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## **Donna Hunter Wins 2012 WEDU Volunteer Award**

(Tampa, Fla.) — Passion + drive = inspiring force when Donna Hunter is part of the equation. An advocate for the one in four Americans with mental illness. As a Mental Health Care Foundation board member, Donna Hunter won the 2012 Be More Involved volunteer award given by WEDU and radio personality Mason Dixon. This award was created to pay tribute to the many unsung heroes in our community whose efforts have had a significant impact inspiring and encouraging others.

Donna Hunter was chosen based on her extraordinary efforts to advocate for children in crisis with mental illness. Donna has co-chaired the Children’s Crisis Center Breakfast, which is one of the foundation’s two major fund-raisers. The hallmark of the event, and a key to its success, is not what Donna did—and she did a lot. It is what she said.

Her own words explain her passion best: “It has been an honor and a privilege to serve on the MHC Foundation Board and volunteer at MHC for the past few years. I came to the board because my family was not immune to the challenge and strain of mental illness. We watched a healthy, vibrant teenager become distraught, depressed and suicidal. She attempted suicide four times before she finally got the help she so desperately needed. Now, she is a healthy, happy married mother of two rambunctious boys and a marvelous human being. We all know someone or have someone in our family who has struggled with mental illness.”

The Mental Health Care Children’s Crisis Center is the first founded in Tampa. The expert team provides emergency psychiatric evaluation and treatment to children ages 5-17 experiencing emotional or behavioral problems. Last year, over 1,800 children and families received help and counseling.

The Mental Health Care Foundation builds friendships with people who support the efforts of 700 therapists, psychiatrists, educators and support staff. “Without Donna’s talents we might not be able to show the dramatic before and after renovation photos of the Children’s Crisis Center. We might not have the donor infrastructure in place to be successful.” said Karen Frashier, executive director of Mental Health Care Foundation.

To learn more about the Mental Health Care Foundation contact Karen Frashier, APR, at 813.817.4476 or [kfrashier@MHCinc.org](mailto:kfrashier@MHCinc.org).

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*Since it was founded by the Junior League and dedicated parents in 1949, Mental Health Care, Inc. has pioneered many of the region’s innovative behavioral health therapies. Today, 30 psychiatrists and 700 employees assist clients in 20 locations through 35 programs. This team serves more than 270,000 client interactions each year. They also manage inpatient units for adults and children in crisis. The mission of this private, non-profit is to educate, advocate and give hope to all people touched by behavioral health and developmental challenges.*