

Two Recognized for Their Compassion, Focus on Improving Lives of Those With Behavioral Issues

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - Two area residents - news reporter Cory Davenport and State Rep. Monica Bristow - were recognized with the 2019 Community Champions Award by Centerstone at a Tuesday night ceremony.

Centerstone Regional Chief Executive Officer John Markley led the ceremony. He said he felt both Rep. Bristow and Davenport were deserving of the honor for their work.

The Champion Award recognizes community leaders who have made a significant difference in the lives of those living with behavioral health conditions in our communities, Markley said.

The Community Champions Banquet honors community leaders who have made a difference by advancing mental health and substance use disorder services through their advocacy, leadership, and service.

“For me, it is so rewarding to be able to recognize the individuals, organizations, and partners who work every day to improve the lives of those with behavioral health conditions,” said Markley. “Each of our Champions has helped many people in our communities in a meaningful way. We are so grateful for the ways they have each helped Centerstone in its mission of delivering care that changes people’s lives.”

Sarah Beth Viliocco, an assessment unit clinician, with Centerstone, nominated Davenport for his “inclusion and sensitivity to mental health in his articles.”

“I was really impressed that he is using his voice on a platform that reaches thousands to advocate for mental health,” Viliocco said.

Centerstone Marketing and Communications Coordinator Chelsea Boyles nominated Bristow, whom Boyles called “a champion of behavioral health for many years.”

Boyles said Bristow has been a big advocate to make sure the mental health and substance abuse people and those with behavioral issues get assistance. Bristow tries to educate the community about mental health issues and shows her passion in many ways, including her annual opioid summit.

Bristow serves on the House Mental Health Issues Committee and said it is important that everyone has more access to health care, especially those with mental health needs. She talked about two bills passed through the House and Senate that should help mental needs for those with behavioral issues.

“We have only started the fight,” she said in regard to assisting those with behavioral issues, something she said she wants to provide a voice in the House.

Davenport started aggressive lines in Riverbender.com about mental health and suicide and each time included the national suicide hotline to those types of stories within the articles.

Davenport was recognized for his aggressive lines about mental health issues and suicide in Riverbender.com. He was saluted for his inclusion and sensitivity to mental health issues.

Davenport was extremely honored to receive the award and said: “I was just doing my job and doing what needs to be done in the community. I am giving a voice to those who might otherwise not have it. I see it as my duty to write about mental health issues. I include the crisis hotline each time with stories about behavioral issues and I knew one of the operators, so I included what happens when you call the hotline, which seemed to help.”

