



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, May 16th, 2017

Conference Dedicated to the Mental Health of First Responders and Military Personnel
East-Coast Heroes Honoured at Fundraising Gala

HALIFAX, NS – Wednesday through Friday (May 24th – 26th) The Tema Conter Memorial Trust will host a variety of events and workshops in Halifax focused on the mental health, resilience, and peer & psychological support of First Responders, including nurses, Public Safety and Military Personnel and their families. Wednesday’s Common Threads conference will feature a variety of inspirational speakers including Nova Scotia’s own John Garth MacDonald who will speak about PTSD from a paramedic’s perspective. MacDonald, along with Cpl. Jamie MacWhirter (St. John’s, NL) will be named Tema Ambassadors, formally welcomed Wednesday evening by Angela Gevaudan (Moncton, NB) who was named the first Tema Ambassador in February.

Wednesday evening’s fundraising gala will welcome celebrities such as Enrico Colantoni (*Flashpoint*, *Veronica Mars*), and Kevin Davison ([When Those Sirens Are Gone](#)), as well as dignitaries such as Chief Jean Michel Blais of Halifax Regional Police. CTV Morning Live Atlantic’s Heidi Petracek will emcee alongside Adam Conter.

Thursday evening Tema will host a public screening of the independent feature-length documentary called, “[The Other Side of the Hero](#)” produced by Enrico Colantoni, Diana Warmé, and Karen Shopsowitz and directed by Karen Shopsowitz. This film takes viewers into the world of the first responder we rarely see; out of uniform. The film features various first responders and their families, actor/producer Enrico Colantoni, and several television actors from shows such as “Chicago Fire” and “Criminal Minds”.

The Week’s Agenda at a Glance:

May 24th – Common Threads Educational Conference 8am-3pm

- Cunard Centre (961 Marginal Road, Halifax)
- Free registration [here](#)

May 24th – Heroes Tribute Gala 6pm

- Cunard Centre (961 Marginal Road, Halifax)
- Tickets [here](#)

May 25th – MANERS Psychosocial First Aid Training/Mental Health First Aid Training

- Halifax Regional Police Training Facility (2 Chapman Road, Dartmouth)
- Register [here](#) for MANERS
- Register [here](#) for Mental Health First Aid

May 25th – Public Screening of “The Other Side of the Hero” Documentary

- Mount Saint Vincent University, Seton Aud. (166 Bedford Hwy, Halifax, NS)
- Tickets [here](#)

May 28th - Public Screening of "The Other Side of the Hero" Documentary

- Wingate by Wyndham (69 rue du Marche, Dieppe, NB)
- Tickets [here](#)

Common Threads Conference May 24th 8am-3pm, Cunard Centre

- Participants will learn about the latest research, newest trends and innovations dealing with acute, cumulative, vicarious and post-traumatic stress within public safety services and military operations
- Speakers include Cpl. Jamie MacWhirter & Paramedic John Garth MacDonald (a full list of speakers can be found [here](#))

Fundraising Gala May 24th 6:30pm, Cunard Centre

- More than 600 attendees including First Responders & their families
- Emcees Heidi Petracek (CTV) & Adam Conter
- Plenary Speaker Jason Powell (Dean, School of Health Sciences, Humber College)
- A few dignitaries/celebrities of note:
 - Kelly Regan, NS Minister of Labour & Advanced Education
 - Chief Jean-Michel Blais, Halifax Regional Police
 - Chief Doug Trussler, Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency
 - Enrico Colantoni (*Flashpoint, Remedy, Veronica Mars*)
- New Tema Ambassadors John Garth MacDonald & Cpl. Jamie MacWhirter named
- Tema's New PSA "[What Does TEMA Stand For?](#)" featured

Awards (presented at fundraising gala)

Full info including photos & bios of award winners [here](#)

Media Award:

Janice Landry

Janice's late father, Captain Basil (Baz) Landry, M.B., served for 31 years with the precursor of HRFE, the former Halifax Fire Department. Landry was the first Halifax firefighter to receive the Canada's Medal of Bravery for his amazing rescue of an infant, detailed in his daughter's book, *The Sixty Second Story*.

Public Service Awards:

Bobby MacKenzie, Firefighter, Founder of the "Help Our Heroes Charity Golf Tournament"

Nicole Monaghan, Paramedic, PTSD Walk Organizer

Kentville Fire Department (presented by Kevin Davison)

For their assistance & support in the making of Kevin Davison's music video, "When Those Sirens Are Gone"

A complete digital media kit can be found here: <http://www.tema.ca/mediakit>. All inquiries and interview requests to Erin Alvarez, Director of Communications ealvarez@tema.ca 1-888-288-8036 x3.

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About The Tema Conter Memorial Trust

The men and women of Canada's emergency services, public safety, military, communications, and correctional organizations see tragic events every day. They witness human suffering up close and it sometimes becomes very difficult to cope with the aftermath. Smells, sounds and reliving witnessed events create lasting painful memories that haunt these men and women for life. It is their legacy for helping others in times of human suffering.

In 1988, paramedic Vince Savoia attended to the homicide of Ms. Tema Conter who had recently moved to Toronto from Halifax. This event not only changed his life, but it also changed the lives of the Conter family. Dealing with the feelings of guilt, anger, and frustration, Savoia began his long battle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Flashbacks, nightmares, isolation, and hyper-vigilance were some of the symptoms that Savoia needed to deal with.

In 2000, Savoia approached the Conter family requesting permission to establish a memorial trust that would end the silence and ease the suffering of those colleagues dealing with post-traumatic stress. The trust would also serve to honour the memory of Tema.

Celebrating 16 years in 2017, The Tema Conter Memorial Trust was established to offer resources and support to public safety and military personnel. Through research, education, training, and through the provision of peer and psychological support, we aim to help these men and women when they need it most.

Tema is proud to partner with Simon Fraser University in offering the First Responder Trauma Prevention and Recovery Program, the first program of its kind in Canada. Please visit tema.ca for more information.

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