



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Help For Our Heroes: Ritchie Delivers \$185,000 To Continue Local PTSD Support Programs

PATTY RITCHIE May 16, 2017



State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing she has secured \$185,000 in state budget funding to help continue programs in Jefferson County that aim to help veterans and active-duty troops struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other combat-related illnesses.

Funding will be split evenly between River Hospital's Community Wellness Program and the VETS Peer-to-Peer Outreach Center in Watertown.

Located in Alexandria Bay, the River Community Wellness Program offers troops outpatient mental health services, including counseling and group therapy. Watertown's VETS Peer-to-Peer Outreach Center oversees the PFC Joseph Dwyer Peer Support Program for Veterans, a statewide PTSD initiative created by Senator Ritchie and Rep. Lee Zeldin, a former state senator and Army lieutenant who served in Iraq with the 82nd Airborne Division, who is now a member of Congress.

"Our region is home to so many brave men and women who have put their lives on the line to serve our country and keep us safe," said Senator Ritchie. "They've always been there for us and we need to be there for them too when they are struggling with wounds of war we cannot see. These programs give them a shoulder to lean on and I am proud to continue to support them."

"The River Community Wellness Program has an excellent track record of helping active duty troops and veterans cope with the challenges that often accompany military service," said River Hospital CEO Ben Moore. "We would like to thank Senator Ritchie for her continued commitment to ensuring that the men and women of our armed forces receive the care they need."

"The VETS Peer-to-Peer Outreach Center cannot thank Senator Ritchie enough for the support she has shown not only for the important services we provide, but also for the members of our military both past and present," said VETS Peer-to-Peer Outreach Center Veteran Peer Advocate Tim Crytser. "Through funding she has secured, we can continue to ensure that these brave individuals receive the support needed to cope with combat-related illnesses."

This marks the fifth consecutive year Senator Ritchie has been able to secure funding for both programs. To date, she has delivered nearly \$1 million to help provide local veterans and active duty troops with services that help them cope with combat-related illnesses.