



RACE, RACISM and MENTAL HEALTH

PROGRAM AGENDA
November 16 - 17, 2018

Day 1 (Friday, Nov. 16 - full day program)

8:30 - 8:55 Registration and Networking

9:00 - 9:05 Introduction

9:05 - 10:15 **Keynote: “The House that Racism Built and its Consequences for Mental Health” - David R. Williams, Ph. D., M.P.H., Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health**

This lecture provides an overview of the empirical evidence for the multiple ways in which racism (institutional, interpersonal and individual) functions in society and how it can affect mental health. It will also highlight evidence regarding promising interventions to reduce racism, ameliorate its harmful health effects and promote health equity.

10:15-10:30 **Break**

10:30 - 12:00 **Panel Discussion: “Irrational White Fear”**

Waiting at Starbucks, napping at Yale, BBQ-ing, renting an Airbnb, being at a swimming pool, carrying a duffel bag to work. In myriad settings “white” people view “black people” with suspicion, profile them, and threaten them with police for their mere presence. How is the psychology of racism related to this kind of irrational fear? How do we hold people accountable for racist behavior? Can we respond to such behavior by individuals while addressing the systemic forces that create and sustain it? What systemic solutions are necessary and possible?

Moderator: Renée Graham, *The Boston Globe*

Panelists:

- Paul Marcus, Communities for Change
- Carl Takei, American Civil Liberties Union
- Fatima Cody Stanford, M.D., M.P.H., M.P.A., Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School

12:00 - 1:15 **Lunch Break**

1:15 - 2:45 **The Impact of Everyday Racism**

Why are African-Americans 20% more likely to report having serious psychological distress than non-Hispanic whites? What coping mechanisms serve to deflect incessant daily micro-aggressions? What is the psychological cost of “coping”?

Moderator: Lolita Parker, Jr.

Panelists:

- Phillipe Copeland, Ph.D., Boston University School of Social Work
- Nyamuon Nguany Machar, Youth Move Maine
- Abridal Forrester, Director of Community Action, Madison Park Development Corp

2:45-3:00 **Break**

3:00 - 4:30 **Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Mental Health Treatment; Learning (and Teaching) Cultural Humility**

How does race affect the diagnosis and treatment of individuals with mental health issues? What barriers exist for people of color in accessing services? How can clinicians learn not to contribute to the disparities in mental health treatment and engage in cultural humility? Hear how communities and researchers are working together to improve access and outcomes for people of color with lived experience.

Panelists:

- Benjamin Lê Cook, Ph.D., Center for Multicultural Mental Health Research and Health Equity Research Lab-Cambridge Health Alliance, Harvard Medical School Department of Psychiatry, Massachusetts General Hospital
- Valeria Chambers, Transformation Center, Blacks United for Recovery
- Oyenike Balogun-Mwangi, Ph.D., Salve Regina University
- Natalie Cort, Ph.D., William James College

4:30 - 5:00 **Friday wrap-up | Announcements**

Day 2 (Saturday, Nov.17th – half day program)

8:30 - 8:55 **Registration**

8:55 - 9:00 **Introduction**

9:00 - 10:00 **Race, Mental Illness and the Justice System**

Race and mental illness intersect throughout the criminal justice system. Disparate and damaging treatment begins at the point of arrest through incarceration and afterwards, experiences with the system continue to harm persons of color with mental illness. What do lawyers do about it?

Panelists:

- Dehlia Umunna, Esquire, Clinical Professor of Law and Faculty Deputy Director of the Harvard Law School's Criminal Justice Institute (CJI)
- Sana Fadel, Citizens for Juvenile Justice
- Lizz Matos, Prisoners Legal Services

10:15 - 12:15 **Break-out groups: Reform Efforts**

Discussion in small groups

In brief presentations, persons actively engaged in reform efforts will discuss their advocacy regarding the problems described in the prior session, followed by small group discussion with roaming facilitation by the morning's speakers.

Panelists:

- Marlies Spanjaard, Esquire, YAD (Youth Advocacy Division of the Committee for Public Counsel Services) Education Law Project
- Lisa Thurau, Esquire, Strategies for Youth
- Cassandra Bensahih, Massachusetts Against Solitary Confinement

12:20 - 1:00 **Plenary Discussion | closing**

Panelists from both sessions discuss the ideas they heard in the small group discussions with conference participants

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