



Summit Schedule

Birmingham-Southern College ● July 18, 2019
Norton Campus Center
900 Arkadelphia Road, Birmingham, AL 35254

7:30 am – 8:30 am: **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

8:30 am – 8:45 am: **Welcome**

- Norton Campus Center : Great Hall -

Lanada Williams, MA, NCC, LPC
Founder, Alliance Family Solutions, PLLC
Director of Community Outreach, No More Martyrs

Nadia M. Richardson, PhD
Founder, No More Martyrs

8:45 am – 9:45 am: **Opening Panel Presentation**

- Norton Campus Center : Great Hall -

Title: Black, Blue and Brilliant: Normalizing Black Mental Health Discussions through Storytelling

Dr. Eliza Belle, Director of Psychology & Behavioral Services
Alabama Department of Mental Health

Jasmin Pierre
Mental Health Advocate and Peer Support Specialist
Author and Creator, The Safe Place

T-Kea Blackman, Mental Health Advocate and Speaker
Author of Saved & Depressed: A Suicide Survivor's Journey of Mental Health, Healing and Faith

Rwenshaun Miller, MA, LPCA, NCC
Founder and Executive Director, Eustress, Inc.
Author, Injured Reserve: A Black Man's Playbook To Manage Being Sidelined by Mental Illness

JacQuan D. Winters, M.Ed.
Author, Kristen's Rainy Day and My Happy Place
Executive Director, Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation

Storytelling is the act of sharing narratives that convey information. It has been used as a social and cultural technique for gaining insight, building empathy and imparting knowledge. For centuries, it has been used throughout the African diaspora to pass down history and build community. Recently, storytelling has become a public health strategy for destigmatizing mental health. During this opening panel presentation, Dr. Eliza Belle will facilitate a discussion on mental health and storytelling in Black experiences. Panelists include the following authors and mental health advocates: T-Kea Blackman, Jasmin Pierre, Rwenshawn Miller and JacQuan Winters. T-Kea Blackmon is the creator and host of the Fireflies Unite Podcast. Jasmin Pierre is the creator of The Safe Place mental health app. Rwenshawn Miller is the Founder and Executive Director of Eustress, Inc. JacQuan D. Winters is the Founder and Executive Director of the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation.

9:45 am – 10:00 am: **Networking Break**

10:00 am – 11:00 am: **Concurrent Session I**

- Norton Campus Center : Great Hall -

Title: Intersectionality and Mental Health Needs of Students with Disabilities

Andrea N. Hunt, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Sociology
University of North Alabama

Emily Baker
Candidate, Master of Science in Family Studies
University of North Alabama

Stacy Lee, LICSW, PIP
Coordinator, Office of Disability Support Services
University of North Alabama

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that 6.7 million students received special education services in 2015-2016. Many of those individuals also live with a mental health condition. Individuals within this population experience their disability and mental health conditions within the context of their other social identities such as their gender, race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and more. The salience and awareness of these different identities fluctuate over the life course and result in a myriad of filters that inform the day-to-day experiences of each person. This workshop will demonstrate how intersectionality provides a more culturally relevant way of understanding individuals' experiences with

disabilities and mental health needs. We will offer strategies for working with individuals with disabilities that addresses developmental stages, self-advocacy, and how different aspects of identity have more salience over the life course.

- Norton Campus Center : Executive Dining Room -

Title: Genomic Testing to Improve Clinical Outcomes in Mental Health Treatment

Pauline K Long, PharmD
Consultant Pharmacists | MedsPLUS Consulting, LLC

Jennifer S Campbell, PharmD
Consultant Pharmacists | MedsPLUS Consulting, LLC

Mental health conditions are very prevalent in the United States, with an estimated 50% of all Americans diagnosed with a mental illness or disorder at some point in their lifetime (CDC). After initiating care, minority patients are less likely to receive the best available treatments, and are more likely to terminate treatment prematurely. Several factors can contribute to increased risk of mental illness such as difficult life experiences, experiencing ongoing chronic disease, chemical imbalances and genetic predisposition, and the use of alcohol or recreational drugs. Genomic testing is a cutting edge, promising tool that addresses treatment failures and incidence of adverse drug events in mental health therapy. During this session, presenters will discuss pathophysiology of mental health conditions (primarily depression and anxiety) and discuss various treatment options. They will also explain the utility of genomic testing to improve clinical outcomes in mental health treatment. At the conclusion of the presentation, participants will have an understanding of mental health conditions, treatment options, and cutting edge testing that can optimize clinical outcomes.

- Norton Campus Center : Norton Theatre -

Title: Barriers and Supports Among African American College Students in Accessing Mental Health Services

Dr. Tonya Davis, Program Coordinator
Psychology & Counseling Department
Alabama A&M University

Dr. Jetaun Bailey, Assistant Professor
Coordinator, Clinical Training
Alabama A&M University

Quaneshia Chandler
Candidate, Master's in Counseling Psychology
Alabama A&M University student

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (n.d), African Americans have a 20% higher chance of having a serious mental illness compared to the general public. With increasing numbers of African American students attending college, colleges must be on the forefront of tackling issues that can impact retention and engagement and thus examining the efficiency and access to mental health services in the college setting is paramount. Understanding the barriers that are systemic and cultural are important as they relate to developing helpful strategies to understand the mental health needs of African American college students. Mounting research points to the need to examine service delivery models and access barriers related to college counseling centers.

11:00 am – 11:15 am: **Networking Break**

11:15 am – 12:15 pm: **Concurrent Session II**

- Norton Campus Center : Executive Dining Room -

Title: Hip Hop Culture as a Medium for Emotional Wellness

Adia "Dr. Dia" Winfrey, Psy.D.
Author/Creator of H.Y.P.E.: Healing Young People thru Empowerment
Founder of Elevating Us

From its inception, Hip Hop culture has had a reciprocal relationship with society and has served as an outlet for people of color. Hip Hop culture emerged in The Bronx in the 1970s, and for nearly 30 years has been a global force and voice for the oppressed. During this interactive workshop, Dr. Winfrey will provide a historical overview of Hip Hop culture and demonstrate specific techniques, using the Hip Hop Empowerment Model, for integrating rap music and other elements of Hip Hop culture into emotional wellness-based interventions. The goals of the “Hip Hop Culture as a Medium for Emotional Wellness” are to increase participant knowledge and understanding of Hip Hop culture and provide a foundation for integrating elements of the culture into interventions with people of color and other marginalized groups.

- Norton Campus Center : Great Hall -

Title: Working as Designed: Dismantling U.S. Policy's Criminalization of Mental Illness

Azza Altiraifi
Research Associate, Disability Justice Initiative
Center for American Progress

Rejane C. Frederick
Associate Director, Poverty to Prosperity
Center for American Progress

Valerie Novack
Fellow, Portlight Disaster Strategies
Center for American Progress

The co-foundational structures of white supremacy and ableism, or the structural and interpersonal oppression of disabled people based on their presumed or actual disability status, undergird the US mental healthcare system. From the antebellum period, to the civil rights movement, to the present - ableist notions of mental health and illness have been leveraged by the state to justify measures which criminalize historically marginalized groups (including disabled people). This presentation will explore the historical development of US mental health policy, and how white supremacy and ableism shaped today's punitive and broken systems. Through facilitated discussion, presenters will apply a disability justice praxis to today's progressive movements and identify policy directions and advocacy strategies to support Black and Indigenous People/Persons of Color (BIPOC) with Serious Mental Illness (SMI).

- Norton Campus Center : Norton Theatre -

Title: The Implications of Historical Trauma in African Americans: Empowerment through Narrative Therapy

Shane' J. Gill
Family Intervention Specialist
Youth Villages

Racism has contributed to the dehumanization of persons of color, reducing them to mere animals, savages, and in essence, barbaric. Contrary to popular belief, racism is prevalent in our society and more so is present in the system, supporting discriminatory practices and exacerbating depression. In today's society, this form of racism is rooted in color-blindness. This belief has contributed to systemic discrimination in minorities and Blacks in particular being subjected to emotional and psychological trauma. Narrative therapy has been identified as a modality to explore historical trauma related to race and to empower marginalized persons. This presentation will explore the manifestation of racism and oppression in mental health

practices, trauma, and explore the efficacy of narrative therapy in restoring power and alternative meanings of these unique experiences in therapy.

12:15 pm – 1:30 pm: **Lunch Keynote Speaker**

- *Norton Campus Center : Great Hall* -

Title: A Hero's Journey

Dr. Artie Nelson,
Adolescent and Child Psychiatrist

It is clear that everyone has a story. Stories can help to guide a person to success or failure in life by providing examples and frameworks of perseverance. The use of storytelling can prevent individual suffering by removing mentally-distressing, false and isolating ideas of inadequacy or desolation. Heroism differs based on culture. Through the use of culturally relevant stories, Dr. Artie Nelson will encourage participants to recognize their own hero's journey by considering the unique philosophy of Joseph Campbell. Campbell was a philosopher, cultural anthropologist and educator who developed the theory of the hero's journey; a theory that went on to serve as the foundation of numerous cinematic stories. Through his work with the creative community, the theory of the hero's journey went on to inspire such films as Star Wars, Harry Potter and the Matrix. Participants will walk away from this presentation with an understanding of how their own cultural lens informs their vision of heroism and self-actualization.

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm: **Concurrent Session III**

- *Norton Campus Center : Norton Theatre* -

Title: A Critical Look at Black Female Narratives

Danielle Mars
Yes... I Have A Therapist

Renee' N. (Chaffin) Smith
Yes... I Have A Therapist

Williesha Morris
Mental Health Advocate

It takes a village to raise a child, but it also takes a village to raise and empower a woman. Through this journey of following how the evolution of the black sisterhood has been portrayed in media, this session will show that the current media portrayals of female friendships are destructive and ultimately inaccurate. In

addition, Williesha Morris will share her experiences with what she calls “The Triple-Paned Glass Ceiling”; being a Black woman in a professional environment living with high-functioning mental illness.

- Norton Campus Center : Great Hall -

Title: Mental Illness within the Deaf Community

LaShawnda Lowe, NIC, QMHI
Nationally Certified Sign Language Interpreter

Unfortunately, Deaf individuals are an underserved population in the mental health setting. Deaf individuals often experience oppression, stigma, and prejudices daily. Individuals who do experience mental health issues may avoid seeking services because of the additional stigma. For individuals who do seek help, they are often met with the daunting task of finding accessible mental health services. This presentation will discuss mental illness within the Deaf community, barriers to access, and several key points to remember when communicating or working with Deaf individuals. The ultimate goal is to encourage awareness of mental illness within the Deaf community.

- Norton Campus Center : Executive Dining Room -

Title: Embracing “For US by US”: Creating Spaces that Keep POC informed, safe and allow us to authentically express ourselves.

Tiffany Wright, MSW
BE! Wellness Consulting, Los Angeles, California
Wellness & Trauma Organizational Consultant

As a clinician, the most relevant cultural piece is understanding the complexity of the relationship others have with the concept of therapy, mental health, and mental illness. Finding the right approach or blend of approaches, including incorporating traditional western African wellness practices as well as those influenced by indigenous and eastern philosophies, not only destigmatizes mental illness, but expands the notion that healing looks one way; it provides a holistic approach to what is going on. Safe space for authentic expression, authentic connection, and open exchange of information is what has made a difference for many of the attendees and supporters of my organization. The safe space created, has initiated otherwise skeptical and uninterested individuals to become open and interested in seeking not only traditional mental health support, but also a range of holistic approaches to healing such as acupuncture, apothecary and even sound healing.

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm: **Networking Break**

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm: **Community Conversation – Decriminalizing Mental Illness**

- Norton Campus Center : Great Hall -

Participants are invited to engage in a community conversation on the development of working groups. The focus will be incorporating information from the summit into action steps toward culturally responsive mental health care and advocacy. This year's community conversation will focus on the topic of 'Decriminalizing Mental Illness'.

Jim Carnes – Policy Director
Alabama Arise

Jilisa Milton, MSW, JD – Equal Justice Works Legal Fellow
Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program

3:45 pm – 4:45 pm: **Closing Panel Discussion**

- Norton Campus Center : Great Hall -

Title: Our Voices, Ourselves: Storytelling and Mental Health Advocacy

Destini Love, LISCW, PIP
Clinical Director, AIDS Alabama
Founder, Love & Associates, LLC

Ahmad Abojaradeh,
Founder and Executive Director
Life in My Days, Inc.

James Hickman
Licensed Therapist and Peer Support Specialist
Author, The Mindful Son

Mary Murphy
Peer Support Specialist

During this special closing panel presentation, Destini Love will guide panel participants in a discussion about storytelling, community organizing and mental health advocacy. James Hickman is the author of The Mindful Son; A Beacon of Hope through the Storm of Mental Illness. He is a licensed therapist and a certified peer support specialist, as well, having been diagnosed with schizophrenia at age 21. Ahmad Abojaradeh (pronoun they/them) is the Founder and Executive Director of Life in My Days. Ahmad is also a Justice and Transformation activist and a Peer Support Specialist. Mary Murphy is Peer Support Specialist, Certified Minister and Author.

4:45pm – 5:00 pm: **Closing Remarks and Adjourn**

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