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Huntington Society of Canada Celebrates Champion of Hope Month

(KITCHENER, ON) Feb. 5, 2015 – February is Champion of Hope Month at the Huntington Society of Canada. Champions of Hope are donors that make monthly donations to support Canadians affected by Huntington disease. Every year, we take the month of February to thank these dedicated donors that have an incredible impact over time.

Ally Hurst is a Champion of Hope. In Grade 6, while other kids were complaining about the breakfasts their moms had prepared, Ally was waking up early to feed and dress her mother. That’s just how it goes when your mom has Huntington disease (HD). With their dad working, a lot of the cooking, cleaning and general caregiving duties fell to Ally and her three older sisters.

Growing up in a family affected by HD, Ally got to know the Huntington Society of Canada (HSC) at an early age. She remembers the encouragement and support the family got from the local HSC resource centre director, who would take Ally out for regular one-on-one chats. Their local Chapter was also there for them, helping the Hursts navigate the tricky waters of Huntington disease.

Now she’s giving back. For the past six years, Ally has been a member of our Champions of Hope program. The small amounts charged to her credit card each month make it easy to be a regular donor. “You don’t have to think about it,” she says. “I think it’s a great thing for people to do.”

Although her mother passed away in 2008, HD continues to play a major part in the Hurst family. While one of Ally’s sisters has tested negative, her other two have already started showing symptoms. However, in the midst of life’s challenges, Ally’s commitment to HSC remains rock solid. “The Huntington Society of Canada is something that is really close to my heart,” she says. “I would rather spend money on that than anything else.”

Monthly donors offer the Society a steady and predictable source of funding, and also allow us to benefit in two additional ways: it reduces our administration costs and it allows us to plan more effectively.

- \$10/month provides educational materials and consultations for one year to a facility providing long-term care for a person with HD.
- \$20/month ensures one person can take advantage of our retreat program, fostering feelings of inclusion and hope.
- \$30/month enhances direct support services, including counselling, referrals and recreational programs for one person with HD for a year.

To learn more about the Champions of Hope Monthly Giving Program, visit www.huntingtonsociety.ca/monthly-giving/

Huntington disease (HD) is a debilitating brain disorder that is fatal and incurable. About one in every 7,000 Canadians has HD and approximately one in every 5,500 is at-risk of developing the disease. Many more are touched by HD whether as a caregiver, a family member, or a friend. HD causes cells in specific parts of the brain to die. As the disease progresses, a person with Huntington's become less able to manage movements, recall events, make decisions and control emotions. The disease leads to incapacitation and, eventually, death.

The **Huntington Society of Canada (HSC)** is a respected leader in the worldwide effort to end Huntington disease. HSC is the only Canadian health charity dedicated to providing help and hope for families dealing with Huntington disease across Canada.

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