

# New Mexico Interagency Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative

*Collaboration for Recovery, Resiliency and Empowerment*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Legislature to Honor New Mexicans as STARS**

*Behavioral Health Day Theme for 2015 is Hope Changes Everything*

**SANTA FE** – The 9th Annual Behavioral Health Day will be held tomorrow, Wednesday March 11 from 9:00am - 12:00pm at the Capitol. As in previous years, this event honors New Mexicans with behavioral health disorders who have overcome personal barriers, defeated the odds, and have become active leaders and mentors in their local communities as Behavioral Health Local Collaborative STARS. At the noon hour, the STARS will receive certificates of appreciation signed by Governor Susana Martinez and Behavioral Health Collaborative CEO Dr. Wayne Lindstrom.

“It is truly a pleasure to be able to recognize the community behavioral health leaders who work each day to overcome barriers,” said Dr. Wayne Lindstrom, Behavioral Health Collaborative CEO. “The importance of this recognition cannot be underscored enough, and we will continue to offer this recognition to those who work hard to overcome mental health and substance abuse issues.”

Behavioral Health Day provides the opportunity for legislators to meet the STARS, which have been pivotal in their communities’ grassroots efforts surrounding behavioral health. STARS are selected from their Local Collaboratives (LCs), which represent every county and demographic breakdown of the area.

In addition to the recognition of individual STARS, part of the purpose of Behavioral Health Day is to educate and inform others about mental and substance abuse illnesses and to encourage those who struggle with behavioral health issues to find help in order to continue their journey. Having the Stars in the Capitol helps familiarize them with the legislative process.

Introducing legislators and the public to the face and voice of individuals living and working in the behavioral health world helps educate the wider community, which breaks down barriers in reducing the stigma often times associated with behavioral health, another common obstacle in the lives of those who struggle with these illnesses.

As in past years, it is expected that the Roundhouse Rotunda will be filled with over 200 participants who represent individuals living with a behavioral health condition, families, advocates, friends, and providers from frontier, rural, urban, and tribal communities across the state.

### **About the Collaborative**

The Collaborative was created during the 2004 Legislative Session to allow most state agencies and resources involved in behavioral health treatment and recovery to work as one in an effort to improve mental health and substance abuse services in New Mexico. This cabinet-level group represents 15 agencies and the Office of the Governor.

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