



For immediate release

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**SOUND MENTAL HEALTH GALA RAISES AWARENESS,
FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH**

*May event is part of nationwide celebration of Mental Health Month;
awards presented to long-time mental health advocates*

SEATTLE –May 4, 2010–Sound Mental Health, King County’s most comprehensive provider of mental and behavioral health services, will host its fifth annual gala dinner, “[Mental Health Matters](#),” on May 6 to raise awareness for mental health issues and benefit its more than 40 individual programs reaching in excess of 16,000 children, adults and the elderly.

Taking place at the Seattle Sheraton Hotel and Towers from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., *Mental Health Matters* ensures that such pioneering social service programs as employment services for the developmentally disabled, support services for at-risk children, and successful supportive housing initiatives remain viable. These programs and more not only improve the quality of life for Sound Mental Health clients, but they also strengthen the fabric of the community.

“Sound Mental Health is truly a unique resource and a significant asset to our community,” said Paula Janson, Sound Mental Health board chair. “Mental well-being must be supported in very much the same way we support other community health programs, with the goal always being to provide safe, healthy communities and a quality of life for its citizens. Now, more than ever, individual and corporate support for this organization is crucial to ensure that we continue to invest in the well being of our community.”

Expectations for the fundraiser are high this year. Significant cuts to state budgets, coupled with an escalating need for critical mental health, chemical dependency and behavioral health services, have resulted in an unprecedented need for social and human services in the community.

Hundreds of community leaders, politicians and supporters of mental health causes will attend the event as part of the nationwide celebration of “Mental Health Awareness Month,” taking

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place throughout the month of May.

Gala festivities will include real-life stories from Sound Mental Health clients, testimonials by clinical staff and presentation of Sound Mental Health's highest distinction, the *Gov. Booth Gardner Mental Health Champion Award*. Winners of this year's awards are Amnon Shoenfeld, director of King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services and the Gaffney Family, longtime champions of numerous mental health causes. Each will be awarded for their significant contributions to advancing mental health services in the region.

Event sponsors include Genoa Healthcare, COSTCO, Puget Sound Business Journal, Muckleshoot Casino, AstraZeneca, Enterprise, BB&L, KeyBank, Pacific Office Automation, Qwest Communications, SKB Architects, Lilly, Linn, Schisel & DeMarco, PS, Moss Adams LLP, McCullough Hill, PS, Puget Sound Energy, Regence, Seattle Children's, a&a printing, inc. and Thinkalike.

For more information about the gala or to request an invitation, please contact Steve McLean, Sound Mental Health communications manager, at stephenmc@smh.org.

About Sound Mental Health

Sound Mental Health is a private, non-profit organization that has provided a comprehensive array of mental health and related services to the King County community since 1966. Our goal is to help individuals and families achieve the highest level of independence and (mental) health possible. Services are tailored to meet the unique needs of different age, disability and cultural/ethnic groups.

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