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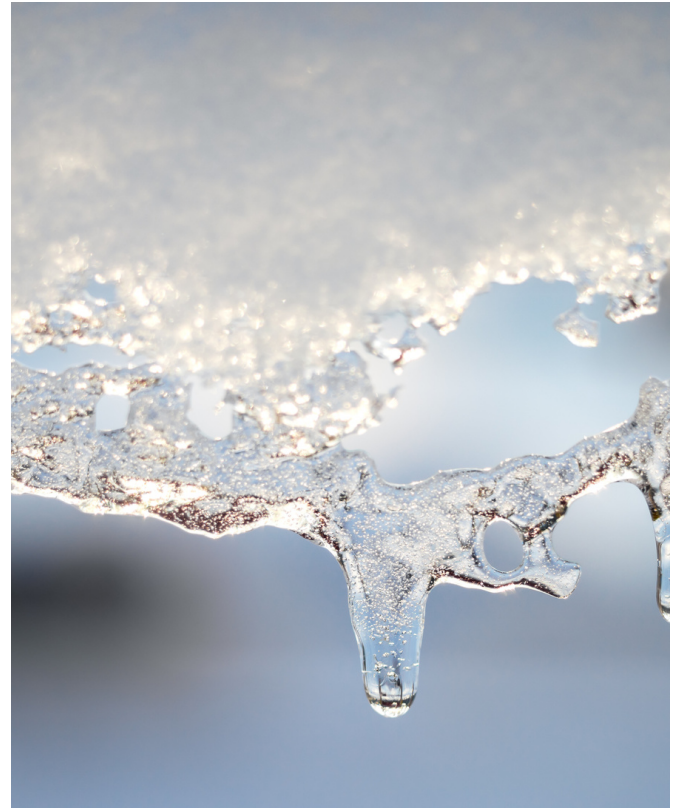
THE ASSOCIATION OF MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING & DEVELOPMENT

2024 Winter Newsletter



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— *Letter to AMCD members*

Dr. Asha Dickerson

AMCD President



Dear Members of the AMCD,

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I extend my warmest greetings to each of you as we continue another impactful year within our esteemed association. As President, I am honored to lead a community of dedicated professionals who are committed to advancing the principles of multicultural counseling and development.

Our association serves as a beacon of hope and guidance in a world marked by diversity and complexity. In these times of rapid change and evolving societal norms, our commitment to fostering inclusivity, equity, and cultural competence has never been more critical. We stand at the forefront of promoting understanding, empathy, and empowerment for individuals of all backgrounds.

At the core of our mission lies the belief that every individual deserves to be treated with dignity, respect, and understanding. Through our collective efforts, we strive to create environments that honor the unique identities and experiences of each person we serve. Whether through counseling, advocacy, research, or education, we are dedicated to promoting social justice and equity for all.

As we look ahead to the challenges and opportunities that await us, let us reaffirm our commitment to collaboration, innovation, and growth. Together, we have the power to effect positive change and make a lasting impact on the lives of those we serve. Let us continue to learn from one another, to challenge assumptions, and to embrace the richness of diversity in all its forms. I invite each of you to actively engage with our association, to share your insights and expertise, and to join us in shaping the future of multicultural counseling and development. Your contributions are invaluable, and together, we can create a world that is more just, compassionate, and inclusive for all.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to our shared mission. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your President, and I am excited for the journey that lies ahead.

Warm regards,

Asha Dickerson, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, MAC, ACS

President

Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development

— AMCD Updates

Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development congratulates our newly elected leaders!!



The graphic features a black background with a red horizontal band at the bottom. In the top left corner is the AMCD logo, which consists of two silhouettes of people facing each other with the letters 'amcd' below them. The title 'AMCD ELECTION RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT' is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below the title are five circular portraits of the newly elected leaders, arranged in two rows. Each portrait is accompanied by their name and title in white text. The top row includes the President-Elect, the Governing Council Representative, and the VP for Asian American/Pacific Islander Concerns. The bottom row includes the North Atlantic Regional Representative and the Graduate Student Representative.

AMCD ELECTION RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT

President-Elect:
Tiphannie Gonzalez

AMCD Governing Council Rep:
Angela Coker

VP- Asian American/Pacific Islander Concerns:
Dapika Daga

North Atlantic Regional Representative: Anna Flores Locke

Graduate Student Representative: Colleen Rice

AMCD also welcomes the newly developed

MENA Concerns Task Group Co-Chairs



Dr. Nouna Jalilzadeh



Dr. Shadin Atiyeh

AMCD 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS

AMCD is pleased to announce the selection of the 2024
Awards recipients:

Samuel H. Johnson Distinguished Service Award

This award honors an AMCD member whose service at the local, state, national, or international level has stimulated interest in multicultural counseling and development and/or enhanced the well-being of members of the populations served by AMCD.

Dr. Natoya Hill Haskins



Advocacy Award

This award honors an AMCD member who has exemplified competent practice in advocacy and/or fostered an awareness of advocacy among members of the counseling profession.

Dr. Kristopher Hall



Young Emerging Leader Award

This award honors an early-career AMCD member who has demonstrated a commitment to multicultural counseling and development and the potential for future leadership in the counseling profession.

Melissa Carmona



Exemplary Diversity Leadership Award

This award honors an AMCD member who has exemplified a career-long commitment to multiculturalism and diversity and/or promoted and enhanced cultural sensitivity among members of the counseling community and the society at large.

Dr. Camila A. Pulgar



AMCD 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS

AMCD is pleased to announce the selection of the 2024
Awards recipients:

Emerging Graduate Student Leader Award

This award honors an AMCD student member who has demonstrated a commitment to multicultural counseling and development through outstanding scholarship, service, or leadership.

Sravya Gummalurifor



Compadrazgo/Comadrazgo Award

This award honors a member of the Latinx Network of AMCD who is active in the mentorship of Latinx counseling students or professionals, demonstrates a commitment to multiculturalism and social justice, and has demonstrated leadership (or leadership potential) within the Latinx Network.

Dr. Laura Rendon Finnell



AMCD Research Grants

Dr. June (Jung) H. Hyun & Dr. SungWon Yoon-Lee



Dr. Camila A. Pulgar



A special thank you to our
2024 AMCD Award Reviewers

Dr. Chantrelle Varnado-Johnson
Dr. Amirah R. Nelson

Join us at the upcoming:

ACA CONFERENCE & EXPO 2024

APRIL 11—13 | NEW ORLEANS

Get ready to be energized and inspired while connecting with leading experts and peers from around the country at the ACA Conference & Expo, April 11–13, 7:00 AM–6:00 PM Central Time, in New Orleans.

This year's theme — **Pause, Prepare, Provide** — focuses on curating a space for reflection, connection, and learning among the counseling community.



The ACA conference is also a key time we gather as **AMCD** members for our annual meeting and enjoy educational, social, and professional networking opportunities. Please mark your calendars for the following important meetings:

AMCD Day of Service: Wednesday, April 10, 2024, 3:00 pm– 4:00 pm (Hagar's House)

AMCD Board Meeting: Thursday, April 11, 2024, 9:00 am– 12:00 pm (Host Hotel Room TBD; Breakfast provided)

Regional Rep Meetings: Thursday, April 11, 2024, 12:00 pm– 1:00 pm (Host Hotel TBD)

Concern Groups: TBD (Virtual)

Membership Meeting: Thursday, April 11, 2024, 1:00 pm– 2:00 pm (Host Hotel TBD; Lunch provided)

AMCD Riverboat Lunch Cruise: Friday, April 12, 2024. Meet at the host hotel at 10:15 am (3 buses will leave from the host hotel). Ship departure is at 11:30 am from 400 Toulouse New Orleans, LA 70130. Lunch will be provided. The event ends at 1:30 pm

AMCD Mixer: Saturday, April 13, 2024, 7:00pm–10:00pm (Host Hotel TBD)

AMCD Expo Booth: Thursday, April 11, 2024, 2:00pm– 5:00pm; Friday, April 12, 2024, 8:00am–5:00pm; Saturday, April 13, 2024, 8:00am– 4:00pm (Expo Area)

AMCD's Day of Service at ACA: Hagar's House



ASSOCIATION FOR MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING AND DEVELOPMENT (AMCD)

BECOME A VOLUNTEER



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

3PM EST
10
APRIL

HAGAR'S HOUSE

ADDRESS IS CONFIDENTIAL BUT 15 MINS FROM
CONFERENCE LOCATION

Hagar's House is a sanctuary for women, children, trans and gender-nonconforming folks that provides an open and empowering residential community, resource coordination, and a safe space to transition into sustainable housing.

We will be spending 1 hour painting a fence and staircase!

EMAIL BRENISEN.WHEELER@MAIL.ALFREDADLER.EDU TO SIGN UP

Come cruise with AMCD in New Orleans!



AMCD will host a **lunch cruise** during the 2024 ACA Conference on **Friday April 12, 2024**.

Tickets are \$60 and includes the riverboat cruise, lunch and transportation to and from the host hotel.

Tickets go on sale March 1, 2024 **Space is limited!**

See the link below to get your tickets.

Questions?

Contact Cha'Ke'Sha Spencer, Conference Chair at
conference@amcd.info

[Register for AMCD Riverboat Cruise here!](#)



AMCD
cultivating relationships
and celebrating each
other



— AMCD Native American Concerns Group



Native American Concerns Group will be gathering in person at ACA on Thursday, April 11th.

As we look forward to visiting New Orleans for the 2024 ACA Conference, we remind ourselves that during the conference we are going to utilize and walk on Native land. The Nations and tribes of this region who have been impacted by the invasion of Turtle Island, colonization, the formation of the United States of America, economic development, and gentrification are:

- **The state-recognized tribes of Louisiana are Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb, Addai Caddo tribe, Biloxi-Chitimacha Confederation of Muskogee, Clifton Choctaw, Four Winds Tribe of Louisiana Cherokee Confederacy, Grand Caillou/Dulac Band, Isle de Jean Charles Band, Louisiana Choctaw Tribe, Pointe-Au-Chien Indian Tribe, and United Houma Nation.**
- **The four Federally-recognized tribes are Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, Chitimacha, Tunica-Biloxi, and Coushatta Tribe.**
- **Additional indigenous nations and tribes who were connected to the land we now call Louisiana are Houma, Biloxi, and Bullbanchah.**

Out of these nations, the Chitimacha are the only tribe who live on a portion of their original land. Over time the Chitimacha had purchased additional land and established an economy. Imagine the mental and emotional anguish to unjustly be separated from the land through acts of theft and then you have to purchase it back to continue caring for it.

Also of note, the Jena Band of the Choctaw Indians did not receive Federal recognition until 1995. The members of the Jena Band of the Choctaw Indians endured a multitude of tragedies at the hands of the US Government and have demonstrated immense resilience. Today the tribe continues to serve as protectors of the land and natural resources.

(continued on page 12)

Native American Concerns Group (cont.)

Giving space towards these histories, a Land Acknowledgement ceremony will be conducted at the opening in the evening of Thursday April 11th. A land acknowledgment is an opportunity to offer space to honor the people who have lived on and cared for the land prior to colonization, massive traumas, and exploitation. It serves the purpose to decolonize history, elevate Native voices, as well as encourage remembrance and respect for the lived experiences and current effects regarding Native nations. It challenges each listener to contemplate how the current occupied space has come to be in the present moment and the cultural, social, psychological, economical, and spiritual consequences which accompany this reality.

As a part of the land acknowledgement ceremony, gifts will be given to the representative who will be joining us. Gift-giving's meaning and purpose is not uniform across the Native nations and tribes dwelling on the land currently named the United States. For many it can be a way to strengthen or reinforce relationships, a meaningful spiritual practice, good manners, and/or a ceremony. Some Native authors who have written on this subject online include Marina Turningrobe (<https://sistersky.com/blogs/sister-sky/gifting-in-native-american-culture>), Bruce Moreton (<https://www.nighteaglewilderness.com/post/the-give-away-ceremony-a-lakota-tradition>), the Squaxin Island Tribe (<https://squaxinland.org/visitors/native-american-etiquette/>), the Tukadeka Traders (<https://nativeamericangiftshopwyoming.com/native-american-traditions/>), and Joseph Bruchac (<https://parabola.org/2016/06/20/sacred-giving-sacred-receiving-by-joseph-bruchac/>).

Preparation for the land acknowledgement ceremony that will occur during ACA's Opening Ceremonies at our national conference in New Orleans offers each of us an opportunity to practice and perhaps even embody cultural appreciation.

Additionally, in honoring Native American voices and experiences, NAC is going to be launching a podcast later this year.

We look forward to you joining our voices.

Native American Concerns gathered on the 2nd of February from 2 pm-3:30 pm ET.

**Next Native American Concerns Group meeting:
May 3rd. Please email naconcerns@gmail.com for the link.**

AMCD Latinx Concerns Group



¡Hola a todos!

My name is **Dr. Camila A. Pulgar** (she/her/ella).

I am your AMCD VP for the Latinx Concerns Committee. Proud Chilean immigrant and like they say, “trabajo en Ingles y amo en Español” (I work in English, and I love in Spanish). Although, lucky for me, I get to also work in Spanish as I work as a trauma-focused clinician (LMCHC), almost exclusively, serving Spanish speaking Latinx young adults, adults, and their families. I live in North Carolina, with my partner, and our 4-month daughter (!). I work as a research faculty (tenure track) at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, where my research focus is on mental health access, suicide prevention and risk, bilingual supervision, and trauma. I also own Salud Mental Health, an organization that aims to increase awareness and access to mental health services to our local Latinx community in NC.

As you can see, I wear many hats, and I am very excited to serve in this role. I would like to get us back on track, together, and in comunidad. To this end, please find me at ACA in April, I would love to connect in-person if you are there, meet you and hear about how this group can be supportive and helpful to you! If you are not attending ACA in person, we will have a virtual meeting option, look out for that as well.

I also ask that you **fill out this survey** so we can connect.

These are some of my goals for the next three years:

1. Create a virtual space for collaboration and support for Latinx graduate students.
2. Host two or more webinars per semester on topics related to Latinx in counseling.
3. Create spaces for Latinx clinicians and researchers to connect, collaborate and increase their scholarly publications.
4. Celebrate and honor our ancestors, both personal and professional.

I whole heartily believe in the power of numbers, and I can't lift this group up myself. Therefore, I ask if you are enthusiastic about Latinx concerns, please get involved. Your commitment, volunteerism, and time will make the world of difference in the success our group. How you can be involved: attend our meetings, webinars, host small groups sessions (I will provide guidance on this), and spread the word about our group.

I will say more and expand on these goals as our time together continues, but for now, thank you for your time and get in touch.

Mil gracias,

Camila A. Pulgar, PhD, LMCHC, NCC (she/her/ella)
Vice President for Latinx Concerns (2023-2026)
Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)



— Writers' Consortium

Greetings AMCD Community!

My name is **Sravya Gummaluri** (she/her) and I am a Counseling PhD Candidate at The George Washington University. I am also a 2022 NBCC Doctoral Minority Fellow and through this program served historically marginalized communities through scholarship, leadership, and advocacy. Additionally, I am a current Chi Sigma Iota Leadership and Internship Program Fellow. In AMCD, I am in my second year serving as Writers' Consortium chair and I also serve as the graduate student liaison for the Womens' Concerns Group.

The mission and purpose of Writers' Consortium is:

- To network seasoned and aspiring writers in an effort to promote awareness of writers; resources, inclusive of educational, employment, funding, and publishing opportunities
- To inspire seasoned and aspiring writers to **PUBLISH** and to share their work with the counseling community at large
- To support seasoned and aspiring writers in an open-minded, respectful, and ethical environment that is sensitive and responsive to its diverse members' needs.

My goal in this role is to foster and co-create a community with diverse counseling students and diverse counseling writers and to provide a space for individuals to share challenges that they may face and to celebrate achievements.

So far over the course of these two years, Writers' Consortium has brought together diverse writers through webinars such as *Writing for Publication: A Discussion with JMCD Editor* with Dr. Adkison-Johnson in the Winter of 2023, where writers were able to receive helpful tips for publication. Attendees reported the event being a helpful space to connect and discuss concerns specific to diverse writers' engagement in scholarly writing.

Additionally Writers' Consortium has been holding biweekly writing groups and spaces *Write to the Finish Line* since the winter of 2023, a space that has continued to grow this year in AMCD. These spaces are open to all counseling students, both masters and doctoral. Students in the dissertation phase have especially described these groups as being a valuable opportunity in providing a set time to focus on work and writing, and to connect and find community with diverse students, spaces that might not otherwise be easily accessible.

In the summer of 2023, for BIPOC Mental Health month, Writers' Consortium and the Community Education and Engagement Committee collaborated to organize Fostering Community Connection and Wellness, A BIPOC Mental Health Month Discussion. This panel was co-facilitated by myself and by Brenisen Wheeler(she/her), AMCD's wonderful Community Education and Engagement Chair.

(continued on page 15)

Writers' Consortium (cont.)

This event consisted of some wonderful panelists and experts and focused on advocacy for empowerment, wellness and liberation in BIPOC Communities, for themselves as panelists, those in attendance, and for the greater communities that we serve. It was a heartfelt discussion and space where the reality of what wellness in BIPOC communities might look like was discussed, and how to advocate for this in our personal and professional lives as counseling professionals.

Most recently, Writers' Consortium and the Womens' Concerns Group held a collaborative event *Write There With You*, an event that focused on providing dissertation formatting tips where attendees had the opportunity to connect with Akila Wilson MEd a dissertation coach. This was a valuable opportunity for doctoral students to learn about how to correctly format dissertation writing.



The Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)
Presents:

FOSTERING COMMUNITY, CONNECTION, AND WELLNESS A BIPOC MENTAL HEALTH MONTH DISCUSSION

Please join AMCD for an engaging panel discussion centered on the pillars of community, connection, and wellness within BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities inspired by this year's **BIPOC Mental Health Month** theme. Our esteemed panel consisting of past AMCD leadership, counseling practitioners, and counselor educators will share their insights and strategies to advocate for and foster wellness, empowerment, and liberation in BIPOC communities.

Attendees will gain valuable insight from expert panelists, and have the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussion to operationalize these pillars in their professional and personal lives.

All counseling professionals and counseling students are welcome and encouraged to attend (AMCD members and non members are welcome to attend).

Tuesday, August 1st, 2023

3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81174074188>

Featuring:

SPEAKER

Dr. S. Kent Butler

Ph.D., NCC, NCSC

SPEAKER

Afroze Shaikh

(she/her)
MA, NCC, BC-TMH

SPEAKER

Dr. Zori Paul

(she/her)
PhD, LPC (MO), NCC

SPEAKER

Dr. PaQuita Pullen

(she/her/hers)
Ph.D., LPC-MHSP, NCC

Facilitated by:

FACILITATOR



Sravya Gummaluri
(she/her)
LAC (NJ), NCC
AMCD Writers' Consortium Chair

FACILITATOR



Brenisen Wheeler
(she/her)
BA, RYT 200
AMCD Community Education and Engagement Chair

"WRITE" TO THE FINISH LINE

Join AMCD's Writers' Consortium for our February Writing Spaces for Counseling Students!



Whether it be your dissertation, a class paper, or a manuscript, writing can be an isolating process. We are here for you!

Writing Space Mission To provide:

- Community and connection with diverse counseling writers
- Peer feedback and resources
- A set time to work on and achieve your writing goals

**Friday, February 16th, 2024
Tuesday, February 27th, 2024**

11:00 am-12:30 pm EST

Zoom

Link: <https://bit.ly/3H85raD>



Scan to join



Save the Dates!

Writers' Consortium Mission

To network seasoned and aspiring writers in an effort to promote awareness of writers; resources, inclusive of educational, employment, funding, and publishing opportunities

To inspire seasoned and aspiring writers to PUBLISH and to share their work with the counseling community at large

To support seasoned and aspiring writers in an open-minded, respectful, and ethical environment that is sensitive and responsive to its diverse members' needs.

For more information, contact Writers' Consortium Chair, **Sravya Gummaluri (she/her)**

gsvarya@gwmail.gwu.edu

Upcoming Events

Be on the lookout for March-June *Write to the Finish Line* Writing Spaces which will be announced in the coming months and for a collaborative event between Writers' Consortium and AMCD's Mentorship Committee, chaired by Daniel Dosal-Terminel (He.him/el).

I am grateful to AMCD, and all those in the counseling profession who have supported the efforts of Writers' Consortium, and have taken the time to spread awareness of and attend these events!

**With gratitude,
Sravya**

AMCD Women's Concerns Group

Women's Concerns has monthly Affinity Groups



SPRING 2024 SERIES

AMCD WOMEN'S CONCERNS

Affinity Groups

CONNECT | COLLABORATE | INSPIRE

Last Fridays 1:00-2:00pm ET

January 26th
February 23rd
March 29th
April 12th*
May 31st

*(*Hybrid @ ACA Conference in New Orleans)*

[HTTPS://NOVA.ZOOM.US/J/98557351157?
PWD=VLZQSITQZVU1EK5PC3JBAMVQYY83DZ09](https://NOVA.ZOOM.US/J/98557351157?PWD=VLZQSITQZVU1EK5PC3JBAMVQYY83DZ09)

MEETING ID: 985 5735 1157
PASSCODE: 2024

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://nova.zoom.us/j/98557351157?pwd=VLZQSITqZVU1ek5pc3JBamVqYy83dz09>

Meeting ID: 985 5735 1157

Passcode: 2024

AMCD Women's Concerns Group

Women's Concerns had a joint event with the Writer's Consortium

"Write There With You" A Dissertation Formatting Workshop



ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

Calling all doctoral students in, or preparing for, the dissertation phase! You've got your content down, but do you know your formatting? Join us for some practical tips designed to save you headaches, & help you approach your dissertation formatting more accurately & efficiently.

ABOUT THE PRESENTER @EVERYBODYS_ENGLISH_PROFESSOR

Akila Wilson, MEd is a high school English teacher & current PhD student in English at Morgan State University. She serves as a School of Graduate Studies' Dissertation Coaching Fellow & has revised over 100 dissertations and theses across all disciplines. She also offers private dissertation editing amongst other writing support services.



MONDAY, 02.26.24, 6-7PM ET

A COLLABORATION WITH THE AMCD WOMEN'S CONCERNS GROUP & WRITER'S CONSORTIUM
VPWOMEN@AMCD.INFO | GSRVYA@GWMail.GWU.EDU

Recording to the event:

https://nova.zoom.us/rec/share/-779ZADPd9XrkvWtTvIKA9iQwpGWYα-X6mQ96YjBxtuJJaitA9t_ysxozD8DO2Jj.GIDCAaNPWmLAHXb2?startTime=1708988545000

AAPI Concerns Group

THE ASSOCIATION FOR MULTICULTURAL
COUNSELING & DEVELOPMENT (AMCD) PRESENTS:



Voices Unveiled: AAPI Teens Speak on Mental Health

OUR PANELISTS



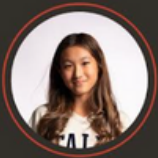
Ethan Chuc



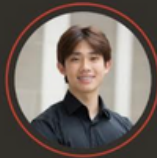
Grace Dai



Manaswini
Gunturu



Cindy Liu



Alex Zhang

Moderators



Yang Ai, Ph.D.
VP - AAPI Concerns;
Assistant Professor,
University of Redlands



Min Liu, Ph.D.
Co-Founder of AACCS;
Professor, Southern Illinois
University-Edwardsville

Join Zoom Link:

<https://shorturl.at/kvzMP>

Meeting ID: 829 8335 8253

Passcode: 986306



Friday
Feb. 23, 2024
5 - 6 PM
PST

AAPI Concerns Group hosted an online webinar titled **Voices Unveiled: AAPI Teens Speak on Mental Health**.

Our AAPI high school panelists shared their experiences, discussing topics like cultural coping strategies, fostering effective collaboration with AAPI parents and families, the impact of cultural norms on parenting styles, and bridging generational gaps.

We had a good turnout!

-Warmly,

Yang Ai, Ph.D.

PREPARING COUNSELORS OF TOMORROW: HBCUs Leading the Way

Roseina Britton, Ph.D., LPC, NCC (She/Her)

Assistant Professor at National Louis University

Chauncy Cody (She/Her)

Undergraduate student at DePaul University

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have long been bastions of higher education for African American students. These institutions, however, provide more than just classrooms – they offer pathways into vital careers. This is notably true regarding training capable, compassionate counselors to support their communities.

Most HBCUs have at least one counseling degree program, most commonly at the Master's level. Standard programs include clinical mental health counseling (offered at Alabama State, Jackson State, Southern University and A&M College, Coppin State), school counseling (Alabama State, Jackson State, Coppin State, Morgan State), rehabilitation counseling (Alabama State, Jackson State, Coppin State), addictions counseling (Coppin State), and counselor education/supervision (North Carolina A&T). While graduation rates range from 25% to nearly 75%, some HBCUs successfully get most enrollees to the finish line. Howard University sees 65% make it through their psychology and counseling Master's—and 81% complete Simmons' counseling program.

What sets these standout schools apart? Small class sizes, mentorship, practicum experience, and other evidence-based best practices promote persistence and completion. Simmons counseling graduates praise the personalized support and preparation that empowered their success. Many enter the field eager to pay it forward.

Discussing programs with lower completion metrics, funding, and enrollment challenges can limit student support and resources. However, analyzing trends and borrowing proven strategies from peer institutions provides a roadmap for improvement. HBCUs tend to face several key challenges when it comes to funding and student enrollment that can negatively impact their ability to provide robust student support:

- 1. Lack of endowments** – Unlike many well-funded, predominantly white institutions, HBCUs often lack substantial endowments that provide ongoing funding to cover costs. Any enrollment decline significantly impacts budgets (Leefatt, 2015).
- 2. Student financial hardship** – Many HBCU students require financial aid to enroll and complete their studies. During times of economic downturn, losing work to cover expenses causes significant enrollment drops as students stop out when aid does not meet their needs (Nguyen, 2012).

(Continued on page 20)

Preparing Counselors of Tomorrow: HBCUs Leading the Way (cont.)

3. Public funding declines – As states face their strained budgets, appropriations for public HBCUs have faced cuts over time (Sav, 2010).

4. Competition – HBCUs compete for top black scholars with well-funded, predominantly white schools offering flashy amenities and robust aid packages (Williams, 2020).

Reduced budgets from declining enrollments, lacking endowment buffers, and state cuts severely constrain HBCUs' capacity to offer academic supports like tutoring, mentoring, extracurricular engagement, personalized advising, and mental health services that promote persistence and completion (NODAA, 2010). Additional fundraising and advocacy for public investment are critical to overcoming financial barriers restricting student success investments.

In summary, most HBCUs provide coursework preparing students to enter counseling, granting degrees that lead toward counseling licensure. Graduation rates are varied, but some schools demonstrate stellar success, getting most enrollees to completion. HBCUs have an opportunity to lead in addressing mental health needs by expanding their counseling programs, investing in student progress, and sending more practitioners into underserved areas. With proper attention and resources, they can break barriers to graduation while breaking ground in communities lacking access to care.

References

- Leefatt, S. (2015). The Key to Equality: Why We Must Prioritize Endowing HBCU Institutions. UNCF Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute.
- Nguyen, M., Bibo, E., Engle, J. (2012). Advancing to Completion: Increasing degree attainment by improving graduation rates and closing gaps for African-American students. The Education Trust.
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COUNSELING LEADERSHIP FOR A CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Given ongoing national and global crises, such as the genocide of and state-sanctioned violence against Palestinians in Gaza, and the correlated rise in Islamophobia in the United States, anti-woke and anti-trans legislation, and nationwide gun violence, it is crucial for *counseling educators and leadership* to intentionally model activism through an anti-oppressive stance in response. Marginalized individuals face pressure from dominant groups to initiate actions in line with what is deemed appropriate by Whiteness (Gorritz, 2024). There is silence, a delayed response, and ambivalence in addressing social injustice from dominant groups, despite our moral responsibility.

As authors with marginalized identities, we are advocating for a call to action and asking readers and the counseling profession, why we should leave it up to the lived experiences of social injustice to respond when we can leverage our power and privilege in the spaces we occupy to advocate for and with our marginalized peers and colleagues who may have their safety at stake for doing so. We propose *positionality-conscious activism* as a culturally responsive action in creating a culturally inclusive learning environment, thus developing an anti-oppressive counselor leadership identity (Ratts et al., 2015; Peters et al., 2022). The fluidity of positionality creates challenging conversations around the aforementioned events in counselor education, given the complex dynamics within academic institutions.

We propose the following action items to initiate critical conversations and actions.

First, **broach** discussions as the person in a position of power within the room (e.g., fostering open dialogues in the classroom or inviting students/supervisees in one-on-one meetings) (Bayne & Branco, 2018; Jones et al., 2019; King & Borders, 2019). Second, acknowledge the here and now together through **immediacy**. For instance, despite uncertainty about your perspective and responding “correctly,” we must reflect, hold empathy, and remain present with those who need it. Recognizing this takes vulnerability and authenticity. Third, nurture **rapport** with students and supervisees. Learn their stories and develop competence in the impact on lived experiences.

Fourth, engage in **critical self-reflexivity**. Where is ambivalence coming from? Are you aware of your positionality? Is your classroom or supervision practice culturally engaging? How are you caring for yourself to show up for others?

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Counseling Leadership for a Culturally Inclusive Learning Environment... (cont.)

Fifth, use your positionality and **activism** to amplify the voices of marginalized people, such as through meetings, writing, or presented content (Collier-Spruel & Ryan, 2022). Given the complex oppressive structures marginalized faculty encounter, faculty with privileged identities must disrupt barriers to activism and support for marginalized students.

Modeling a Brave Space

Constructing a brave space encourages transformative discussions, catalyzes positionality-conscious activism, and creates culturally inclusive learning environments through (1) awareness, (2) connection, and (3) an unambiguous approach to anti-racism (Cisneros et al., 2023; Peters & Luke, 2022). For instance, centering marginalized narratives with a powerful exchange using debriefing discussions can prioritize student wellness amidst crises such as in Gaza, ongoing as we write.

Conclusion

At its core, positionality-conscious activism ignites the reclamation of cultural identity and dismantles White Supremacy. Through culturally inclusive leadership, we urge the use of privilege to engage in collective advocacy.

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CURRENT CHALLENGES IN VENEZUELA: HOW RESILIENCE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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Venezuela is facing overwhelming challenges such as water rationing, power outages, and economic instability due to triple-digit inflation. The situation has left people stressed, with mental health significantly impacted. Many Venezuelans feel trapped in a cycle of poverty and crime, making life unbearable. With high levels of anxiety, depression, and aggression in society, there is a widespread lack of trust in the government. The resulting chronic stress not only affects mental health but also contributes to other health issues, made worse by grave health disparities. Suicide rates are increasing as people see no way out, painting a grim picture of Venezuela's collective mental health.

The crisis in Venezuela's health services is exemplified by the mismanagement of mental health institutions. As the country's political and economic turmoil escalates, the future remains grim for vulnerable patients, emphasizing the urgent need for intervention.

At the Teachers Training Teachers conference, our presentation focused on strategies to strengthen resilience. This topic is especially important because as the disparities and lack of access to qualified resources persist, the idea of individuals having tools to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity is needed. The conference was organized in Maracaibo, Venezuela. We presented on "Strengthening Resiliency for Enhancing Wellness" and networked with local/International educators for further development of the counseling profession in Venezuela.

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CURRENT CHALLENGES IN VENEZUELA: HOW RESILIENCE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE (CONT.)

Counselor burnout, particularly in the context of international adaptation, is a significant issue in the mental health profession. Decades of research has mostly focused on risk factors for burnout while overlooking protective factors such as resilience that may help to address this universal dilemma. Resilience is the capacity and dynamic process of overcoming stress and adversity while maintaining adaptive psychological and physical functioning. It is essential not just for the people being affected by the harsh realities of Venezuela, but also the helping professionals who seek to ease their pain and find solutions to create and restore well-being. The concept acknowledges that it is not realistic nor adaptive to plan for a complete absence of challenge, so becoming resilient encompasses ways to confront, overcome, and learn from setbacks as they present themselves. It often includes better managing uncertainty and handling setbacks that allow for the maintenance of purpose and self-worth along the way. It seeks to encourage a gains and losses framework, where challenges are acknowledged but also analyzed to explore the growth within each experience.

Research has shown effective components to strengthen resiliency include spiritual, physical, creative, emotional and social interventions. Therefore, the workshop we conducted outlined the research and activities for each of the different factors. For example, physical exercises help us to experience the neurochemical changes that seem to make us more optimistic and more open to connecting with others. Different formats of exercise impact the brain and mental health in slightly different ways. For example, lifting heavy weights, which engages the core, induces activation in the brain that tends to produce euphoria that can tame anxiety. It works by way of a neuro-feedback loop, such that when we brace our core resulting in strong muscular contraction, our brain reads those signals from the body and can produce an empowered state of mind. We can start a physical movement experience feeling depressed, anxious and demoralized, but after 15 minutes, our body and brain may experience more pleasure and positive emotion. Research-based interventions to strengthen the other components of resiliency were also shared with the participants (e.g. meditation, praying, yoga, fasting, etc.).

**A message from
AMCD Grad-Student
Representative
& Newsletter Editor**



Hola! My name is Melissa Carmona (she/elle).

I am AMCD's current Grad student rep and newsletter editor.

Whether you are a student, clinician, educator, supervisor, or reader passing by, you are welcome here; this message is for *you*.

I see you.

I see you trying your best out there. Showing up even when you feel unsure about how to take up space, speak up, stand up. I hope you see that in yourself as well.

That heart of yours is holding so much right now: witnessing genocide, violence, injustices. That heart of yours is holding so much right now: anger, hope, desire for more.

*May you stay gentle and kind with yourself
May you give yourself permission to rest
May you give yourself permission to feel
May you feel held with compassion and love
May you be seen and heard
May you be safe*

You are worthy of liberation, love, care, and compassion.
You are worthy of being witnessed and honored.

Thank you for being *here*.

-Melissa

