



## **Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority**

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### **For Immediate Release**

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## **Veteran Navigator Bridges the Gap for Military Personnel**

**NOVEMBER 5, 2018 – DETROIT, MI** – For Veterans the war at home can be just as perilous as conflicts abroad. Nationally, 20 Veterans commit suicide every day. Of those, six received some kind of health care, the other 14 did not.

The Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority (DWMHA) is changing those statistics by just recently hiring a Veteran Navigator who travels throughout Wayne County providing resources such as behavioral health, employment, housing and transportation.

DWMHA Veteran Navigator and US Army Vet Chris Brown, coordinates with partner agencies and works to build bridges to his fellow servicemen and women, meeting them where they are, from the street corners to the corporate offices.

“There are so many Vets out there who simply don’t know what resources are available or who don’t want to go through the hassle of the paperwork and waiting for hours to be seen by a professional,” said Brown. Some think this is just the way it is.”

Brown enlisted at age 20 and completed basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky. He served as a tank vehicle mechanic for four years. After discharge he lost direction. “There was not a lot of guidance and without the military structure and comradery of my unit, I slipped into isolation and depression.”

A friend encouraged him to take advantage of the GI Bill. He attended Eastern Michigan University and worked at the VA Hospital in Ann Arbor. There, he found his direction, helping fellow Veterans.

“There are resources out there but you do need someone who has been through it all to help you and that’s why Michigan has implemented this program which is based on one being implemented in Texas,” said Brown.

“DWMHA serves as a safety net for 80,000 people in Detroit and Wayne County who have mental illness, intellectual and developmental disabilities, children with serious emotional disturbances and those with substance use disorders,” said CEO and President Willie Brooks. “We also need to be known for our work with Veterans who proudly served out country and now that they are back home, we need to serve them, “

Michigan is home to five VA hospitals and 17 Veteran Navigators servicing 6,000 Vets throughout the state. All Navigators serve Veterans and families with resources for mental health, disability, employment, housing, substance use disorders, support groups, transportation and much more. For additional information contact Chris Brown at 313-344-9099 ext. 3509 or [cbrown@dwmha.com](mailto:cbrown@dwmha.com).

*The Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority (DWMHA) is the largest and most diverse CMH system in Michigan. We are committed to being consumer and community focused, data driven and evidence based. Through programs and services that utilize promising best practices we hope to promote a community that is supportive and embraces individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities and substance use disorder. We offer supports in Infant Mental Health, Integrated Healthcare, Supportive Housing, and Recovery to support self-determination and improving the health and quality of life for nearly 80, 000 consumers and their families.*