Mental Health America Announces Winners of 2019 Awards; Advocates, Media Professionals, Youth and More to be Honored at June Conference

Mental Health America (MHA) is happy to announce today the recipients of the Clifford W. Beers Award, the Mental Health Corporate Excellence Award, the Innovation in Programming Award, the Media Award, the youth-focused mPower Award, and the George Goodman and Ruth P. Brudney Social Work Award.

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (PRWEB) May 09, 2019 -- Mental Health America (MHA) will honor an impressive group of individuals, communications professionals and innovative programs at its 2019 Annual Conference, being held in Washington, DC on June 13-15. Throughout the three days MHA will present several awards and is happy to announce today the recipients of the Clifford W. Beers Award, our Mental Health Corporate Excellence Award, the Innovation in Programming Award, the Media Award, the youth-focused mPower Award, and the George Goodman and Ruth P. Brudney Social Work Award.

MHA’s Clifford W. Beers Award will be presented to mental health advocate Gregory Dicharry. The Clifford W. Beers Award is presented annually to an individual with the lived experience of mental illness who best reflects the example set by MHA founder Clifford W. Beers in his or her efforts to improve conditions for and attitudes toward people living with mental health conditions. Greg's experience as a peer, mental health professional, volunteer and film maker have had a huge impact on helping improve the lives of people living with mental health challenges. He is the national youth empowerment director at Magellan Health, and in his spare time produces and directs mental health-related documentary films to reduce stigma and help others find recovery. In 2008, Greg developed the MY LIFE (Magellan Youth Leaders Inspiring Future Empowerment) program, which is one of the nation's leading programs for youth who experience mental health, substance use and/or foster care-related challenges.

MHA’s 2019 Media Award recognizes journalists, authors, digital platforms, media outlets, television shows and filmmakers that have tackled the issues of mental illness and addiction – and in doing so, have educated, informed, and broken down stigma and shame around these issues. This year’s recipients include six outstanding and diverse examples across multiple platforms:
- Amazon Studios for its feature film, Beautiful Boy, a powerful and emotional film about drug addiction starring Steve Carell, Timothée Chalamet, Maura Tierney, and Amy Ryan.
- Documentary filmmaker Roger Weisberg for his film, Broken Places, that dives into the complex question of why some children are severely impacted by early adversity while others are able to thrive.
- ABC Television for its show, A Million Little Things, which centers around a close circle of friends who must come to terms with a friend’s suicide. The show masterfully weaves in content that addresses depression, therapy, grief, and the intersection of physical illness and mental health.
- The Egg Gang, for its Instagram account @world_record_egg, which became a global phenomenon and an internet sensation within days of its creation. With millions following the account, the creators chose a big reveal to shine a light on the importance of mental health.
- Deseret News, for its series Generation Vexed, a year-long series out of Utah that examined why teens are more anxious than ever and how families and communities can help.
- WBFO-FM and lead journalist Eileen Buckley for their two-year Mental Health Initiative project, which provided in-depth coverage of mental health issues and helped build the mental health literacy of its community.

MHA’s 2019 George Goodman and Ruth P. Brudney Social Work Award this year goes to Kelley Kitley.
Kelley is a psychotherapist and owner of 2 wellness businesses - Serendipitous Psychotherapy, LLC and reNew studio, LLC. She’s an Amazon Best Selling Author and Chicago Literary Legacy Honoree of "MY self: An Autobiography of Survival." She’s shared her experience, strength, and hope on national media platforms including TODAY, Dr. Oz, Access Live, and Dr. Drew. Kitley is a TEDx speaker "I show my scars so others know I can heal," and expert contributor in hundreds of national publications. Her mission is to break the silence and stigma of mental health and addiction and give others hope that they too can heal.

MHA’s 2019 mPower Award goes to Zachary Mallory, a mental health and suicide prevention advocate from Kansas City, Missouri. Zachary is a suicide attempt survivor and a survivor of Conversion Therapy. He has been very active with local, state, and national legislation to urge stakeholders to raise awareness and take initiative to combat stigma surrounding suicide and mental health. Zachary is a former Human Rights Campaign (HRC) National Youth Ambassador and was awarded the 2016 Spirit of Matthew Award from the Matthew Shepard Foundation for his tireless efforts to erase hate and accelerate acceptance.

MHA’s Innovation in Programming Award, which recognizes the continuing innovation and creativity of the MHA affiliate network in program development and implementation, goes to MHA of Greater Houston for its Center for School Behavioral Health. The Center works with school districts to create trauma-informed environments and implement prevention and early intervention services. The Center is built on six pillars – the School Behavioral Health Collaborative, the Best Practice Incubator, the Stigma Reduction Initiative, an Annual Conference, Professional Development, and Advocacy and Policy Analysis. Common points of entry into the Center’s work include attending a professional development offering or the conference. In 2018, the Center trained almost 4,000 people through professional development, and the conference drew 650 attendees from 46 school districts.

And this year, in partnership with One Mind, MHA will co-present the Mental Health Corporate Excellence Award to Booz Allen Hamilton. The award honors and recognizes corporations that demonstrate a commitment to its employees by offering programs, accommodations, and training that support mental health wellness in the workplace. Booz Allen Hamilton exemplifies its dedication to mental health by its commitment to maintaining a work environment that provides its 25,000+ employees with the tools they need to be their best, both physically and mentally. One of several examples is its extensive Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that supports mental health in multiple ways, including offering up to eight clinical counseling and/or crisis intervention sessions free of charge for employees, as well as their spouses, partners, and dependents.

The Clifford W. Beers Award and the Mental Health Corporate Excellence Award will be presented on June 13 at MHA’s Clifford W. Beers Awards Dinner. The Media Awards will be presented during MHA’s Media Awards Luncheon on June 14, and the mPower Award, Innovation in Programming Award and the George Goodman and Ruth P. Brudney Social Work Award will be presented during an awards reception the evening of June 14.

“We look forward to gathering in Washington, DC this June and celebrating these amazing award winners,” said Paul Gionfriddo, president and CEO of MHA. “These noteworthy awardees join an already impressive line-up of speakers and participants at this year’s conference. With an unprecedented gathering of advocates, athletes, clinicians, and news makers in the heart of the nation’s capital, this year’s conference is one not to be missed.”

For more information and to register for the MHA 2019 Annual Conference, click here.
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