



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Supporting Those Who Serve: Ritchie Announces \$185,000 for Local PTSD Support Programs

PATTY RITCHIE November 2, 2016

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State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing she has secured \$185,000 in special funding to support Jefferson County veterans and active duty troops who are 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.

“With the North Country being home to so many 10th Mountain Division soldiers and their families, it is vitally important to have resources available to support those who have served and help them cope with PTSD and other combat related illnesses,” said Senator Ritchie.

“I am proud to have secured this funding, which will provide troops and veterans struggling with scars we cannot see with the support they need.”

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.

“This funding means a lot and allows River Hospital to continue to provide crucial services to the soldiers of Fort Drum and the community,” said River Hospital Chief Executive Officer Ben Moore. “We are very grateful to Senator Ritchie for her support of the River Community Wellness Program and what she has done for our hospital, our community and our soldiers.”

“We want to express our deepest thanks to Senator Ritchie for securing this vital funding, which will allow us to continue to provide help and support for our veterans and their families in our Outreach Center,” said VETS Peer to Peer Outreach Center Coordinator Tim Crytser.

“Having the resources to help our service men and women, our veterans and their families get the services they need is critical,” said Jefferson County Community Services Director Roger Ambrose. “Senator Ritchie has provided funding over the years that has helped hundreds of veterans. From our county’s perspective, mental health services and River

Hospital have also been instrumental in helping our soldiers cope with combat related illnesses.”

This marks the fourth consecutive year Senator Ritchie has been able to secure funding for local PTSD support programs. To date, Senator Ritchie has delivered \$740,000 to help provide veterans and active duty troops cope with combat related illnesses.