

RETAIL

HBC Foundation focuses on mental health

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The Bom This Way Foundation is among the organizations getting a grant from HBC. Image credit: Bom This Way Foundation

By STAFF REPORTS

Saks Fifth Avenue owner Hudson's Bay Company is raising awareness and funds in support of mental health organizations, looking to improve services for the one in four people affected by mental illness.

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Through a New York cocktail event, the company has raised \$2 million that will go towards grants for organizations in the United States. HBC has made mental health a key focus of its charitable efforts across North America.

"HBC and the HBC Foundation are committed to promoting greater access to resources and services for those affected by mental illness," said Helena Foulkes, CEO of HBC, in a statement. "By supporting like-minded organizations that can make an impact, we hope to drive progress and change around these critical issues, but the work is far from finished.

"We look forward to continuing to support mental health initiatives across North America," she said.

Mental health mindset

HBC's #1in4 fundraiser was held at L'Avenue at Saks. Vendor partners including American Express, Salesforce, Leonard Lauder, Simon Property Group and Boston Consulting Group helped to raise \$2 million through the event.

Following the event, Saks is giving grants to four organizations focused on mental health.

One of the nonprofits is the Born This Way Foundation, which was founded by Lady Gaga and her mother Cynthia Germanotta. The organization focuses on young people, helping to reduce the stigma around mental health and provide access to services.

Born This Way also partners with National Council for Behavioral Health on an educational program that helps teens support their friends who are struggling with depression, eating disorders or substance abuse.

HBC is also donating to Bring Change to Mind. Founded by actress Glenn Close, the organization will be using the funds to help it launch a school-based program in partnership with the New York City mayor's office this fall.

The JED Foundation focuses on colleges, helping schools improve their mental health services for students.

National Alliance on Mental Health is also receiving a grant, which will help it fund its walks that raise money

towards advocacy and education.

"Now more than ever, there is a tremendous urgency to foster mental health awareness and understanding," said Richard Baker, governor and executive chairman at HBC, in a statement. "With these latest grants, HBC will meet its commitment to provide \$6 million CAD to support mental health initiatives by the end of 2019.

"We are grateful for the generosity of our vendor partners, who have helped to make this happen," he said.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Our partners at #HBCFoundation are selling this special @wearyourlabel T-shirt to support #BC2M! 100% of proceeds will be donated to our @bc2mhighschool program. Link in bio to purchase. Also, with each Instagram or tweet with the hashtag #TheFutureIsStigmaFree, \$5 is donated to us. Thank you for helping us create change and end stigma

A post shared by Bring Change to Mind (BC2M) (@bringchangetomind) on Jun 29, 2018 at 1:39pm PDT

Instagram post from Bring Change to Mind

Last year, Saks also worked on a project to help with mental health services.

Saks, Lord & Taylor and Saks Off 5th offered a special T-shirt made in partnership with Wear Your Label. "The Future is Stigma Free" campaign will work towards raising money for mental health services ([see story](#)).