

## FOUNDERS LETTER 2022

FROM FOUNDER, RICH MATTINGLY

### A YEAR OF GROWTH

There are certainly cycles in our lives. They evolve around endless influences, both physical and emotional---often totally out of our control. This past year, with the pandemic cycling into a more manageable faze, we were able to pursue our mission of making a quantifiable impact once again, aggressively around mental health.

We began the year working with our partners at the National Press Foundation on the **2022 Carolyn C. Mattingly Award for Mental Health Reporting**—the most prestigious journalistic award for mental health coverage in America. The Award recognizes exemplary journalism that illuminates and advances the understanding of mental health issues and treatments.

Christina Caron, a reporter for the Well section at The New York Times, won this year's mental health reporting award for her coverage of how COVID affected U.S. mental health in 2021, particularly among Black teenagers. She and her colleagues were also lauded for partnering with Psychology Today to survey 1,320 therapists around the country, eliciting valuable information about what they were hearing from their increasingly anxious and isolated patients. Caron later wrote about the lessons she learned about the ethics of covering suicide.

In the spring we launched a new award initiative entitled the **Carolyn C. Mattingly Award for Mental Health in the Workplace**. The idea was conceived as a result of our 2016 symposium with the John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHBSPH), entitled **Mental Health in the Workplace: A Public Health Summit**.



The Award focuses specifically on robust approaches that support employee mental health. Criteria include mental health benefits and resources, workplace policies and practices, leadership support, and efforts to create a positive work environment and organizational culture above and beyond what is offered in a general health and well-being program.

Recognizing that workplace mental health efforts are most effective in the context of an overarching culture of health and comprehensive efforts that enhance employee well-being, the Workplace Award is built on the foundation of broad-based psychologically healthy workplace practices including opportunities for employee involvement, health and safety efforts, training and development, work-life support, reward and recognition, and strategic communication.

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**"WE KNOW THAT  
WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH  
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CULTURE OF HEALTH AND  
WELLBEING."**

**- RON GOETZEL, PHD**

**SENIOR SCIENTIST AT THE JOHNS HOPKINS  
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**



This fall, at our annual An Evening of Luv, we honored the inaugural winners of this important and impactful Award before a crowd of more than 300 Luv u Project supporters. Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, Metro Nashville Public Schools and the University of Virginia were recognized with the 2022 Workplace Awards. In addition to the winners, Associated Bank, Franklin County Cooperative and General Electric received Honorable Mention recognition.

You can read more details about the winners of the Awards and all our initiatives on The Luv u Project website: [theluvuproject.org](http://theluvuproject.org).

As shared regularly in our updates, we have a strong and productive alliance with the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. Our commitment and work to build the **Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/The Luv u Project Center for Mental Health in the Workplace** continues as the country's first academic home for workplace mental health research and development.



In fact, JHBSPH's work with The Luv u Project was the inspiration for the submission and ultimate approval of a nearly \$7 million grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), to establish a new POE (Psychological, Organizational, Environmental) Center at Hopkins.

Working with Dean Ellen J. MacKenzie and the faculty leadership, we are proud to share that we will be collaborating on a new project in 2023 which will focus on a summit aimed at identifying the challenges, gaps, and opportunities to improve the mental health and wellbeing of those who work at higher education institutions. Johns Hopkins is well-positioned to serve as a central focal point for research, translation, and dissemination of best and promising practices to address the mental health and wellbeing needs of its own employees and staff as well as for those at other similar institutions of higher learning.

In addition to all the exciting work outlined above, we also remain faithfully committed to our "Acts of Kindness" initiatives. In October, we participated in the **2022 Women Moving Forward Conference**, held at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women. Since the Program's inception, The National Association of Women's Judges, along with countless other dedicated volunteers, have united to introduce critical resources and offer the guidance essential to help empower women scheduled for release back into society. Our prisons are mental institutions, and we simply must address the challenges within.

This year we extended our commitment to **student scholarships at Montgomery College (MC)**, based in Rockville, Maryland. MC is continuously ranked as one of the nation's most highly regarded community colleges and serves a diverse student population. The Luv u Project annually funds scholarships to candidates who meet financial need criteria, have an active GPA of 2.5 or higher and have an active interest/involvement in mental health services—all verified by independent College officials. These scholarships are awarded in memory of our good friend Mitchell Greenberg.

Arguably, nothing is more important than our **uLead** initiative. Building on our mission, uLead engages and embraces young professionals in conversations about mental health to open new channels of opportunity. Membership to uLead is free for young professionals ages 25 – 45 from across the country, who care deeply about breaking the stigma surrounding mental health. This year, the uLead Advisory Council, expanded and conducted a Giving Tuesday outreach. uLead also introduced a new Blog series-- Powerful pieces that help to destigmatize and share stories that it is ok to talk about our mental feelings, stress, etc. You can read these submissions and we welcome your own thoughts on our website.

In mid-December, we again collaborated with the NPF on a webinar regarding mental health in the workplace. Attended by journalists and guests from many other sectors, it featured The Luv u Project, JHBSPH, and a distinguished Wall Street Reporter. Employee mental health is drawing more news coverage as companies recognize that worker depression and anxiety hurt their bottom line and a new emphasis by the Surgeon General is helping raise attention and awareness.

So, we begin another cycle. Another year.

Our pace is quicker now. The schedules are full of responsibility and opportunity. But before we file the memories of 2022 away, let's reflect on one invaluable fact. We are nothing without each other. **The kindness of many gives us the emotional fuel and funding to push forward, every day.** While I cannot mention every individual or company that has empowered our work in this correspondence, please know that not a day passes without me thinking of you and your goodness. One special mention does go to my friend Lewis Black. Lewis has always cared about our work and in November he stood with us, in person, at An Evening of Luv, to be honored and be counted. Luv u Lew.

Please keep us in your thoughts and in your plans for giving. You won't find a better investment. Happy to share more about the Luv u Project, with you, anytime, anywhere. Mental Health touches us all.

My heartfelt thanks,

Rich

C. Richard Mattingly  
Founder and President

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**THE  
LUV U  
PROJECT**

In Memory of  
Carolyn C. Mattingly