



FROM: MHA-NYC
Media Contact: James Grant
917-626-1300
james@jamesgrantpr.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MHA-NYC to Honor First Lady of New York City
National Mental Health Advocate
Chirlane McCray
at Annual Gala**

***Evening will focus on “Just Talking About” mental health and will highlight
the stories of those who have courageously spoken out about the
importance of mental health care.***

WABC Eyewitness News co-anchor Bill Ritter will host.

On Wednesday, June 7, the Mental Health Association of New York City (MHA-NYC), a national leader in mental health services, advocacy, and education will host its annual gala, themed “Just Talk About it: Stories of Recovery and Success.” The benefit, to be held at Gotham Hall in Manhattan, will honor **First Lady of New York City Chirlane McCray** for her unprecedented leadership and advocacy in support of mental health.

In her two short years as First Lady of New York City, Ms. McCray has become a leading voice on mental illness, both locally and nationally.

Ms. McCray created **ThriveNYC**, a roadmap designed to change the way people think about mental health and the way city government and its many partners deliver services. It is the most comprehensive mental health plan of any city or state in the nation.

NYC Well, a cornerstone of ThriveNYC is a partnership between MHA-NYC and the City that makes free, confidential mental health and substance misuse support available to all New Yorkers 24/7/365, via phone, text or chat. In its 7 months of operation, NYC Well has already responded to 145,000 contacts.

MHA-NYC's annual benefit, "Just Talk About It: Stories of Recovery and Success," will call upon the public to "just talk about" mental health and will celebrate people like Ms. McCray whose public words and deeds have helped others find hope and care.

New York Giants Wide-Receiver Brandon Marshall and his wife Michi Marshall will also be honored for their passionate mental health advocacy since 2010, when Brandon disclosed his lifelong struggle with Borderline Personality Disorder and became an inspiration and role model to fans everywhere. Today, Brandon and Michi are the Co-Founders and Chairs of Project 375, an organization dedicated to eradicating the stigma surrounding mental health by raising awareness and improving care for those in need.

In addition, MHA-NYC will honor the Zirinsky family, whose commitment to improving mental health services has spanned 50 years and 3 generations. **Cynthia Zirinsky** -- founder of Gracie Square Hospital and the Richard and Cynthia Zirinsky Center for Bipolar Disorder at Mount Sinai Beth Israel Hospital -- will be honored along with her daughter, legendary CBS News producer **Susan Zirinsky**; her son-in-law, TV news innovator, **Joe Peyronnin**; and her granddaughter, Morgan Stanley executive **Cynthia Eckes**. For 5 decades of leadership and generous philanthropy, a member of the Zirinsky family has served continually on the MHA-NYC Board, changing the face of mental health care.

"The First Lady's work has changed the mental health landscape in New York City," says **Kimberly Williams, President of MHA-NYC**. "Her enduring commitment has worked to break the stigma surrounding mental illness, and allowed us to help more New Yorkers when they most need support. We are thrilled to honor her extraordinary leadership at our gala that celebrates the power of communication and helping individuals find hope."

More than 350 business, civic, and government leaders will come together for this 25th anniversary gala. Dinner Chairs for the event include Jennifer Ashley Ph.D., Global Director of Human Resources of CBRE; Kevin Danehy, Global Head of Corporate Development at Brookfield; and Charles Fitzgerald, Senior Managing Partner of V3 Capital Management, L.P.

About the Mental Health Association of New York City (MHA-NYC):

The **Mental Health Association of New York City (MHA-NYC)** is a not-for-profit organization that addresses mental health needs in New York City and across the nation. Through our three-part mission of service, advocacy and education, we identify unmet needs and develop culturally sensitive programs to improve the lives of individuals and families impacted by mental illness while promoting the importance of mental health. Among other life-saving work, MHA-NYC

administers the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, the Veteran's Crisis Line, and the NFL Life Line.**