



## ***Surrounded By Madness* and author Rachel Pruchno highlighted in *Courier-Post* feature story on mental illness**

*The gripping and empowering memoir by Rachel Pruchno, Endowed Chair & Professor of Medicine at Rowan University, telling of her experiences with mental illness in her family continues to attract media attention.*

September 8, 2014 – **For Immediate Release**

**VOORHEES, NEW JERSEY** – When Camden’s *Courier-Post*, a major South Jersey newspaper, made the decision to run a major feature story about mental illness and mental health care in South Jersey, reporter Eric Herr was quick to contact Dr. Rachel Pruchno, an internationally recognized expert on mental health and family dynamics and author of her recently published memoir ***Surrounded By Madness: A Memoir of Mental Illness and Family Secrets***.

The result, a two page feature story entitled “Let’s Talk: New book highlights the need for more communication surrounding mental illness,” appeared in today’s *Courier-Post*. (A PDF image of the article is available through the book’s website at <http://rachelpruchno.net/surroundedbymadness/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/courier-post-090814.pdf> or <http://tinyurl.com/m6torew>.)

Aside from the coverage of ***Surrounded By Madness***, a book that shines light into the darkest corners of Dr. Pruchno’s own family history and provides vital insight into the problems with the United States’ mental health care and legal systems and which has been lauded by mental health professionals nation-wide, the *Courier-Post* article focuses on the current state of mental health care services in New Jersey and the need for a legislation such as The Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act (H.R.-3717) to help the families of people with mentally illness.

“It was good to see the *Courier-Post* spreading the word about the important social challenge that our country faces in combating mental illness,” observes Dr. Pruchno. “Overall, the public doesn’t really understanding what mental illness looks like and the devastating effects it has on individual sufferers and their families. And because of the stigma associated with it, mental illness is something that is largely absent from the public consciousness despite its enormous costs to our nation’s economy – estimated at close to one-half trillion dollars annually. These are among the many reasons why The Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act is such a vital piece of legislation. I urge everyone to call their representatives in Congress to demand support for this important bill.”

Since its release, ***Surrounded By Madness*** has attracted the attention of leaders in the field and glowingly positive reviews.

“Penned in a vivid, literary style that bleeds anguish, Pruchno’s story is a mother’s worst nightmare. Since the book centers on a young person and leaves such a powerful impression, it would make a solid supplementary text for a college psychology course. Pruchno’s feelings of desperation and powerlessness speak more to the reality of mental illness than an academic case study ever could,” from **Kirkus Reviews**.

“An important, poignant voice rooted in one family’s experience. Will help move communities beyond dialogue to action,” from **Michael J. Fitzpatrick, M.S.W., Executive Director, National Alliance on Mental Illness**.

“Reading *Surrounded By Madness* is like watching the inevitable train crash that you can’t stop from happening. Poignant, vivid, tragic, yet ultimately resilient,” from **Stephen P. Hinshaw, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Psychology, University of California at Berkeley and Vice-Chair for Psychology, Department of Psychiatry, University of California at San Francisco**.

“A report from the front lines of the daily battles of mental illness and a first-hand account of loss, this is a compelling book for clinicians, scholars, and family members trying to understand chronic mental illness,” from **Michael A. Smyer, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology & Provost, Bucknell University**.

For more information about the author, please visit Dr. Pruchno’s official website at [www.RachelPruchno.net](http://www.RachelPruchno.net).

For more information about ***Surrounded By Madness*** and to watch the book trailer, please visit the book’s official website at [www.SurroundedByMadness.net](http://www.SurroundedByMadness.net) or go to YouTube.com at <http://tinyurl.com/nozgcwv>.

***Surrounded By Madness: A Memoir of Mental Illness and Family Secrets*** is available exclusively at Amazon.com (<http://tinyurl.com/k5xvmsz>) and other online booksellers.

#### **About the Author:**

Rachel Pruchno is Endowed Chair & Professor of Medicine at Rowan University’s School of Osteopathic Medicine and Director of Research at the New Jersey Institute for Successful Aging (<http://www.rowan.edu/som/njisa/>). She earned her Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies at Penn State University. Dr. Pruchno has been the Principal Investigator on numerous research grants funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute of Aging, the National Institute of Nursing Research, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Retirement Research Foundation, and the Cleveland Foundation. She has published nearly 100 peer-reviewed articles in scientific journals, 10 invited book chapters, and co-edited *Challenges of an Aging Society: Ethical Dilemmas, Political Issues*. She has served as Editor-in-Chief of the leading scientific journal *The Gerontologist* (<http://gerontologist.oxfordjournals.org/>) since 2011.

As a weekly blogger since January 2014, Dr. Pruchno has been contributing to PsychologyToday.com, the website of the magazine *Psychology Today*. The blog, “All in the Family: Mental Illness and Caregiving Across the Generations,” may be viewed at [www.PsychologyToday.com/blog/All-in-the-Family](http://www.PsychologyToday.com/blog/All-in-the-Family).

She is married with four children, two of whom are dogs.

If you would like more information about Dr. Pruchno’s academic work, including her CV and publications, please visit her personal website at [www.RachelPruchno.net](http://www.RachelPruchno.net).

**Contact:** Jonathan Brill / 617-872-5580 / [jonathan.brill.wh82@wharton.upenn.edu](mailto:jonathan.brill.wh82@wharton.upenn.edu)