

Diversity and Inclusion: National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

July Edition:

As the new 2020-2021 academic year has started, we wish to officially welcome Dr. Evelinda Gonzales-Pryor as the new committee faculty adviser and thank Dr. Taiwona Elliott for her leadership and support of the D&I Alvernon Committee over the past two years.

Thank you to the faculty and residents who attended June's Alvernon D&I committee meeting: Dr. Cagno, Dr. Landau, Dr. Gonzales-Pryor, Dr. Thompson, Dr. Pettit, Suzanne, Anne, Nicolette, Leticia, and Jennifer Veaco.

"Once my loved ones accepted the diagnosis, healing began for the entire family, but it took too long. It took years. Can't we, as a nation, begin to speed up that process? We need a national campaign to destigmatize mental illness, especially one targeted toward African Americans...It's not shameful to have a mental illness. Get treatment. Recovery is possible."—Bebe Moore Campbell, 2005

Bebe Moore Campbell (1950-2006) was an author, advocate, co-founder of NAMI Urban Los Angeles and national spokesperson, who was passionate about minority mental health awareness. In May of 2008, the US House of Representatives announced July as Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month to start the process of improving access to mental health treatment and services and to promote public health awareness of mental illness. Mental health does not discriminate based on race, color, gender, or identity, **but background and identity can make access to mental health treatment much more difficult.**

Mental Health, Diverse Populations and Disparities:

- Mental health problems are common among people in the criminal justice system, which has a disproportionate representation of racial/ ethnic minorities. Approximately 50% to 75% of youth in the juvenile justice system meet criteria for a mental health disorder.
- Lack of cultural understanding by health care providers may contribute to underdiagnosis and/or misdiagnosis of mental illness in people from racially/ethnically diverse populations. Factors that contribute to these kinds of misdiagnoses include language differences between patient and provider, stigma of mental illness among minority groups, and cultural presentation of symptoms. **To learn about best practices** for treating diverse populations and to get answers to your questions by leading psychiatrists, please visit APA's Cultural Competency webpage at:

<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/cultural-competency/education/mental-health-facts>

Thank you Dr. Janelle Thompson for sharing with us the following resources (some local, some national):

- * Innopsych - <https://www.innopsych.com/findatherapist>
 - * Website has "find a therapist" feature for in-person and virtual appointments across the country.
 - * Organization focuses on helping individuals find a "therapist of color."
- * Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective (BEAM) - <https://www.beam.community/>
 - * Although based in CA, website has resources, including tools like worksheets, journal prompts, and education that patients can use from anywhere.
- * Therapy for Black Girls - <https://providers.therapyforblackgirls.com/>
 - * Website has "find a therapist" feature for in-person and virtual appointments across the country (including Tucson)
 - * Also, have a podcast
- * Black Mental Health Alliance - <https://blackmentalhealth.com/>
 - * Has "Connect with therapist" feature where the individual can, free of charge, complete a confidential questionnaire that helps them be matched with a therapist who is best suited to meet their needs.
- * People of Color & Mental Illness Photo Project - <http://diorvargas.com/poc-mental-illness/>
 - * Project stems from the lack of media representation of POC and mental illness
 - * Artist asks - "If you're interested in being part of this project, please submit a photo of yourself holding a sign with whatever you feel comfortable expressing. Angle (waist up etc): shoulders up, Save the image as a JPEG and saved as your first and last name, Include text of what is written on your sign and image description, Send to: Dior.Vargas@gmail.com."

Local therapists with sensitivity/specific focus on helping individuals identifying in a minority group:

- * Antonio Fernandez, LCSW
 - * Hiapsi Counseling319 West Simpson Street
Tucson, Arizona 85701
(520) 253-7438<tel:+1-520-253-7438>
 - * accepts most insurances
- * Alanna Boyd, LPC
 - * Thriveworks Tucson1050 East River Road, Suite 202 Tucson, Arizona 85718
(520) 399-8930<tel:+1-520-399-8930>
 - * Accepts Tricare, BCBS, UnitedHealthcare
- * Vernice Morris, LCSW
 - * Breaking Waves Counseling, LLC2030 E Broadway Blvd
Tucson, Arizona 85719
(520) 549-4274<tel:+1-520-549-4274>
 - * Does not accept insurance

Strength Over Silence

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) has an ongoing docuseries, highlighting perspectives on mental health across backgrounds and communities, emphasizing the importance of culture and identity in the mental health movement. Watch now at

NAMI.org:<https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Minority-Mental-Health-Awareness-Month/Strength-Over-Silence>

Call to action - Ways to use your voice and social status to effect change:

- Join D&I committee-contact us (Leticia and Nicolette to join/get details)
- challenge loved ones who may deny that racism exist
- talk about mental health
- recognize own biases and attend implicit bias trainings, speak up
- participate in D&I book club (more details to come)

-Leticia and Nicolette, Diversity and Inclusion co-chairs