our live event, gathering thousands of supporters and equally enthusiastic participants who can also choose to participate virtually.

A highlight of the event is the sense of community it brings. Create your team today at runforwomen.ca All funds raised at the Ottawa event support women's mental health initiatives at The Royal.

Pictured below from Shoppers team:

Tracey Dell
VP Operations, SDM

Raegan Arbuthnot
SDM, DM

Rob Labossiere
SDM, DM

Josée Larocque Patton
SDM HR and LONG standing RFW lead

Jordan Clarke
Fairlawn & Westboro SDM Associate

Kate Swetnam
3080 Carling, SDM Associate

Johannah Profit
Place d'Orleans & St Joseph SDM Associate

Jenn Mulley
Bank/Sunnyside & Dalhousie SDM Associate
LONG standing RFW lead

Joanna Baker
Rockland SDM Associate,
LONG standing RFW lead

Pictured below from our Royal team:

Dr. Susan Farrell
VP Patient Care Services and
Community Mental Health

Chris Ide
President Royal Foundation

Kate Baker
Director, Community Mental
Health at The Royal

Tracey Welsh
Former Director Royal
Foundation, RFW Lead



THIS YEAR

4,000 Canadians will die by suicide

THIS WEEK

500,000 employed Canadians are unable to work

TODAY

1 in 4 Canadians are suffering

NOW

is the time to make a difference

Mental illness affects everyone.
Help us stop the suffering.
Donate today.

www.theroyal.ca/donate
613.722.6521 ext. 6527

The Le
Royal

Mental Health - Care & Research
Santé mentale - Soins et recherche



We had the seemingly perfect life...

I always made sure to be home before the school bus dropped the kids off. I needed time to check every room, one by one. I didn't know what I might find.

Would today be the day he couldn't fight anymore and take his own life?

From the outside looking in, we had the seemingly picture-perfect life. My husband Jody and I both had successful jobs. We were involved in our community. We had kids that were active in sports. We travelled all over the world. According to the outside world, life couldn't get any better for us.

But what people didn't see were the days and weeks that Jody couldn't get out of bed in the morning. The days he'd come home after work and cry himself to sleep. The days we'd come home from a nice dinner out with friends and he'd have a meltdown for no obvious reason.

I watched somebody that I thought I knew, turn into somebody that I didn't know.

There were times where I would lie beside him all day, just because I was terrified that if I left, he would take his own life.

It was hard to stay positive when all my energy was spent trying to keep my husband alive and keep the kids from growing up without their dad. I was hiding the truth from everyone around us, including our own kids. It was a very lonely and scary way to live.

But I never gave up hope. We found a physician who referred Jody to The Royal, where we met Dr. David Bakish and a whole team of mental health experts.

Dr. Bakish and The Royal saved my husband's life. They saved our family.

For years, Jody lived in a state of mania... elevated mood, hyperactivity and disorganized behaviour. He was extremely high-functioning, successful, enthusiastic, incredibly outgoing and unstoppable. At times, he was superman-like, with an abundance of energy and hyper-focus. He thought he was invincible.

But he was also overcome by darkness and extreme despair.

We had long days of silence. I fought feelings of giving up on us. I struggled to do more, be better, and was always fearful that something I did or said would set him off. For a long time, we minimized the severity and repercussions of Jody's behaviours. We made excuses for his impulsivity, sudden outbursts and changes in mood.

We rationalized, saying it was just the stresses that came with our fast-paced lifestyle, our demanding careers and raising two children in a blended family. We didn't talk about it with anyone. Not our friends, family or our kids. Heartbreakingly, often, not even with each other.

At the time, we didn't know that what Jody was experiencing were symptoms of bipolar disorder.

I know for a fact that without The Royal, Jody would not be here today. And our family would have been ripped apart.

It's hard to put into words how beyond grateful we are for The Royal and for people like you. Thanks to generous donors like you, my husband received the care he needed.



I've been thinking a lot about how lucky we are to have Jody with us today. The holidays have always been huge for our family. Every year, Jody loves putting our Christmas tree up in November. But when he was going through his darkest period one year, prior to treatment, he couldn't bring himself to get out of bed. That one Christmas, the kids and I decorated the tree without him.

This year we counted our blessings that we were able to celebrate the holidays together.

I can't thank you enough for supporting mental health care and research in our community. Together, with the amazing experts at The Royal, you helped spare two children a lifetime of pain and insufferable grief by not having to grow up without their dad – and for that my family will be forever grateful.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Burton

*Wife of grateful patient,
Jody Burton*