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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLOGY NAMES ANDREW W.K. AS PERSON OF THE YEAR

Washington, D.C. – February 19, 2018 – Andrew W.K. has been named Person of the Year by the American Association of Suicidology (AAS), honoring his life-affirming music and work, which promotes celebrating all life has to offer. AAS will present the 2018 inaugural *Person of the Year Award* at the [51st AAS Annual Conference](#), the largest gathering of suicide prevention professionals, students, attempt and loss survivors, and clinicians in the United States taking place in Washington, D.C. April 18 - 21, 2018.

The inaugural *Person of the Year Award* will be presented to Andrew W.K. due to his consistent and powerful use of positivity to improve the lives of those who hear his music. “Andrew’s message resonates with the field of suicide prevention in that he encourages people to use their capabilities to create a life worth living,” said Julie Cerel, PhD, President of AAS.

The purpose of the AAS *Person of the Year Award* is to recognize large-scale impact as it relates to the suicide prevention and mental health community.

“Words cannot adequately convey my astonishment at having been selected for this unique recognition. I’m grateful to the American Association of Suicidology for the incredibly valuable work they’ve done for so long, and continue to do now, when it’s needed more than ever,” said Andrew W.K.

“My story is a familiar one: from a young age, I felt consistently uneasy in the world, and thus began an ongoing search for something to quell the sense of wrongness inside of me. I was lucky enough to discover a life's work which not only transmuted my darker tendencies into something brighter and more deserving of my energy, but also allowed me to amplify and share that quest with others. In my mission to find joyful meaning in life, I never imagined my rock and roll destiny would become a source of inspiration for those who also dwelled in the shadows. To reach into the abyss and somehow make contact with the unknown is both terrifying and miraculous, but even more terrifying and miraculous, is to reach into yourself and somehow make contact with your fellow man. It's in this quintessential form of contact - this primal physical and emotional connection - that the Truth about life must surely be found. This is our challenge - to see if we can find the other person inside of us, and us in them, and to let this process of enlightened discovery open our hearts, and purify our minds.”

"I'd like to humbly accept this award on behalf of all the people who work everyday at forging this sacred human bond. I'd like to accept this award on behalf of music itself, and on behalf of the mysterious life-force feeling I simply call "partying". I'd like to accept this award on behalf of every person who has struggled and overcome, and struggled and fallen - for I have been both. I'd also like to accept this honor on behalf of every person who's lost someone - or lost themselves - to seemingly insurmountable darkness. In a world of confusion, distress, and extraordinary challenges, there are few efforts more worthwhile than devoting oneself to the raising of the collective human spirit. If any of our work can contribute to this vast emergency - this crisis of joy - then may the Party Gods grant us ever more strength, so we may all help make the world a partier place."

Additional awardees at the conference will include lawmakers, researchers, academicians, suicide attempt and loss survivors, and mental health advocates.

"Andrew W.K. has brought so much hope and joy to so many people through the power of his music, lectures, and writings" said Colleen Creighton, Executive Director of AAS. "He has empowered individuals to find a positive path forward. Therefore, we are pleased to name him our inaugural Person of the Year for the incredible impact he has had in transforming lives throughout the world."

For the media: We urge members of the media to share suicide prevention resources in all of their reports. Responsible reporting on suicide and the inclusion of stories of hope and resilience can prevent suicides. You can find more information on safe messaging around suicide [here](#).

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About AAS: Founded in 1968, AAS promotes suicide as a research discipline, public awareness programs, public education and training for professionals and volunteers. The membership of AAS includes mental health and public health professionals, researchers, suicide prevention and crisis intervention centers, school districts, crisis center volunteers, survivors of suicide loss, attempt survivors, and a variety of lay persons who have an interest in suicide prevention. You can learn more about AAS at www.suicidology.org.