



Media contact: Margaret Ritsch
817-255-9411; mobile 817-913-6135

**DESTIGMATIZING MENTAL ILLNESS:
FINE LINE EXHIBIT OPENS AT
FORT WORTH MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND HISTORY SEPT. 23**

“There is no them and us. There is only us.”

-- Photographer Michael Nye

Fort Worth, Texas – A photography/audio exhibit portraying real people with mental illnesses opens at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History Saturday, Sept. 23, 2006. ***Fine Line: Mental Health Mental Illness*** fights the stigma of mental illness by presenting guests with human stories from individuals affected by mental illness.

Life-size black and white photos, all taken with a large camera to ensure exquisite detail and depth, are accompanied by the subjects’ voices telling their own stories. Each of the portraits has an audio box. Some of the individuals talk about their illnesses, others about the stigma they encounter, and still others about their lives in general – lives that are much like all others.

Developed by San Antonio-based artist Michael Nye and presented by Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County, the exhibit will be on display at the museum through Dec. 3, 2006 and will be offered free of charge to the public.

“Fine Line is a departure from our usual type of exhibit – it’s a window into a segment of our community that is normally hidden,” said Van A. Romans, the museum’s president. “It tells stories that need to be heard. These are our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, neighbors and friends. To know them is to care for them.”

The individuals portrayed in the exhibit have a range of mental illnesses including depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. Some have high-level jobs and others are parents with high ideals for their children. Some are homeless or in jail. They are courageous and fragile, rich and poor, young and old. But the common thread they share is an illness that occurs in their brains and affects their minds instead of their bodies. Mental illness can strike anyone at any time and has an impact that goes well beyond the individuals who experience the illness.

Nye conceived the exhibit after losing two close friends to suicide and seeing the struggles of others he knew had mental illnesses. He points out, “There is no them and us. There is only us.”

The museum is located at 1501 Montgomery Street in the Cultural District of Fort Worth, Texas. *Fine Line: Mental Health Mental Illness* is appropriate for older children and adults; parents of younger children will be encouraged to opt out of bringing their children into the exhibit. For more information, please call 817-255-9300 or visit www.fortworthmuseum.org. To learn more about mental health and services in Tarrant County, visit www.mentalhealthconnection.org.

About the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History

Dedicated to lifelong learning and anchored by its rich collections, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History engages its diverse community through creative, vibrant programs and exhibits interpreting science and the stories of Texas and the Southwest.

The Museum features traveling exhibits and four core exhibit galleries, including DinoDig® and KIDSPACE®; the Noble Planetarium, Museum School®; and the Omni Theater, an IMAX dome seven stories high. Since the mid-1980s, the Museum annually welcomes more than 800,000 visitors, making it one of the most popular cultural attractions in North Texas.

About Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County

Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County is a collaboration of public and private agencies, mental health care providers, patients and caregivers working together to improve the mental health system for all residents of Tarrant County. Its goal is to create a highly networked system of mental health care so there is “no wrong door to the right mental health resources.”

###