CONTACT:
Michael Goodman
GPR | Goodman Public Relations
(954) 806-2869
michael@goodmanpr.com

For Immediate Release

THE POPPY PROJECT POP-UP LIVING GARDEN AT GALLERIA FORT LAUDERDALE TO EXPAND WITH AN ART EXHIBITION AND OFFICIAL RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY ON SEPTEMBER 10

Public photo opportunity honoring veterans and the military at Galleria Fort Lauderdale to run through November 10

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (August 20, 2026) – Galleria Fort Lauderdale will host a special ribbon cutting ceremony to launch **The Poppy Project Pop-Up Living Garden** in support of Henderson Behavioral Health (HBH) in collaboration with the **USS Fort Lauderdale (LPD28) Support Committee on Thursday, September 10, at 4:30 p.m.** The public is invited to join **City of Fort Lauderdale Mayor Dean Trantalis** and community leaders with singer **Zachary Kopelman**, as they unveil this public art initiative designed to honor veterans while raising awareness and funds for critical mental health services. Adding to the installation, will be "Soldier Stories," an exclusive exhibition by **award-winning artist Marilyn Johansen honoring veterans and the military**. The cherished photo opportunity with the larger-than-life artistic poppy flowers will run through November 10 at Galleria Fort Lauderdale (2414 East Sunrise Blvd.)

"Galleria Fort Lauderdale is proud to present this special photo moment and tribute to veterans in support of Henderson Behavioral Health and their efforts to provide vital mental health services," said **Shaneika Haskins, marketing director at Galleria Fort Lauderdale.** "We are thankful to our past and present military for their contributions to our country and we invite the community to join us in honoring their legacy."

Designed by South Florida based Ingham Landscaping and presented by Galleria Fort Lauderdale, the two-month living garden will be a colorful and lively setting featuring the five- and 6-foot striking handcrafted fiberglass poppy flowers which are a remembrance of those who protect and serve our country. The inside mall garden will include a variety of tropical ornamental plants and shrubs that will complement the artistic poppy works of art sponsored by key community partners, sponsors, and supporters including The Leo Goodwin Foundation, Arlene Pecora, the Henderson Behavioral Health Board of Directors, Florida Power & Light Company (FPL), USS Fort Lauderdale (LPD28) Support Committee, Community Foundation of Broward, Disabled American Veterans-Gold Coast Chapter 133, Riverwalk Fort Lauderdale and Galleria Fort Lauderdale

As an extension of the garden, accomplished artist **Marilyn Johansen** will present an exclusive art series, “Soldier Stories,” in honor of our U.S. Military based on her close family ties to serving our country. Her father was a career military Air Force fighter pilot who flew in WWII, Korea, the Cold War and Vietnam and served time as a prisoner of war. Her husband, a former Marine, is now a volunteer with Honor Flight South Florida. Her nephew, and cousins served in Afghanistan and other relatives currently serve in the Army, Navy, Air Force and the Coast Guard. An arts community leader and mentor, Marilyn teaches classes in acrylic and watercolor at ArtServe in Fort Lauderdale. She has served as president of both the Florida Watercolor Society and the Gold Coast Watercolor Society and is a member of additional local and national art societies including Miami Watercolor Society, Palm Beach Watercolor Society, Gold Coast Watercolor Society, Florida Watercolor Society, and Southern Watercolor Society. She has also penned a memoir of her life growing up in a military family, entitled “My Father’s Secrets.”

In addition, visitors will also be encouraged to select free postcards and add a personal message to current servicemen and women. This special moment is arranged by the USS Fort Lauderdale (LPD28) Support Committee.

Guests to the mall can take colorful photos to share online and connect with and donate to HBH’s virtual Legacy Wall which encourages friends and families to honor loved ones who have served or are currently serving our country. The campaign will continue throughout the year, aligning with nationally recognized holidays including Veterans Day.

The poppies made their debut at an unveiling at Tunnel Top Plaza in Downtown Fort Lauderdale in May. Funds raised through sponsorship of the poppies and donations will directly support Henderson Behavioral Health’s VICTORY (Veterans in Counseling to Obtain Recovery) Program, which provides free mental health services to veterans, active-duty service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and their families, including outreach and education across South Florida, workshops addressing mental health challenges impacting military families, and individual and relationship therapy offered both in clinical settings and within the community.

“The Poppy Project is a powerful way for our community to come together in remembrance of those who have patriotically served our country and to honor them by supporting vital mental health programs and services,” said **Dr. Steven Ronik, CEO of Henderson Behavioral Health**. “We value our partnership with Galleria Fort Lauderdale and salute them and our other sponsors for presenting this extension of our program, ensuring that those who have served and continue to protect our country receive the care they deserve.”

Inspired by the poppy’s historical significance as a symbol of sacrifice, rooted in the World War I poem “In Flanders Fields,” and later adopted as a national emblem of remembrance, HBH’s The Poppy Project brings this tradition to life in a local and meaningful way. The effort will continue throughout the year, aligning with nationally recognized holidays including Veterans Day.

Since 2023, Henderson Behavioral Health has served hundreds of veterans, including more than 250 in 2025 alone, reflecting the growing demand for accessible, high-quality mental health care. As a vital safety net within the community, the organization continues to see increasing demand for veteran-focused services, highlighting the need for continued resources to support and expand access to care.

To learn more about The Poppy Project Pop-Up Living Garden at Galleria Fort Lauderdale, and for a complete list of retailers, call (954) 564-1015 or visit www.hendersonbh.org.

About Henderson Behavioral Health
Established in 1953, Henderson Behavioral Health (HBH or Henderson) is one of Florida’s oldest and largest nonprofit providers of mental health and substance use disorder services, serving more than 30,000 individuals of all ages each year. Through a comprehensive approach

that includes clinical care, housing, supported employment and advocacy, Henderson helps individuals achieve recovery and lead meaningful, independent lives. With programs and facilities throughout South Florida, the organization provides a wide range of accessible, evidence-based services designed to treat the whole person. Henderson is fully accredited at the highest level by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (C.A.R.F.). For more information visit, hendersonbh.org or call (954) 777-1624.

About Galleria Fort Lauderdale
Galleria Fort Lauderdale, recognized as one of South Florida's premier shopping destinations, features a variety of popular dining and retail options. Macy's, Dillard's and H&M anchor the center which also is home to Apple, Banana Republic, Free People and Pandora. The center features an assortment of dining establishments such as Seasons 52, The Capital Grille and P.F. Chang's. Coming in late 2027, Galleria Fort Lauderdale will welcome Florida's first Wayfair retail location. Just steps away from Fort Lauderdale's world-famous beach, it is minutes from the airport, port, downtown, hotels and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention Center with easy access from Sunrise Boulevard, U.S. Highway 1 (Federal Highway), Interstate 95, Interstate 595, and U.S. Highway A1A (Fort Lauderdale Beach Boulevard). Located at 2414 East Sunrise Blvd., it is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Mon. through Sat. and 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Sun. Restaurants and anchors enjoy varied hours. More information is available by calling (954) 564-1015 or by visiting www.galleriamall-fl.com.

###



Photo courtesy of Galleria Fort Lauderdale



Photo credit: Reese Meighan, Perfect Look Photos



“The Great War” by Marilyn Johansen

Galleria Fort Lauderdale will welcome The Poppy Project Pop-Up Living Garden in support of Henderson Behavioral Health (HBH) with a special ribbon cutting on Thursday, September 10, at 4:30 p.m. The cherished photo opportunity will run through November 10