

Essex resident set to release H.O.P.E – a film to start the conversation about mental health

by Sylene Argent

Matthew Luppino is a multi award-winning filmmaker, known for making films in the drama and romance genres, has found a way to use his talents to help lift the stigma around mental health.

On September 10, to coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day, the nine-minute and 13 second PSA titled “H.O.P.E – Hold. On. Pain. Ends,” is set to premier in Windsor, with details to be announced.

Luppino – who is a Writer, Producer, Editor,

Director, and Actor in the film, along with his fiancé, Laura Holman – said he is working to launch the PSA with the help of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and is set to be a keynote speaker to youths in the near future.

“I always knew I wanted to create a story like this. As a survivor of attempted suicide and long-time battler of depression I knew I wanted to tell the story. It was just a matter of when,” Luppino said of setting out to start work on this project that was very

near and dear to him.

Luppino said he has been open about his own journey with mental health. Two-and-half years ago, he was hospitalized twice for suicidal attempts and depression. He was diagnosed as Manic and Bipolar and required medication and therapy for years.

With H.O.P.E, he wanted to show the mental breaking point when an individual has had enough and does not know who to turn to. Perhaps this is the point when an individual may contemplate a permanent solution to a



Photo submitted: Matthew Luppino, a new resident to Essex, is set to release his newest film, “H.O.P.E – Hold. On. Pain. Ends,” in September. He is pictured with his fiancé, Laura Holman.

temporary problem, and when that path is chosen, he noted, the pain is transferred to those around that individual.

“Just because you don’t see a tomorrow,

there are things and people around you worth living for. Mental health is not who you are, it is a piece of who you are,” he said.

Luppino said he was in a dark place a few

years ago, and his fiancé said, “I wish you could see yourself through my eyes.”

“That concept struck a chord with me,” he said.

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He was working on a project at the time that was suppose to be a romance, but the wheels in his head started turning. "There was a deeper connection."

This story, which turned into "H.O.P.E.," he said, had to be told through a mirror to show two different perspectives: the individual contemplating suicide and their loved-one.

"It is a dark film, but it has a hopeful ending," he said. "The film capitalizes for something intangible that keeps them alive, that could be anything. There is someone or something to live for."

"H.O.P.E." ended better than Luppino could have hoped for. He finished filming a few months ago, but the ending was missing something. The

original song he chose to end the film with was not exemplifying that hope meaning he was striving to convey.

"I played with it and landed a new song to end it with, so when the climax ends with the character dialogue - it hits harder. It gives me chills every time," he said.

Overall, the response he has received about the short film has been overwhelming, and he has been commended on speaking out about mental health issues.

"There is a huge stigma in mental health, he said. "Just from talking about it and promoting the film, I learned people want to talk about it, but people need something to spark the conversation. I have received a lot of messages from people who believed the film will help so many," he said, adding there needs to be a common ground for conversation from those who need to speak about their mental health issues and others, including those who support individuals suffering with mental health issues.

"Everyone has something. Everyone goes through something that affects them," he noted.

Through the film, he wanted to give options, including maybe a different way to react to an individual going through a hard time or for those suffering.

So far, "H.O.P.E." has won two awards through the One-Reeler Short Film Competition in LA for Best Screenplay and the Award of Excellence, Luppino said.

The goal for "H.O.P.E.," Luppino said, is to get it picked-up nationally as a PSA in order to reach as many people as possible.

Even though the

visit the movie's official Facebook page.

The film's website includes helplines so if anyone is looking for help, they can get that information.

To date, Luppino has made 15 films, nine of which have been awards winning out of Los Angeles (LA). The filmmaker went to Toronto

Film School, where he competed his first award-winning film, "Blink of an Eye," which won several awards, including Best Romance Short and Best Dramatic short in LA at a film festival.

In the future, Luppino would love to bring his passion for film to LA and continue building on his career there.

film is set to premier on September 10, it will be released online on September 6 at www.hopefilmovement.weebly.com as well as www.luppostudios.weebly.com.

For more info and media materials, log onto the film's website or



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