



For Immediate Release
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**Georgia Public Broadcasting
Takes an In-depth Look at Depressive Disorders
Programming Features PBS Documentary
Depression: Out of the Shadows
and a Special Edition of Georgia Weekly
Wednesday, May 21, Beginning at 9 PM
GPB Partners with the Georgia Crisis & Access Line
To Answer Viewer Calls**

May is Mental Health Month, and as a service to viewers across Georgia, GPB will present a comprehensive evening of programming on **Wednesday, May 21**, which takes an in-depth look at depressive disorders. Programming begins at 9 PM with the new PBS documentary **Depression: Out of the Shadows**. The documentary is followed by a special edition of GPB's weekly public affairs program **Georgia Weekly** that features local mental health experts. GPB is also partnering with the Georgia Crisis & Access Line to provide support and resources for viewers who call in during the broadcast with concerns about mental health issues.

Depression: Out of the Shadows tells the dramatic stories of people of different ages, from diverse backgrounds, who live with various forms of clinical depression — and explores its causes and treatments. The film also features several of the nation's leading mental health experts, who explain current theories about the causes of depression and pharmaceutical and counseling treatments that have proved successful.

The experts include Drs. Charles Nemeroff, William McDonald and Helen Mayberg of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Emory University School of Medicine.

According to statistics from the Georgia Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases, depression is the leading cause of nearly 900 suicides each year in the state. "Over 80 percent of those diagnosed with depression show significant improvement with the right treatment. Unfortunately, far too many do not seek help," says Division Director Gwen Skinner.

(More..)

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Following the broadcast of **Depression: Out of the Shadows**, veteran journalist Jane Pauley, who wrote about having a bipolar disorder in her autobiography *Skywriting: Out of the Blue*, will host a panel discussion with mental health experts to discuss the issues raised in the film.

At 11 PM, GPB will air a special edition of its weekly public affairs program **Georgia Weekly**. Mental health experts will discuss the basis of depression, treatment and research being conducted in Georgia, and resources available through the state and non profit organizations. Guests include: Dr. William McDonald, Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Emory University, Chief, Division of Geriatric Psychiatry and Director, Fuqua Center; Dr. Donald Manning, Medical Director for the Georgia Division of Mental Health Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases; Audrey Sumner, Director for the Office of Mental Health, Georgia Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases; and Eric Spencer, Executive Director, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Georgia.

Throughout the evening of programming on May 21, GPB will post the number of the Georgia Crisis & Access Line on the screen so that viewers can call in with questions. The service is operated by the Georgia Department of Human Resources Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disability and Addictive Diseases and Behavioral Health Link. The service provides toll free access to service location and appointment scheduling, crisis counseling with licensed clinicians, and deployment of emergency services. G-Cal has the additional benefits of affording centralized data collection regarding demand for services and accessibility of services in all parts of the state.

"With the stigma that goes with mental illness and depression in our society, even today, it is hard to make that first step to pick up the '400-pound' phone. The Georgia Crisis & Access Line works to make accessibility of care as easy as possible." David Covington, CEO, Behavioral Health Link (Georgia Crisis & Access Line).

Funding for Georgia Public Broadcasting's **Depression: Out of The Shadows** project is made possible in part by a grant from the Aetna Foundation, the independent charitable and philanthropic arm of Aetna Inc. Founded in 1972, the Aetna Foundation helps build healthy communities by promoting volunteerism, forming partnerships and funding initiatives that improve the quality of life where its employees and customers live and work.

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