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For Immediate Release:

September 25, 2024

Honoring Recovery Month: Veterans Inc. Hosted 3rd Annual Recovery Summit

Art, Aria, & Architecture: The Recovery Oasis

Discovering the latest challenges and advances in the field of recovery

Shrewsbury, MA – Veterans Inc., a leading organization in New England of support services to Veterans and their families, successfully hosted its 3rd Annual Recovery Summit on September 19, 2024, with over 150 guests in attendance. This year's theme, *Art, Aria, & Architecture: The Recovery Oasis*, highlighted the intersection of creativity, culture, and community in the journey towards healing. The event focused on the transformative power of art, music, and well-designed spaces in recovery.

"At Veterans Inc., we are always exploring innovative approaches to support Veterans in their recovery journey. This year's Recovery Summit allowed us to spotlight the power of art, music, and architectural design—elements that are truly transformative," said Denis Leary, Veterans Inc. Executive Director. "These creative avenues offer profound emotional, mental, and physical recovery potential. We are proud to unite such a passionate community of professionals and advocates who understand that creativity and thoughtful design can play a vital role in restoring hope and transforming lives. Together, we ensure no veteran walks the path to recovery alone."



Cara Brindisi, MT-BC – Music Therapist & Songwriter presenting on music therapy & healing at Veterans Inc. Recovery Summit

The event opened with an energizing drumming session by Crocodile River Music, creating an atmosphere that embodied the rhythm of healing and community. The powerful music set a vibrant tone for the Summit, engaging participants and elevating the energy in the room for the day's discussions and presentations. Guests had the opportunity to hear from experts, engage in meaningful discussions, and experience performances that celebrated the healing effects of creativity and thoughtful design. The day was enriched with artistic activities and music, showcasing how art and design contribute to effective recovery and enhance well-being. Veterans Inc. remains committed to advancing recovery efforts and ensuring veterans have access to the resources and support needed to reclaim their lives.

Presentations and Performances throughout the day included:

- Crocodile River Music – Connecting people through the arts of Africa.
- Cara Brindisi, MT-BC – Music Therapist and Songwriter presenting on music therapy and healing.
- Dr. Erik Holmgren, Massachusetts Cultural Council – *Art Pharmacy: Art as Prescription*.
- James Welu, Director Emeritus of the Worcester Art Museum – *Art Therapy in the Making: From WWI to WWII*.
- Sean W. Brennan, AIA, NCARB, Lamoureux Pagano Associates | Architect – *Architecture, Therapeutic Spaces and Veterans Inc.*
- Ben Picard Music – United States Army Veteran

"The Summit was a wonderful way to connect with other healthcare professionals and community members on the importance of art integrated into recovery care," said Cara Brindisi, MT-BC – Music Therapist and Songwriter presenting on music therapy and healing. "Music, art, and architecture all play vital roles in the overall human experience. We need to



maintain an emphasis on this as we think about those in more vulnerable times of life. I was honored to share my work as a board-certified Music Therapist and advocate on the benefits of Music Therapy from an emotional, spiritual, psychological, and physiological standpoint."

The event also honored the 2024 Behavioral Health Award recipients:

- Heart of the Community Award – *James O'Day*, State Representative for the 14th Worcester district.
- Spirit of Service Award – *Kelsa L. Zereski*, President of the Reliant Foundation, Inc.

"It is truly an honor to receive the Behavioral Health Award on behalf of Reliant Foundation. This recognition is a great reminder of the importance of collaboration and community in tackling these issues head-on." stated Kelsa Zereski, president, Reliant Foundation.

Lead Sponsor, Boston Neuro Behavioral Associates, emphasized their dedication to veterans: "At Boston Neuro, we are deeply committed to supporting Veterans Inc. and the recovery journeys of Veterans across the country. Veterans have made immense sacrifices to protect our nation, and many face unique challenges as a result of their service, including mental health concerns like PTSD, anxiety, and depression. We believe that recovery is not just about healing the body, but also nurturing the mind and spirit. By standing with veterans, we honor their service and strive to give back by helping them reclaim their well-being."

For more information on future events and how to get involved, visit www.veteransinc.org.

About Veterans Inc.

Veterans Inc. is the leading 501(c)(3) non-profit service provider for veterans and their families in need. Since 1990, we have served over 100,000 veterans and their families, offering a wide range of services, including housing, homelessness prevention, employment and training, benefit counseling and advocacy, food services, women and children's services, suicide prevention, and substance use treatment. If you or someone you know is a veteran in need, please call us at 1-800-482-2565 or visit our website at veteransinc.org.



State Representative James O'Day receives The Heart of the Community, Behavioral Health Award presented by President & CEO Vincent Perrone and Executive Director Denis Leary.



Veterans Inc. Executive Leadership & Kelsa L. Zereski, President of the Reliant Foundation, Inc. received the Spirit of Service, Behavioral Health Award.

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