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**2018 Oticon Focus on People Awards Announces Call for Nominations**

***National awards program celebrates 20 years of honoring outstanding people with hearing loss***

**SOMERSET, NJ April 3** -- Oticon, Inc. is seeking nominations of outstanding individuals with any degree of hearing loss for the 2018 Oticon Focus on People Awards. For 20 years, the Oticon Focus on People Awards have set the gold standard for recognizing the achievements and contributions of people with hearing loss. Established in 1997, the national awards program honors students, adults, advocacy volunteers and hearing care professionals who show that hearing loss does not limit a person’s ability to make a positive difference.

“For more than 20 years, the Oticon Focus on People Awards has created the kind of awareness that changes attitudes and opens doors of opportunity for all people with hearing loss,” said Nancy Palmere, Director of Consumer Marketing and Public Relations for Oticon, Inc., who heads the national program. “Our approach is simple. By drawing national attention to everyday people doing amazing things, who also happened to have hearing loss, we aim to change negative perceptions of hearing loss and encourage those reluctant to address their own hearing health to seek professional care.”

**Easy to Nominate**

Anyone may nominate. Quick and easy nominations forms, available at [www.Oticon.com/FOP](%20www.Oticon.com/FOP), can be downloaded or completed online. People with all degrees of hearing loss – from mild to more severe - are eligible. There is also a special category for hearing care practitioners with or without hearing loss. Deadline for nominations is May 18, 2018.

**Four Categories with Three Winners in Each**

Categories include**: Student**, for full-time students with hearing loss, ages 6 – 25; **Adult**, for people with hearing loss, ages 21 and above; and **Advocacy**, for volunteers with hearing loss, who are actively involved in support efforts for the hard-of-hearing and deaf community. A special **Practitioner** category recognizes hearing care professionals who go “above and beyond” through humanitarian and public education efforts. Nominees in the Practitioner category are not required to have a hearing loss to qualify.

First place winners receive a $1,000 cash prize and a $1,000 donation to the charity of their choice. First place winners in the Student, Adult and Advocacy categories also receive Oticon BrainHearing™ hearing devices. Second place winners receive a $500 cash prize and third place winners, a $250 cash prize.

Following the close of nominations, the general public will be invited to vote online to determine first, second and third place winners in each category.

To learn more about the 2018 Oticon Focus on People Awards and to obtain a nomination form, visit [www.Oticon.com/FOP](http://www.Oticon.com/FOP).