



Depression and Bipolar  
Support Alliance

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## National Contest Encourages People with Depressive Symptoms of Bipolar Disorder or Major Depressive Disorder to Speak Out

*SPEAK and Be Heard... Living With Depression Contest Urges Individuals to Serve as Role Models by Sharing Their Stories of Success*

**CHICAGO** – The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) has partnered with AstraZeneca to launch ***SPEAK and Be Heard...Living With Depression***. The contest encourages people with depressive symptoms of bipolar disorder and major depressive disorder (also called depression) to share their stories of success through a variety of creative mediums. Submissions are now being accepted for the program, and finalists, selected by judges from patient, advocacy, healthcare, literary, film, music and art communities, will have the opportunity to inspire people living with unresolved symptoms of depression.

Stories can be submitted online at [www.SpeakAboutDepression.com](http://www.SpeakAboutDepression.com) in the form of an essay, song, art, poetry, or video. To qualify, essay, song, and poem submissions must be received by August 13; and art and video submissions by September 10.

“If you suffer from depression it can interfere with every aspect of your daily life and you may feel symptoms that include sadness and loss of interest in activities once enjoyed,” said Janet Taylor, M.D., M.P.H., a New York-based psychiatrist in private practice. “By sharing their success stories, finalists in the ***SPEAK and Be Heard*** contest will inspire others with their success and show how important it is for people with depression who are still experiencing depressive symptoms to talk to a healthcare professional and develop an appropriate treatment plan.”

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A group of judges from DBSA and the mental health community will select three finalists from each category. Those selected may have the opportunity to share their success stories with local, regional and national media, will be featured on the ***SPEAK and Be Heard*** Web site, [www.SpeakAboutDepression.com](http://www.SpeakAboutDepression.com), on DBSA's wellness community Web site, [www.FacingUs.org](http://www.FacingUs.org), on AstraZeneca media properties, various social media outlets, and on the Web site for *bp Magazine*, which empowers and motivates the community of individuals living with bipolar disorder, or *Esperanza*, which is a magazine designed for the mental health community.

"Many people with depressive symptoms of bipolar disorder or depression face a difficult journey as they learn to manage their illness," said Allen Doederlein, DBSA Executive Director for External Affairs. "Through personal goal setting and the guidance of a healthcare professional, success can be achieved over time, and individuals coping with depressive symptoms can attain a healthy, thriving lifestyle. Success may be measured in many ways: from the basics of feeling well enough to get out of bed, to the complexities of maintaining meaningful work, fulfilling relationships, and personal happiness."

To learn more about the contest, please visit at [www.SpeakAboutDepression.com](http://www.SpeakAboutDepression.com).

### **About the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance**

The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) is the leading patient-directed national organization focusing on depression and bipolar disorder. The organization fosters an environment of understanding about the impact and management of these life-threatening illnesses by providing up-to-date, scientifically-based tools and information. DBSA supports research to promote more timely diagnosis, develop more effective and tolerable treatments and discover a cure. The organization works to ensure that people living with mood disorders are treated equitably.

Assisted by a scientific advisory board composed of the leading researchers and clinicians in the field of mood disorders, DBSA has more than 1,000 peer-run support groups across the country. Nearly five million people request and receive information and assistance each year. DBSA's mission is to improve the lives of people living with mood disorders.

For more information, please visit [www.DBSAlliance.org](http://www.DBSAlliance.org) or call (800) 826-3632.

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