



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free Festival Focuses on Mental Health Awareness and Celebrates Community at Ijams Nature Center April 6

(KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, 3/27/2024) – Join Ijams Nature Center, UTK Knoxville Sources of Strength, and CONTACT Care Line for a free, uplifting mental health awareness festival on Saturday, April 6, from 2-6 p.m.

Titled “Spring into Hope,” this family-friendly, all-ages event at the Ijams Visitor Center will feature community resources, live music, art, speaker sessions, hands-on workshops, and more.

“The goal of this event is to spread messages of hope, resilience, and support for everyone, and break the stigmas surrounding mental health,” Visitor Services Director Sarah Brobst said. “This festival is a space for learning and connecting with others who understand the challenges we face in our day-to-day lives. It’s a reminder that we are not alone; there are community resources and people who care.”

Doors open at 2 p.m.; musical performances begin at 4.

This is a free event, but donations are appreciated and will support the work of UTK Sources of Strength, a student-run, strength-based mental health awareness group at the University of Tennessee. Its mission is to advance mental health awareness among university students and employees, as well as the broader community, by destigmatizing conversations around mental health and focusing on help-seeking behavior, fostering resilience, encouraging healthy coping mechanisms, and cultivating a sense of belonging within the community.

Brobst said Ijams also will have a Free Parking Day in conjunction with the festival.

Spring into Hope is sponsored by Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, the UT College of Social Work, The McNabb Center, and Union Place Bar & Grill.

To learn more or make a donation to support the work of UTK Sources of Help, visit the Spring into Hope event page at ijams.org/calendar-of-events.

Ijams Nature Center is a 318-acre nonprofit educational center in the heart of Knoxville and serves visitors of all ages, stages, and abilities. Its mission is to encourage stewardship of the natural world by providing an urban greenspace for people to learn about and enjoy the outdoors through engaging experiences. Ijams features 14 miles of hiking and mixed-use trails, a public access river dock, swimming, boating, biking, and so much more. Hundreds of world-class educational programs and events are coordinated and offered annually. Ijams' grounds and trails are open every day from 8:00 AM until dusk. For more information, visit Ijams.org or call 865-577-4717.

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