



**Mental Health
Association**
in Orange County, Inc.

NADIA ALLEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For Immediate Release:

Date: 9/27/2019

**Contact: Steven Doolittle, Community Relations Manager
(845) 342-2400 ext.1236**

**MHA VET 2 VET PROGRAM RECEIVES 2019 ORANGE COUNTY HUMAN
RIGHTS AWARD**

Mental Health Association in Orange County, Inc. (MHA) is proud to announce that its VET 2 VET Program has been selected to be the recipient of the prestigious 2019 Orange County Human Rights Award. VET 2 VET representatives will be honored at the 24th Annual Orange County Human Rights Award Reception. The reception is being held on December 10th, 2019 at The Fountains of Walkkill (40 Sands Road, Middletown, NY) at 11:00 am. VET 2 VET is being recognized for its outstanding work in serving our veteran community.

The Orange County Human Rights Commission (OCHRC) was established in 1970 to serve the Orange County community. The OCHRC's primary purpose is to foster mutual respect and understanding among all groups in the county, including, but not limited to: racial, religious, gender, nationality, disability, and LGBTQ. They coordinate and facilitate education and awareness events in the community, in order to promote understanding of equity, acceptance, unity, and humanity. The Human Rights Award program honors those who have made a significant contribution to advance human rights and eliminate discrimination.

MHA is very proud of this deserving recognition, as VET 2 VET's work with Orange County veterans has been impactful and instrumental in improving the quality of life for so many in our community. VET 2 VET is the only service of its kind in Orange County. The program values the importance of meeting veterans where they are at and determining how best to support them and their families.

The program provides "peer to peer" counseling for veterans who personally understand the effects of PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and substance use. This special service offer the opportunity for veterans to come together in support of each other, to listen and benefit from each other's experience with service-related issues which may include getting back into civilian life, returning to school, securing civilian jobs, re-entry to family life, or obtaining VA services.

-More-

MHA's Peer Support Program for Veterans utilizes a combination of peer-to-peer mentoring, support groups, creative programming and additional activities. The peer mentoring and support groups are provided by Veterans who are in recovery from mental health and/or substance use. While every deployment is different, there is one constant: the camaraderie that comes from a shared experience of life in the military.

MHA is privileged to work along-side Larry Neumann, Program Coordinator, Millie Rivera-Velez, Vet2Vet Facilitator, Bryon Abrams, Vet2Vet Facilitator and Everett Cox, Vet2Vet Facilitator.

MHA deeply thanks and congratulates VET 2 VET Staff Members for their dedication with working with the veteran community in Orange County. Time and time again, these dedicated individuals go above and beyond each day for those we serve and are truly deserving of this outstanding award.

MHA would also like to recognize and congratulate the other 2019 Orange County Human Rights Award Honorees:

- Danielle Barbour- LGBTQ Advocate
- Pastor Rolfi Elivo- Immigrant's Rights Advocate
- Fran Fox-Pizzonia- Reproductive Rights Advocate
- Decora Sandiford- Artist and Performance Poet

-End-

73 JAMES P. KELLY WAY * Middletown, NEW YORK 10940 * (845) 342-2400-FAX (845) 343-9665

www.mhaorangeny.com *e-mail: mha@mhaorangeny.com
EBEN ROCKWELL HILL, PRESIDENT * A UNITED WAY AGENCY



Orange County Crisis Call Center • 24 HOURS • 7 DAYS A WEEK
1-800-832-1200 or (845) 346-4357

Mental Health Association in Orange County is a proud member of WELCOME Orange... Helping individuals achieve recovery, resiliency and self-determination.