

## Councilwoman Cartright addresses Stony Brook University Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners

posted on 4/21/2016 11:24:00 AM



**Farmingville, NY** – On Monday April 4th, Councilwoman Valerie M. Cartright addressed graduating Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner students during their intensive day of learning. Councilwoman Cartright, who was the opening speaker, led the group in a discussion on the ways Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners can serve as advocates for their patients and the unique role they will hold in the community regarding mental health education. The Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner program is a recent recipient of a Health Resources Services Administration grant to support the educational needs of the students who are studying to be psychiatric nurse practitioners and who do their field placement work with at risk youth. The discussion included topics including mental health stigmas, addressing mental health topics in underrepresented communities and community awareness and outreach.

"It was a great opportunity to speak with these nurse practitioner students. Mental Health is a topic that impacts all members of society and transcends all differences. People of all walks of life are dealing with issues in their own lives and the lives of their family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances," stated Councilwoman Cartright. "Providing these students with tools to better advocate for patients and become involved early on in the legislative process was invaluable."

"Training nurses to be advanced practitioners in the specialization of psychiatry is having a far reaching impact as our students go on to practice all across the state and country. With federal funds we have been fortunate to enhance our program to focus more on the mental health and behavioral issues facing our youth. The Councilwoman's message to our graduating class was to challenge them to go beyond their everyday practice. She asked them to recognize the multitude of struggles facing these patients and families and to work in collaboration with others including legislators like her to bring about change. Quite a powerful message!" stated Dr. Barbara Sprung, Director of the Advanced Practice Nursing Program in Psychiatry School of Nursing.

Heidy Merius, who is working with Council District One in the Three Village and Comsewogue school districts to implement a project to raise awareness of mental health issues in students stated, "Working with Councilwoman Valerie Cartright in the 'Connecting Hands in Mental Health Collaboration' highlights a very important issue

impacting youth in Suffolk County. This project's pursuit in educating community youth leaders about adolescent depression and suicide requires stakeholders like the Councilwoman, school district superintendents, and Stony Brook University's Psychiatric Mental Health and Adult Gerontological Nurse Practitioner faculty and students to work together. Joint efforts are needed in order to have community impact and I believe we are successfully moving in that direction."

For more information about the Advanced Practice Nursing Program in Psychiatric/Mental Health visit <http://nursing.stonybrookmedicine.edu/mentalHealthMaster>.

Photo: Councilwoman Cartright addresses Stony Brook University Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners

Photo: Eduardo Constantino, MD - Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Director of Clinical Services, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science, SBU, Patricia Bruckenthal, PhD, APRN-BC, FAAN Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Graduate Studies in the Advanced Practice Nursing division, SBU, Barbara Sprung DNP, RN, NPP, PMHNP-BC Director of the Advanced Practice Nursing Program in Psychiatry SBU School of Nursing, Councilwoman Cartright, Frances Pierre, Senior Vice President, Family Services and Day Care HELP USA, Heidy Merius RN, BSN, Connecting Hands in Mental Health Collaboration project director, SBU School of Nursing

**Division of Public Information \* Office of the Supervisor**

One Independence Hill • Farmingville • NY 11738 • Phone 631-451-6595