



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE PROVIDES FREE DEPRESSION EDUCATION TO HIGH SCHOOLS AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS AROUND THE COUNTRY**

*Celebrates its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with Gala on Saturday, May 18*

March 5, 2019 – Winnetka, Ill. – Erika's Lighthouse, a non-profit organization that is dedicated to educating and raising awareness about adolescent depression, encouraging good mental health, and breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health issues, announced today that it will be holding a celebratory event to celebrate its 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Saturday, May 18 at 7 p.m. It will be held at the Valley Lo Club, 2200 Tanglewood Drive, in Glenview. Tickets are \$200 and are available at [www.erikaslighthouse.org/upcoming-events/gala](http://www.erikaslighthouse.org/upcoming-events/gala). The gala will feature dinner, dancing, a raffle, and a live auction, which will feature a limited number of high-end exclusive and experiential packages.

Erika's Lighthouse was founded in 2004 by Ginny and Tom Neuckranz after their daughter Erika lost her life to adolescent depression. The organization, a *Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression*, empowers young people with the knowledge and skills to understand and cope with this disorder. Erika's Lighthouse develops and provides free teen depression awareness programs and resources to middle school and high school communities around the country. Its programs address the challenges surrounding teen depression using the most impactful, innovative and accessible methods available today. This includes interactive web-based resources, multimedia classroom teaching tools, and teen-to-teen interventions, which makes Erika's Lighthouse a trailblazer for mental health education.

"When Erika lost her battle with depression 15 years ago we were devastated and did not understand why she would take her own life. In 2004 there was a lack of information about depression available for teens and their families. We started Erika's Lighthouse because we wanted to fill that information gap with hopeful and helpful support, and break down the stigma that prevents people from getting the help that they need to lead productive lives," said Ginny and Tom Neuckranz, the founders of Erika's Lighthouse. "Over the last 15 years, we are grateful that we have been able to help educate and support countless young people struggling with depression, as well as their families and friends. With the help of our many dedicated friends and staff, we have left a legacy of hope in our communities to *Get Depression Out of the Dark.*"

From a modest start 15 years ago, Erika's Lighthouse has gone from providing free educational programs on depression and suicide awareness in our local community to now touching the lives of students, parents and school professionals in 300 schools spread across 36 states.

Erika's Lighthouse continues to make improvements and make it easier for school partners to access its programs and resources. In 2018, a new website and resource portal was introduced that provides all of Erika's Lighthouse resources in one place, including additional teen empowerment activities.

More information on bringing Erika's Lighthouse programs to middle schools and high schools is available at: [www.erikalighthouse.org/contact-us](http://www.erikalighthouse.org/contact-us).

### **About Erika's Lighthouse**

Erika's Lighthouse: *A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression* is a non-profit organization committed to raising awareness about teen depression in middle school and high school communities at no cost to schools. Erika's Lighthouse works to eliminate the stigma surrounding depression and empower young people to take ownership of their mental health. Core programs include the video-based, teacher-led depression awareness classroom programs — *The Erika's Lighthouse Program: Depression and Suicide Awareness for High School Students* and *The Erika's Lighthouse Program: Depression Awareness for Middle School Students*. Erika's Lighthouse also provides countless other web-based resources. To learn more, visit [www.erikalighthouse.org](http://www.erikalighthouse.org).

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