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Developer of a Website for People with Chronic Conditions Speaks at Annual Center for Hope Luncheon

Author : David Gurliacci

Categories : [Community Organizations](#)

Tagged as : [Center for Hope 2017](#), [Center for Hope Annual Luncheon 2017](#)[Family Centers 2017](#)

Date : May 2, 2017

The Center for HOPE welcomes motivational speaker and entrepreneur Kate Milliken to its 2017 Annual Luncheon on Tuesday, May 16. Milliken started an online support forum that allows patients and caregivers to create video blogs about their individual journeys with critical illness.

As the founder of [MyCounterpane.com](#), Milliken has been immersed in the personal stories of people living tackling illness head on.

When Milliken was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2006, she saw a need for a moment-based, authentic platform to show others what it was like to actually live with an illness.

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She started MyCounterpane not only as a vehicle to share her own struggles, but also to stimulate conversation and inspire others to educate the public on MS and other illnesses through short movies. MyCounterpane aims to demonstrate insights in the emotional realm of health, while healing and heal people through the power of story.

The lunch will be held at 11 a.m. at Wee Burn Beach Club in Rowayton.

The event will also feature a special acoustic performance by national recording artists, The Alternate Routes. Songwriters Tim Warren and Eric Donnelly have always been drawn to universal themes of redemption, loss and the confusion and madness within the heart.

In 2013, the band composed the song "Nothing More" following the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. Since its release, the song was featured in the season finale of *NCIS*, and during the final act of the Opening Ceremonies of the Olympic Games in Sochi. Riding the success of "Nothing More", the band is a mainstay of the U.S. touring circuit.

The 2017 Center for HOPE Luncheon is co-chaired by Kate Clark, Meg Critchell and Merrilou Hillenbrand. All proceeds from the event will benefit the Center for HOPE and The Den for Grieving Kids, Family Centers' programs offering counseling and support to residents of lower Fairfield County coping with a loss, a critical illness or life-altering circumstance.

Tickets start at \$125. Several exciting sponsorship opportunities — which include a semi-private reception with Milliken and The Alternate Routes — are also available. Several exciting sponsorship opportunities — which include a semi-private reception with Milliken and The Alternate Routes — are also available. A copy of The Alternate Routes' album, *Nothing More*, will be included with each ticket purchase.

For more information, contact Carter Ashforth at cashforth@familycenters.org.

Family Centers is a private, nonprofit organization offering education and human services to children, adults and families in Fairfield County. More than 300 professionals and 3,500 trained volunteers work together to provide a wide range of responsive, innovative programs.

A United Way, Community Fund of Darien and New Canaan Community Foundation partner agency, Family Centers is a member of the Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies and the Alliance for Children and Families and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The agency is licensed by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health. Visit

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www.familycenters.org or www.facebook.com/familycentersinc for additional information.

Editor's note: The picture accompanying the link to this article on the Darienite.com home page is from the MyCounterpane.com website.