2018 Clifford W. Beers Nomination

Jennifer Marshall, Executive Director & Co-Founder



Jennifer Marshall is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of

This Is My Brave, Inc., the leading platform for individuals to share their story of overcoming mental illness through creative expression. Jennifer formed the organization after experiencing a positive outpouring of support following the publication of her story on a well-known news website. Wanting to provide that same opportunity to others living with mental illness, Jennifer envisioned a theater show concept and together with her Co-Founder Anne Marie Ames, launched the project on Kickstarter. The project was successfully funded within 31 days, raising over $10k to create the inaugural show and the movement became a non-profit organization the following year. In 2017, This Is My Brave was awarded the prestigious Alkermes Inspiration Grant which is funding the creation of the organization’s first documentary film which is currently in production.

Jennifer’s personal blog, [BipolarMomLife.com](http://bipolarmomlife.com/), has been named Healthline Bipolar Blog of the Year for four years in a row (2014 - 2017), and in 2014, Jennifer was named a “Rookie of the Year” finalist by WEGO Health. She’s been featured on the front page of [The Washington Post](http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/local/wp/2016/06/01/unwell-and-unashamed/?hpid=hp_rhp-more-top-stories_stigma-herodisplay1110a%3Ahomepage%2Fstory) (June 2, 2016), in [O, The Oprah Magazine](http://www.oprah.com/health_wellness/Womans-Fight-With-Mental-Illness-Healing-Process) (August, 2016), in [BPHope Magazine](http://www.bphope.com/balancing-motherhood-bipolar-brave-new-world/) (cover story, fall 2015), on local news stations NBC4 Washington, DC Fox5 and WJAL ABC7News, as well as having been interviewed for podcasts and local publications, speaking on the importance of sharing stories of triumphing despite mental illness to end stigma. Jennifer gave a [TEDx talk](https://youtu.be/0gU1n2ynGBA) in October of 2016 entitled “Mental Illness: Being Brave Saves Lives,” and she speaks regularly at mental health and storytelling conferences.

In addition to her work with This Is My Brave, Jennifer served as a team leader for the 2013 American Foundation for Suicide Prevention’s Overnight Walk in Washington, DC. Jennifer and her husband Ben have been married for 14 years and live in Ashburn with their two kids, Owen (9) and Vivian (7). In her spare time, Jennifer enjoys writing, yoga and reading. She is currently writing a memoir.

Jennifer deserves to be recognized for the Clifford W. Beers Award based on her passion for ending the stigma surrounding mental illness through the sharing of personal stories. Since 2014, she has helped bring over 545 individuals’ stories to stages across the United States and Australia, and the organization’s YouTube channel features over 625 unique videos of personal mental health and addiction storytelling, with 20 all-new shows in development for 2018.