

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Steve Stern

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATOR
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JUNE IS POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH

Suffolk County and Veterans Administration Provide Information and Support

HUNTINGTON, NY – Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern (D-Huntington) Chairman of the Veterans and Seniors Committee is informing our community that the Veterans Administration (VA) has declared June **“PTSD Awareness Month”** and has established the **“Take the Step”** Campaign to raise awareness of PTSD and provide access to important information for Veterans affected by PTSD and their loved ones. The VA’s **“National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder”** website www.PTSD.va.gov has highlighted various topics for veterans, family members and mental health professionals relating to providing state of the art, high quality mental health care for our returning veterans and to break down the barriers that prevent many of our brave servicemen and women from seeking help. Additionally, resources such as **“Ten Steps to Raise PTSD Awareness”** and a monthly PTSD Newsletter can help members of our community help those who have sacrificed so much to protect our great nation.

Suffolk County has received state funding for the **PFC Joseph Dwyer Program** to help returning veterans cope with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) through a Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program. PFC Dwyer enlisted in the Army after the terrorist attacks on our nation on September 11, 2001. He served honorably in Iraq but returned with PTSD and lost his life in 2008. Too many of our returning veterans are suffering in silence and there have been a record number of suicides in the past year. This program will enable our veterans to share their military experiences, ease their concerns and anxieties concerning life issues and transitioning from military to civilian life and provide support from others who understand and are experiencing the same challenges. Meetings are being conducted at multiple locations, and the schedule is

flexible. Participation is totally anonymous and veterans can feel free to attend and share their experiences in strictest confidence. “I encourage our veterans who may be suffering from PTSD, TBI or just want to talk to their peers to e-mail vetpeertopeer@suffolkcountyny.gov or call 631-853-8345 and to visit the VA website to access valuable information and assistance,” Legislator Stern said. “You are not alone.”

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