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## **Mariel Hemingway to Keynote Mental Health Awareness Event on May 15**

*Broadlawns Foundation and Advocate Circle present inaugural "ME-Series" event in Central Iowa*

DES MOINES, IOWA – (April 22, 2014) – Broadlawns has taken a leadership role in raising awareness about and funding for mental health in Central Iowa. Last month, the organization announced its signature "ME-Series" community event on May 15. Since that announcement, keynote speaker Glenn Close has had to cancel her appearance due to a casting call. Academy Award nominated actress, model, author and mental health activist Mariel Hemingway has agreed to give the keynote address.

Granddaughter of the Nobel Prize-winning writer Ernest Hemingway, Mariel has become a national spokesperson on mental health awareness, most recently by promoting "Running From Crazy," a documentary written from Mariel's perspective, about her family's struggles with suicide, depression, alcoholism and more. Her goal is to fuel a broader, freer cultural dialogue about mental illness to bring the topic out of the shadows and into every day conversations.

"Mariel's willingness to speak about the Hemingway family's history helps reduce the stigma currently associated with the disease," said Jody Jenner, CEO of Broadlawns Medical Center. "Her presence at this inaugural event will help raise funding to ensure adequate and timely care is available for mental health patients in our community."

The ME-Series event is part of the "Mental Health in our Community Starts with Me" campaign and will be held at Veterans Memorial Community Choice Credit Union and will consist of three main parts:

1. **A Petcha Kucha style presentation** of 10 short speakers for less than seven minutes each from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Featured speakers will cover topics such as improved access, homelessness, workplace productivity, suicide, quality of care, etc. These speakers will be announced in the next 10 days. (Free to the public.)
2. **Exhibitor Expo** from 3 to 6:30 p.m. Booths will be set up by community organizations for attendees to learn more about services available for individuals living with mental illness. (Free to the public.)
3. **Keynote speech** and Q&A with Hemingway at 7 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase online at [www.BroadlawnsAdvocateCircle.org](http://www.BroadlawnsAdvocateCircle.org). Ticket prices start at \$27.50, and proceeds go toward increasing mental healthcare services in our community. Ticketholders are welcome at a pre-reception from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Previously purchased tickets are still valid with the change in speaker. If you have questions, please contact the Iowa Events Center Ticket Office at 515-564-8300.

"Mariel's commitment allows us to continue our work during Mental Health Month," said Johnny Danos, co-founder of the Broadlawns Foundation Advocate Circle. "The ease of being able to secure another high-profile speaker is a testament to the importance of raising awareness of mental illness issues and concerns."

The ME-Series is part of the State of Iowa's Healthiest State initiative and is sponsored by Prairie Meadows, Polk County and Polk County Health Services, the Principal Financial Group, ABC5, Meredith Corporation and the Des Moines Business Record.

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### **About the Broadlawns Foundation Advocate Circle**

The Broadlawns Foundation Advocate Circle is a fundraising group made up of 26 seasoned and upcoming community leaders. The group was formed in 2011 with the goal of raising both awareness and funding for enhancing mental health facilities mental health services in Iowa through the "Mental Health Starts with Me" campaign. Visit [www.BroadlawnsAdvocateCircle.org](http://www.BroadlawnsAdvocateCircle.org) for additional information.