



Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Megan Castellano, MPA

Megan Castellano, MPA, has served as the Executive Director of the Mental Health Association in Putnam County, Inc. for the past 27 years.

During her tenure, she had the opportunity to develop peer support programs for individuals and families with mental health needs in Putnam and neighboring communities.

Ms. Castellano has proudly served as Co-chair of the Putnam County Suicide Prevention Task Force since its inception in 2013. Through the diverse representation of the Task Force, they collectively have been able to significantly reduce the number of suicides in Putnam County, while also developing peer support programs. The programs, including Warriors Mental Health Awareness Club, provide forums for positive conversations about mental health in school settings, as well as FIRST LINE, a peer-to-peer support program for law enforcement and first responders. Ms. Castellano also continues to host gatekeeper trainings such as SAFETALK, to help people recognize someone who is at risk for suicide and put them in touch with suicide prevention resources.

In 2015, MHA was awarded a NYS contract through the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency to launch a peer support program for veterans - The Joseph P. Dwyer Vet2Vet Program of Putnam County. Ms. Castellano's work through Vet2Vet has inspired a deep respect and admiration for veterans. Additionally, she received the high honor of being named an Honorary Veteran on Veterans Day in 2019. She has recently trained to be a horse handler at Pegasus Therapeutic Riding Stables, as a volunteer, to support their work with veterans and others who are coping with trauma.

Ms. Castellano holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology, with a minor in Sociology and a master's degree in Public Administration, with a specialty in non-profit-management.

She also serves as a volunteer on the Advisory Board for the Putnam Community Action Partnership and teaches religion to 5th graders through the Religious Education Department at St. James the Apostle Church in Carmel. Ms. Castellano is also a volunteer through the Master Gardener Program at Cornell Cooperative Extension in Putnam County.

***Megan Castellano, MPA was selected as a
2020 Woman of Distinction honoree by Senator Pete Harckham.***

