

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**Keris Jan Myrick, MBA, MS, – Director Office of Consumer Affairs, SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, MD) <https://www.inaops.org/keynote-speakers>**

Myrick is a leading mental health advocate and executive, known for her innovative and inclusive approach to mental health reform and the public disclosure of her personal story. Previously, Myrick was president and CEO of Project Return Peer Support Network, a Los Angeles-based, peer-run nonprofit, which manages over 150 self-help groups in Los Angeles County, a peer-staffed Warm Line, a Spanish-language community resource center (El Centrito de Apoyo), and peer run crisis respite house. She was the president of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). With her unique combination of executive skills and personal lived experience in the mental health system, Myrick is an in-demand national trainer and keynote speaker. She is known for her collaborative style and innovative whole personal approach to mental health care and is as a professional who promotes recovery, resiliency, and evidence-based practice. Myrick has a Master of Science degree in organizational psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology of Alliant International University. Her Master of Business Administration degree, with an emphasis on marketing, is from Case Western Reserve University.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SuxSDHPDBk&list=PLA49FF7EABDE07200&index=1>



**Altha J. Stewart MD  
Immediate Past President of the American Psychiatric Association  
<https://www.psychiatry.org/about-apa/meet-our-organization/board-of-trustees/altha-stewart>**

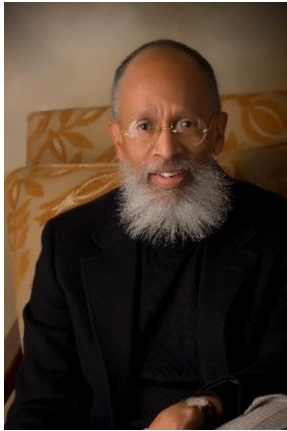
Altha J. Stewart, M.D. is Immediate Past President of the American Psychiatric Association and served as President of APA from 2018 to 2019. Altha J. Stewart, M.D. began her term as President of the American Psychiatric Association at the end of the APA Annual Meeting in May, 2018. Dr. Stewart is an associate professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Center for Health in Justice Involved Youth at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center.

Dr. Stewart has held several leadership roles at APA, including secretary of APA, past president of the American Psychiatric Association Foundation, chair of the APA Conflict of Interest Committee, chair of the Minority Fellowship Selection Committee, member of APA Ad Hoc Workgroups on Real Estate and Strategic Planning, member of the Council on Advocacy and Government Relations and member of the APA Joint Reference Committee.

Dr. Stewart previously served as Executive Director for Just Care Family Network, Memphis' federally funded System of Care program for children with serious emotional disorders and their families. Additionally, Dr. Stewart was Director of Systems of Care for the Shelby County Office of the Public Defender. Prior to this she served as Executive Director of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Mental Health Services funded National Leadership Council on African-American Behavioral Health. Earlier in her career, Dr. Stewart served as Executive Director of

Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency, one of the largest public mental health systems in the U.S. She worked for over a decade as CEO and Executive Director in large public mental health systems in Pennsylvania and New York, overseeing the management and development of programs for persons with mental illness and substance use disorders.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VkJxCJ9Ow>



**King Davis Ph.D.**

**Professor, The University of Texas at Austin**

<https://aaswsw.org/member/king-davis-phd/>

King Davis holds the Robert Lee Sutherland Chair in Mental Health and Social Policy at the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work. He was executive director of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health Services, Research, Policy, and Education from 2003 to 2008 and professor of Public Mental Health Policy at the Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond Virginia, from 1984-2000. He held the Galt Endowed Chair at each of Virginia's medical schools from 1985-1988. From 1998-1999, he was the holder of the William and Camille Cosby Chair at Howard University, Washington D.C., and the Libra Chair in the School of Business and Public Policy at the University of Maine. He taught at Norfolk

State University School of Social Work from 1974 to 1984. Professor Davis earned his PhD from the Florence G. Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University in 1972. King is a former commissioner of the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services, serving from 1990 to 1994. He is co-author of *The Color of Social Policy*, published in March 2004 by CSWE Press.

Video: <https://youtu.be/ldpa9mw530Q?t=979>



**Mike Veny**

**Motivational Speaker, Activist, Drummer**

<https://www.mikeveny.com/about>

What do you get when you mix mental health challenges with a passion for drumming? A dynamic speaker and musician who delivers raw energy with a fresh perspective on wellness!

Mike Veny is a highly sought-after keynote mental health speaker, corporate drumming event facilitator, author, and luggage enthusiast. Seriously, you'd completely get it if you did all the traveling he did! He's the author of the book *Transforming Stigma: How to Become a Mental Wellness Superhero*. As a 2017 PM360 ELITE Award Winner, Mike is

recognized as one of the 100 most influential people in the healthcare industry.

Video: <https://youtu.be/nma0Gey-KEU?t=9>



**Francine Ward**  
**Attorney, Professional Speaker, & Author**

<https://www.allamericanspeakers.com/celebritytalentbios/Francine+Ward/4351>

Motivational speaker, life coach and attorney, Francine Ward has overcome obstacles most people would consider impossible. At fourteen, she was a heroin addict and a practicing alcoholic; today she's twenty-seven years clean and sober. At eighteen, she was a high school dropout who lived homeless on the streets of New York; today she's a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center and no longer lives on the streets. At twenty-one she was a prostitute selling her body to support her drug and alcohol habits; today she's a lawyer, a successful entrepreneur, a loving wife, and a twice-published author. At twenty-six she was hit by a car and told she'd never walk again; in her early forties, she ran two 26.2-mile marathons. At twenty-eight she was the poster child for someone who is selfish, self-centered, and self-absorbed; today, at fifty-three, her amazing life is about being of service to others.

The author of *Esteemable Acts: 10 Actions for Building Real Self-Esteem* and *52 Weeks of Esteemable Acts: A Guide to Right Living*, Francine's story is one that movies are made of. She's been featured in the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Washington Post*, *Black Enterprise*, and *Heart & Soul Magazine*. She's also appeared on *The Tavis Smiley Show*, *Good Day New York*, *Good Day Atlanta* and more! An upcoming PBS special where her life and work are profiled will be aired in January 2007.

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQ\\_aarsQtk8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQ_aarsQtk8)



**Jenifer Lewis**  
**"Black Mother of Hollywood," Actress, Singer and Activist**

[https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0507338/bio?ref=nm\\_ov\\_bio\\_sm](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0507338/bio?ref=nm_ov_bio_sm)

The hilarious Jenifer Lewis has added another facet to her talents as an activist who speaks on mental illness and her own lived experience. Born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, Jenifer has been entertaining Americans and the world with more than 300 appearances in film and television. Dubbed a "national treasure" by TV Guide.com, Jenifer stars on the hit show *Black-ish* (ABC), where her hilarious portrayal of "Ruby Johnson" earned her a nomination for the 2016 Critics Choice Award. Jenifer's most recent movies include *The Wedding Ringer*, *Think Like A Man*, *Think Like A Man Too* and *Baggage Claim*. She delivered legendary performances as Tina Turner's mother in *What's Love Got to Do with It* and in *The Preacher's Wife* as the mother of Whitney Houston's character. Jenifer starred opposite Matt Damon in Clint Eastwood's *Hereafter* and for director Tyler Perry, Jenifer created unforgettable characters in *Madea's Family Reunion* and *Meet the Browns*. In the movie *Castaway*, Jenifer portrayed Tom Hanks' boss. In animated films, Jenifer's uniquely recognizable voice is adored by Disney fans worldwide in roles such as "Flo" in *Cars* and *Cars 2* and as "Mama Odie" in *The Princess and the Frog*.

She has been speaking about her lived experience with bipolar disorder and its consequences. Through book tours, tv, and radio appearances, Ms. Lewis brings attention to mental health in the society.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6ERx75Ou0E>



**Latesha Higgs**

**Founder/President of The DIVA Effect, Inc. and a Baltimore City Public School teacher**

<http://www.bmoreart.com/2017/03/shining-a-light-on-baltimore.html>

Higgs is the president and founder of the not for profit organization, [The DIVA Effect, Inc.](#), which empowers women in under-served neighborhoods through leadership and life-skills training to strengthen their families and change the narrative of their own communities. She talks about suicide and mental health issues.

Podcast @ 13.00 minute: [Not Us](#)