



## Central Texas African American Family Support Conference Planning Committee Meeting

**Date:** Wednesday April 17, 2019

**Time:** 11:30am -1pm

**Location:** Conference Room 3, 1430 Collier St, Austin, TX 78704

### 1. Welcome, Introductions & Announcements

**In Person:** Naijean Bernard, Charlotte Caples, Shannon Carr, Vicky Coffee, Edwin Evans, Stephanie Harris, Felicia Mason-Edwards, Debra Price, Lisa Quinn, Ellen Richards, Falecia Rivers, Kye Tavernier, Nell Watts, Willie Williams

**On Phone:** Kacey Hanson and Jacqueline Miller

**2. Conference Roots and History:** Willie Williams provided background information on the origins of the conference and shared printed programs from the first three conferences (2000, 2001, and 2002). The conference was started to help consumers meet other consumers and to develop support systems for families. Over the years, the conference has grown into the largest of its type in the nation. Members expressed a desire to grow the conference while remembering that connecting people to resources is the goal. Additional consumer and family member involvement in the planning and conference is important to the conference. Suggestions include: contacting past participants, disseminating information via social media, an online survey, new member drives, and having meetings at different times / days.

**3. 2020 Conference Planning:** Ellen Richards spoke about the role Integral Care has in the conference. Over the past 20 years, more than \$1 million has been invested by Integral Care on the conference. The agency is accountable to other public funders for the use of tax dollars that support the conference. Integral Care has provided the backbone support for the conference which has helped with consistency, continuity and quality. As the host of the conference, Integral Care has responsibility for maintaining and protecting the conference brand. With new members joining the conference, it is important to share the history and how the conference is produced each year. To support clarity of roles, a draft Memorandum of Understanding was shared and discussed. Members provided feedback on the document. Input included changing the document name to Agreement and adding in member roles so the document language represents more of a partnership between Integral Care and committee members. [Members were asked to email additional comments to Ellen.Richards@integralcare.org](mailto:Ellen.Richards@integralcare.org) . Topic will be re-visited on the May agenda.

**4. 2020 Proposed Committee Responsibilities & Sign-up:** A handout on conference sub-committees was distributed and discussed. Current subcommittee members gave a brief overview of responsibilities and duties. [Individuals should email lisa.quinn@integralcare.org](mailto:lisa.quinn@integralcare.org) or [scarr@austinmhc.org](mailto:scarr@austinmhc.org) if they are interested in serving on or chairing a particular committee.

**5. 2020 Conference Date/Location:** Ellen Richards reported that various venues across town were contacted regarding the conference. Due to higher costs and other logistical challenges, Palmer Event Center was selected as conference location. Dates are Tuesday, February 11 and Wednesday, February 12, 2020.

6. **2020 Staffing:** Ellen Richards shared that a 30 hour Special Events Manager position is being advertised. Half of the projected time will be spent on conference duties and strategies. The other time will be spent on event planning for other Integral Care events. Job listing can be viewed here: <https://integralcare.e3applicants.com/careers/Special-Events-Manager-1665> Information on the position will also be added to the conference website. Members are encouraged to share the posting information with others.
  
7. **Other Business:** New members (Edwin Evans, Kacey Hanson, Stephanie Harris, Jacqueline Miller and Nell Watts) gave feedback on their experiences with the conference. Lisa Quinn discussed possibility of moving location of May meeting to the Austin History Center to meet with the African American Community Archivist and Librarian Kymberly Keeton. Members decided a different month may be more appropriate due to a full agenda. Members are encouraged to send in suggestions for keynote speakers for the 2020 conference. Email suggestions to [lisa.quinn@integralcare.org](mailto:lisa.quinn@integralcare.org)

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at 11:30am**

Integral Care, Conference Room 3, 1430 Collier St, Austin, TX 78704

**2019 CENTRAL TEXAS AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY SUPPORT CONFERENCE  
PLANNING COMMITTEE CONFERENCE REVIEW**

**POSITIVES**

*Workshops*

1. Overall workshop sessions were full, well attended.
  - People came out of most sessions saying they were excellent.
  - Youth sessions worked.
  - How Words Impact Our Mental Health and Well-Being was a hit, but the room wasn't big enough.
2. Really happy there were so many CEU sessions. In the past there hasn't been.

*Poster Session*

1. The poster session was a hit, liked the idea that people explained it, having it first thing in the morning really kicked off the day and got everyone engaged
  - Even if you couldn't get into a workshop, you could learn about a topic.
  - The portrayal of the poster was not the same as the creator presenting it. When they presented it, I was able to appreciate the poster more, and understand it.
  - More voting took place after people explained their poster.
  - "I learned so much about so many subjects in a 5-minute span."
  - People who did this got more advertisement than people who held workshops.
  - Liked relating it to the Apollo, it's good for a more senior audience and gave people a chance to participate.

*Program*

1. Lots of positive feedback about the way the program flowed and the activity going on in between. Good opportunities to get together and relax.
2. Heard awesome feedback about Emcees.

3. Having someone like Jodie was so important when emcees were trying to juggle so many things/things were flying and changing behind the scenes. Jodie and Meri made it seamless. They were like superstars. They kept time, order, and helped synthesize. They made sure all changes were made, and were professional and calm.
4. Gangster Granny's engagement in hallway between sessions was great. It was good to have an opportunity to move your body and helped break any tension raised in sessions.

#### *Miscellaneous*

1. Cool how photographer uploaded pictures live so they showed up on the screen.

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

#### *Poster Session*

1. Vote for posters after the presentations.
2. Keep the theme open for posters. It helped with inclusion.

#### *A/V for Run of Show*

1. Put words for Lift Every Voice on screen (or provide handouts).
2. Do we need two screens?
  - There wasn't a lot of interaction there. It was a little distracting when not used for presentations. Could we save money with just one or have a screen on stage?
3. Add the testimonial quotes back into the looping PowerPoint.
4. Consider looping videos in 2020.
  - In the past, we've looped videos of people talking and had the voiceover loops. That would be nice to have for the 20<sup>th</sup>, incorporating elders such as Adrian Fowler.
  - We could use the interviews we did in 2019 to promote the conference.

#### *Program*

1. We need to do a better job of noting when sessions are youth only sessions.
2. People should have the right to attend any workshop. Even if it's specific to a specific audience, we should invite people to sit on the periphery.
  - Committee may discuss this further.

3. If a workshop is more focused on a particular audience, hold the workshop in a smaller room.
  - Consider topics and plan space better. Some sessions were overflowing where others had empty seats.
4. Consider how long should we go on the second day.
  - People leave after lunch, unless there is someone really good. Jennifer Holiday had people on their feet.
5. Have a box of tissues in workshop rooms.
6. Consider a separate event for youth during lunch.
  - All of the youth were at the back and on their phones. Keynote wasn't talking about something applicable to them and it seemed like a waste of time for them.
7. Consider having a youth summit separate from the conference on a weekend.

#### *Presenters*

1. Confirm with presenters that attendees can participate in discussion. If not, be sure to communicate that to attendees as well as any additional expectations of the presenters.
2. If Restorative Circles will be on future programs, communicate requirements in the program.
3. Presenters need to know about Gangster Granny. We may need to rethink the location in general.
  - It competed with presentations and some presenters were offended. Kimberly was worried about sending people out after a session about grief.
  - The Comfort Room was right by this. Had there been someone been in need in the Comfort Room, it would have been distracting.

#### *Keynotes*

1. We need to ask keynotes what they're going to talk about and vet them better.
  - Someone needs to have heard them speak or watched them on YouTube.
2. Speak to the keynote in advance to tell them about the conference.
3. Keynotes need to stay on time.
4. Keynotes need an ambassador to escort them. Transportation should be provided. We need to do a better job of connecting with people so they/we know where they're supposed to be and when.
5. We need to see the contracts for keynotes as a team.

6. Consider keynote speaker content, ensure it aligns with the conference.
  - Barbara Majors shared good stuff but it was not the right place for it.
  - We should have been calming people down, getting people resources for their mental health.
7. Consider moderator style for keynote. A Q&A format could help guide keynote discussion.
  - What if we had a youth interviewed a keynote with lived experience?
  - Or consider an interview style (a la Michelle Obama's book tour) in general?

### *Registration*

1. Consider letting people sign up for sessions when they register to help determine room size.
2. When we tell people how much the conference costs, we need to figure out a way to describe the structure and give specific information about the different levels. It's not clear on the website. (There was one comment to revisit the pricing structure.)
  - Not all professionals need CEUs. But should professionals pay 150 no matter what?

### *CEUs*

1. We need to evaluate our CEU process and clearly state where and how to get them.
  - There are people getting CEUs who did not pay \$150.
  - Maybe note if someone is eligible for a CEU on the badge?
  - People could go downstairs to registration and get their name checked off the CEU list.
  - People could email afterward, then get checked against the CEU list. (Dell Med does this.)
2. See if there is an organization willing to take over CEUs, to match up registration to the person.
  - Maybe Hogg or UT? Or Via Hope for Peers?
3. People are interested in CEUs for Peer Support Specialists and Nurses.

### *Planning & Processes*

1. Develop a process for every part of what we're doing – from registration to CEUs so it's clear about everything it takes to produce the conference. This includes a plan and process for last minute changes.
  - If X happens, this person is pulled in, this is how it's handled, etc. For example, what happens if someone doesn't show up?
  - Streamlining processes will take less energy from the planning team.

- At several points, there were issues and there wasn't a process in place. We didn't take into a consideration how it all plays together. We have to be intentional about developing those processes so we do less trouble-shooting.
- 2. Streamline and tighten up communication as a collaborative team.
- 3. Need a better understanding of what Integral Care does to support this conference.
  - The committee could be much more intentional about the changes if we know how we help or how we harm, and if there are pieces that can be done by someone else.
- 4. Need to know when the deadlines are. If the committee misses a deadline, Integral Care should move ahead, even if that means something doesn't happen.
- 5. When decisions are scheduled to be made at meetings, committee members need to know that they need to be in attendance if they want a vote.
- 6. Would the 20<sup>th</sup> conference be over a weekend?

#### *Sponsorships & Fundraising*

1. Do a better job of identifying value for sponsors. The benefits at different levels were not evident.
  - Give them badges with ribbons that say sponsor.
  - Give them more prominent exhibitor tables.
  - I'm not sure I'd be able to make a case to pay \$150 as a non-profit exhibitor vs \$2500 as a conference sponsor.
2. We should let sponsors and others put ads in program.
  - This would likely increase cost of printing due to more pages.
3. Our biggest opportunity for revenue is sponsorships.
4. Do a fundraiser for 2020.
  - o If we need to fundraise, let's fundraise. We know some people who can bring in some money for 2020. Let's look at a funder who might pick up the keynote – Taraji Henson, Tyler Perry (was homeless)

#### *Lunch*

1. There were a lot of empty reserved tables at the front. Can we reduce the number of reserved tables?
2. Food wasn't as good as last year.
3. How did we end up with meatloaf? I thought we voted against it.

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES & COMMENTS

- In a meeting with Representative Coleman, he gave us kudos because he liked the idea of the interviewing, even though we didn't do it. He was really interested in that kind of format and how relaxed it would be.
- Notes on Restorative Practice Youth Circle
  - This presenter didn't allow attendees to speak, specifically in the Youth Restorative Practice. There was a student who was too scared to go to the bathroom. Two caseworkers were shamed when they left, after they were told it was a youth session.
  - The space was organized so attendees would feel safe but created fear if you weren't in the circle. Do we need to tell people to come on time and not to leave early?
  - That program was not supposed to have one adult in it. It was solely for youth. However, we did not ask adults to leave and the presenter had to adjust their presentation.
- Notes on Keynotes
  - Do we do background checks on speakers?
  - If it's a headliner, people will pay.
  - Because we were trying to stay within budget, we were googling keynotes. We weren't picking people we had experience with or had seen. We have to be more intentional about it. We've also had educational speakers who were boring.
  - Barbara Majors riled people up who had mental health issues. When I really listened to her, it was very strong. I made a client go to the bathroom to take one of her pills. If my brother was there, I would have had to check him back into the home myself. It triggered people, and I did not leave feeling good.
- We have a good opportunity for the 20th year to do some excellent programming. We've had dynamic speakers. The conference has been excellence. When you break it down to good and bad, this was a great conference, the workshops were out of sight. I'm thinking about speakers who know are mesmerizing but we have to pay. We want to go over the top in 2020.
  - Mallinee wants to keep a comfortable and professional air and look at how to get more African Americans to the conference. She wants the registration numbers to go from 600 to 1500.
- HR sends statement to everyone in October to queue people to get permission from their supervisor for the department. Travis County pays for it.
- We cannot overlook the value that white people bring to this conference. Majority are in private practice are in it for the money and can't see people for free. If we're talking about people who will see our people, they aren't going to look like us. They need to be educated and brought to the table to learn.