



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Anna McGrath

Email: [amcgrath@skdknick.com](mailto:amcgrath@skdknick.com)

Phone: (646) 930-1936

## **Shatterproof Supporters Rappel from Washington, DC's Lafayette Tower to Change the Conversation About Addiction**

*Third-annual Shatterproof Challenge series raises awareness & resources for prescription drug epidemic, which claims more than 2,100 lives in the DC-area each year*

**WASHINGTON DC (June 24, 2016)** – Today, [Shatterproof](#), a national non-profit working to end the disease of addiction, with national partner Cigna, hosted the third event in its **Shatterproof Challenge Rappel** series to raise awareness and resources for addiction prevention, treatment and recovery.

Shatterproof has been leading the fight in Washington to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA), which is currently sitting in a House-Senate conference committee. Shatterproof is pushing Congress to quickly finalize the bill, and to include money that would help close the so-called "treatment gap." Millions of Americans who need and want treatment for an opioid use disorder currently can't get it, because there aren't enough facilities offering it.

Around 100 supporters personally impacted by the disease descended from the Lafayette Tower to bring attention to addiction and slow the growing opioid epidemic claiming the lives of 129 Americans every day.

"Today, we bring the conversation about addiction to the steps of Capitol Hill," said **Gary Mendell, CEO & Founder, Shatterproof**. "With the money raised, Shatterproof will continue to advocate for legislation to combat this devastating and growing disease. Today we rappelled in honor of those we have lost, and we rappelled to bring hope to those who are still suffering. Thank you to everyone who participated."

"Cigna supports Shatterproof as part of a larger effort to address the opioid epidemic. Shatterproof's events and advocacy help fight the stigma associated with substance abuse," said **David Figliuzzi, executive director of the Cigna Foundation**. "It's imperative that we remove that stigma so the health care system can address opioid addiction as it does other chronic diseases."

The event series has already raised over \$1.7 million and fundraising pages will remain open through the final event in November 2016 to continue the momentum. **Wendy Spencer, CEO of AmeriCorps, Penny Mills, CEO of ASAM**, and many more came out to support one another as they faced their fears and rappelled the 12 stories down the Lafayette Tower.

Upcoming events will take place in Los Angeles, CA (7/14), Hartford, CT (7/27), Fairfield County, CT (10/8) and Austin, TX (11/6). [Registration is now open](#) for all events and participants are required to raise a minimum of \$1,000 to rappel.



If you would like to participate in an upcoming event or donate to an existing fundraising group, visit [rappelshatterproof.org](http://rappelshatterproof.org).

**Register. Raise money. Rappel!**

*About Gary Mendell:*

Gary Mendell is the founder and CEO of Shatterproof. Mr. Mendell founded Shatterproof to spare others the tragedy his family suffered with the death of his son Brian, who lost his battle with addiction in 2011. Mr. Mendell is the founder and former CEO of HEI Hotels & Resort and the former president of Starwood Lodging Trust.

*About Shatterproof:*

Shatterproof is a national non-profit dedicated to reducing the devastation that addiction to prescription drugs, illicit drugs, and alcohol cause to families, and ending the stigma of those affected by this disease. Shatterproof provides information and resources for those living with addiction and their families, enabling powerful new evidence-based approaches to prevention, treatment and recovery, and takes the issue to the steps of Capitol Hill.

###