The Community Action Award,

Toronto, Ont

May 1, 2000

To whom it may concern:

Susan Moziar is an outstanding candidate for the Community Action.

Individuals, particularly children and young adults, who have a serious mental illness like schizophrenia, manic depressive (bipolar)illness or a disabling anxiety or mood disorder are one of the most disadvantaged groups. Stigma, shame and misinformation still surround these illnesses. For the last four years, Susan has been involved in our community in innovative and exciting work educating about mental illness and advocating for the seriously mentally ill and their families. She has made exceptional contributions in this area. The following are some of her accomplishments.

EDUCATING THE EDUCATOR ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS

- Serious mental illness is a young person's disease that often goes undetected for years. Research shows that the sooner mental illness is treated the better the outcome. As a School Board Trustee, Susan had a vision to create a document to help educators recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness. To do this, she enlisted the help of the chief psychologist of the Upper Grand District School Board, teachers, the education worker from the Guelph Community Mental Health Clinic and an M.S.W. social work intern from Wilfrid Laurier University to design "MENTAL ILLNESS IN SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN: AN EDUCATOR'S RESOURCE GUIDE" (copy enclosed). This comprehensive, easy to follow guide will be presented to the special services of the School Board on May 7, 2000. The goal is to have this guide on every educator's desk before the end of the school year.

- Susan has arranged for in service education sessions to be given by the Child and

Adolescent Services of the Community Mental Health Clinic in conjunction with the distribution of the Educator's Resource Guide.

- At regular Board Meetings Susan has repeatedly brought up mental health concerns.

POLITICAL ADVOCACY

Susan has become increasingly concerned by the lack of access to opportunity and the lower quality of life that individuals with serious mental illness often experience. She felt that the political arena was one of the best ways to address these concerns.

- In conjunction with other concerned families in 1997, Susan invited our local MPP, Brenda Elliott to listen to families' concerns in the areas of: the Mental Health Law, the best medications as the first line of treatment for psychiatric illness, adequate treatment, housing and community support services for the seriously mentally ill (see position paper enclosed). After listening to the families' rationale, Brenda has advocated for their concerns in parliament.

- An All Candidates Meeting on Mental Health Issues, 1999, was arranged by Susan before the last election. It was the only All Candidates Meeting on a single issue that was attended by all the candidates. Once again, Susan brought mental health concerns to the attention of the politicians and community members (see newspaper article enclosed)

MEDIATION WORK WITH LOCAL PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL

- When Susan and some other family caregivers had concerns about communication and co-operation problems in 1997 among patients and their families and the local psychiatric hospital, they invited the CEO of that hospital in to hear their concerns, but more importantly, their ideas for solutions to these problems (see position paper on families and the hospital). The hospital has adopted a number of the suggestions and now works more effectively with families.

- The Transitional Care department of this hospital requested meetings in 1998 with Susan and her group to look at what families needed from Transitional Care.

- Up to the present date, the CEO of the hospital has continued to meet with Susan to gain a better understanding of what families need who are caring for a loved one with serious mental illness.

WIZARD OF HOPE WALK FOR SCHIZOPHRENIA 1998 -2000

Susan has been involved with the Wizard of Hope Walk for Schizophrenia the last three years because it increases awareness of mental illness - 300 attended last year's walk. It also raises funds for much needed research into the illness - over $27,000 was raised at our 1999 Walk.

- Susan has been an organizer for the Wizard of Hope Walk for Schizophrenia 1998-2000.

- For the 1998 and `99 Wizard of Hope Walks for Schizophrenia, Susan designed and printed the raffle tickets

- She obtained sponsors for the Wizard Walk. For instance, she was instrumental in getting Ontario Hydro to twice advertise the Walk on their billboard.

- Susan arranged for a Wizard of Hope Walk for Schizophrenia information package to go to all the schools in the Guelph Wellington Dufferin area to get the students involved, give them information and help in lowering the stigma attached to the illness

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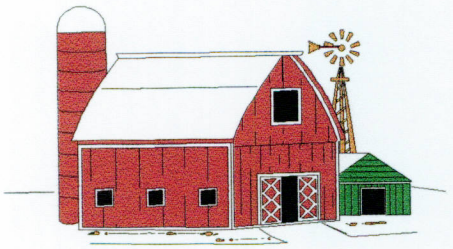
COMMENTS OF A FAMILY EDUCATION WORKER

As I have worked with Susan Moziar, on her projects over the last four years, I have been awed how an ordinary person has become a leader in the field of advocating for the most seriously mentally ill, teaching not only community members but politicians and mental health service providers as well what is needed She has done extraordinary things and really made a difference to a lot of people with mental illness and their families.

And, the story is not over. When I was talking with Susan recently, she asked me the question, "What can **we** do next?" That `we' is a hallmark of how Susan works. She inspires others and gets them to join in the fight for those disadvantaged by mental illness.

What a remarkable woman she is for the Community Action Award!

Susan Scadding M.S.W. Family Education Worker.



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June 13, 1999

Susan Moziar
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Dear Susan,

It was truly wonderful on June 1 to have two solid hours of our local candidates' time devoted to mental health issues. There were so many aspects of the evening that merit congratulations - from the superb organization... to the excellent turnout... through to the sense of satisfaction that we all took away from the meeting: we have been heard.

Thank you, Susan; I know these things do not simply happen. On behalf of the staff and Board of the Community Mental Health Clinic I offer our sincere appreciation for everything you did to bring that evening together.

It seems clear according to the Mercury's post-election quotes from Brenda Eliot that mental health matters are definitely on her list of local priorities. You can be assured that we at the Clinic will do everything we can to keep the momentum going.

Please accept our sincere thanks.

Yours truly,

Anne Lamek

cc: Susan Scadding, CMHC