



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

## Ortt Receives Veterans Award

ROBERT G. ORTT November 9, 2018

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Recently, Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I,Ref-North Tonawanda) was awarded the National Alliance on Mental Illness – New York State (NAMI-NYS) Max Gabriel Award in recognition for his efforts to raise mental health awareness and provide mental health peer services to veterans. Named after Max Gabriel, a decorated Vietnam Veteran from the Buffalo area who was the first chair the NAMI-NYS Veterans Committee, the award is presented each year to a veteran who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to the mental health needs of other veterans.

“Being chosen as the recipient of the Max Gabriel Award is an enormous honor and one that I hold very dear,” said Ortt. “Mental health care for veterans is a life or death issue these days and the exponentially increased suicide rates we see among our ex-service members highlights the need for increased concentration and care. Many of the soldiers who returned from overseas came home changed forever. It’s our duty to make sure we do everything possible to help those soldiers reacclimate when returning home.

NAMI-NYS is New York State’s chapter of the nation’s largest grassroots organization, which focuses on improving the lives of people living with mental illness and their families. Thanks to efforts by legislators like Sen. Ortt, programs such as The Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Program have provided vital mental health services to veterans, increased

awareness of mental health have focused attention on the mental health of veterans and their families.

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