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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winners of the New Voices Showcase Essay Contest Announced

The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health is pleased to announce the winners of the first phase of our New Voices Showcase (NVS), a project with the goal of highlighting talented writers and creatives from Texas who are living with or in recovery from mental health challenges.

This first phase of the NVS called for personal essays written in response to the prompt, “Share a story that describes how your mental health has been impacted during this time of heightened injustice, race-related trauma, and the pandemic. What can others learn from your experience?”

Cash awards were granted to six entrants whose essays displayed excellent writing quality and special relevance to the Hogg Foundation’s mission of equitably supporting mental health and well-being for all Texans. Beginning with the six prize-winning essays, all NVS submissions will be featured on our website over the coming weeks.

“Recognizing the dignity of mental health care consumers is one of the Hogg Foundation’s core values,” says Dr. Octavio N. Martinez, Jr., executive director of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health and senior associate vice president for diversity and community engagement at The University of Texas at Austin “We’re extremely gratified for this opportunity to share consumers’ viewpoints and experiences through the New Voices Showcase.”

The second phase of the NVS project, the New Voices Showcase for Youth (NVSY), is currently underway. The NVS is [calling for entries in video format](#) from talented young creators, ages 16 to 24, that respond to the question, “How would the world be different if it cared about your mental health?”.

“The conversation around mental health is getting bigger and more urgent,” said Ike Evans, communications manager for the Hogg Foundation. “What’s exciting about this project is how it shows that this conversation belongs to all of us, and that valuable perspectives on complex issues can come from every quarter.”

The winners of the first phase of the New Voices Showcase essay contest are:

- **Chuck Collins**, “Combat Fatigue”
- **Jerica Dykes**, “Dear Pandemic Child”
- **Tracy Yvette Green**, “Triggered by Lights: Red, White, and Blue”
- **Ron McCracken**, “My Marathon Journey to Mental Health”
- **Nirali Thakkar**, “To My Asian Brothers and Sisters”

- **Cole Patrick Weaver, “Aren’t I a Human Being?”**

ABOUT HOGG FOUNDATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Established in 1940, the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health envisions a future in which the people of Texas thrive in communities that support mental health and well-being. Using a variety of approaches, including grantmaking, convening, research and public policy, the foundation works collaboratively to transform how communities promote mental health in everyday life.

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