

ctaafsc 20TH anniversary

CENTRAL TEXAS AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY SUPPORT CONFERENCE



Conference Program

FEBRUARY 11-12, 2020 - AUSTIN, TX



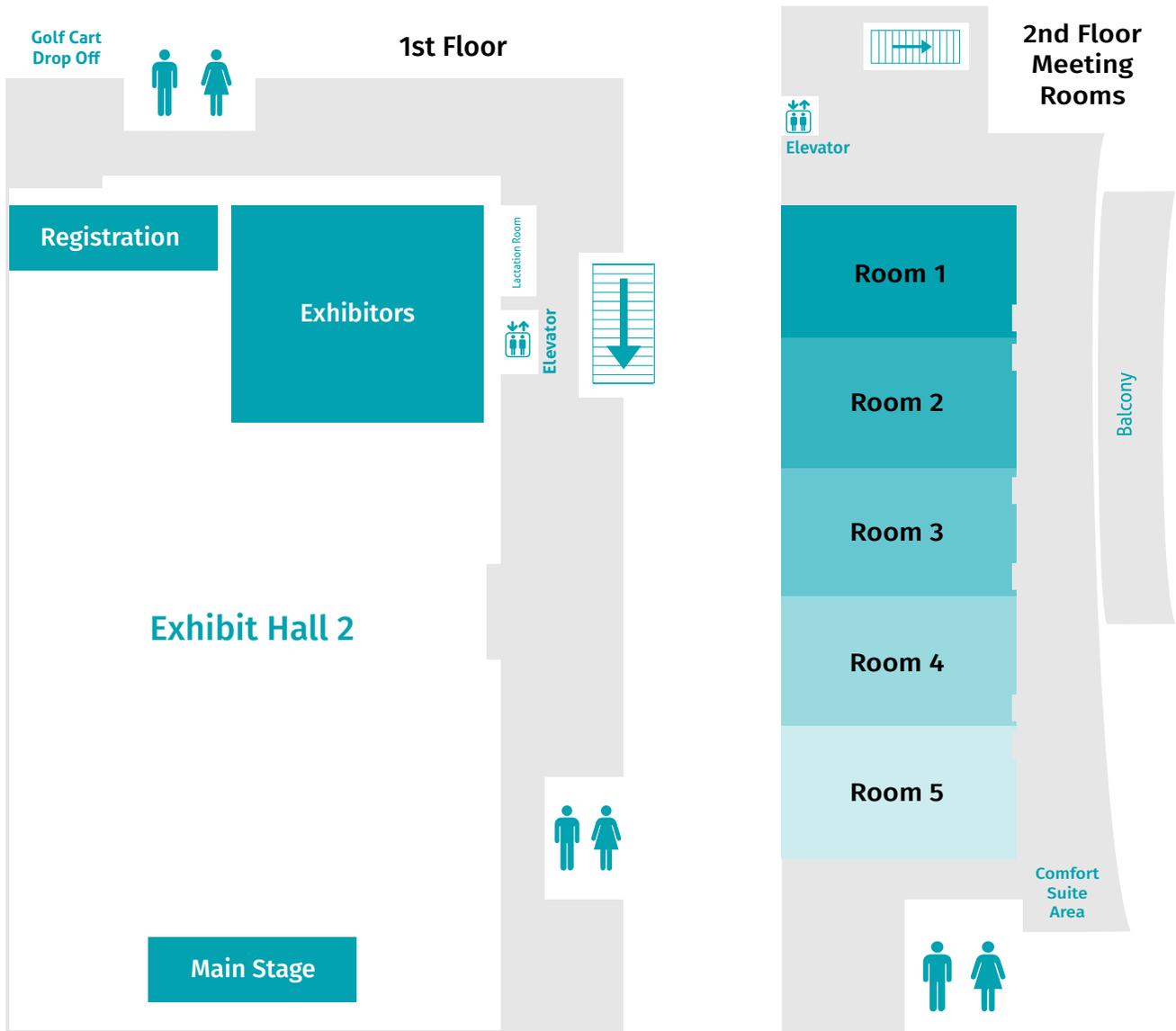
Central Texas
African American Family
Support Conference



Integral Care

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Welcome

Welcome to the 20th annual Central Texas African American Family Support Conference! We are thrilled to celebrate this momentous event with you, where individuals, families, faith leaders, health professionals and advocates come together and explore health solutions, foster relationships, reduce stigma and increase access to care.

This conference was born from a desire to confront systems and cultural bias that have resulted in African Americans facing barriers to healthcare access. Now, the longest-running conference focused on mental health, substance use disorder, intellectual and developmental disabilities and the African American community, thousands of individuals have come together through the years to grow and learn from people who both look like them and often share similar experiences.

In reflecting back on the very first conference in 2000, we were a group of 150 gathered at a Holiday Inn for a single day. Just look at us now – 500 strong with two full days of interactive workshops and three keynote speakers. Our vision has always been and continues to be the empowerment of individuals and families by providing information, support and networking opportunities that inspire hope for a brighter future.

This year, we welcome Dr. King Davis, Dr. Altha Stewart, and Le’Andria Johnson as our keynote speakers. Dr. Davis is one of the originators of this conference, an expert in mental health and urban policy research and analysis. Dr. Altha Stewart is a community psychiatrist and the first African American to hold the position of President of the American Psychiatric Association, and Ms. Johnson is an acclaimed singer-songwriter who will share her powerful story of lived experience with substance use and mental health issues. We cannot thank them enough for bringing their wisdom and stories to this conference.

Over the next two days, Integral Care and the Conference Planning Team hope that you expand your knowledge and make meaningful connections. We hope you are inspired to share what you gain here with your communities. Thank you for joining us.

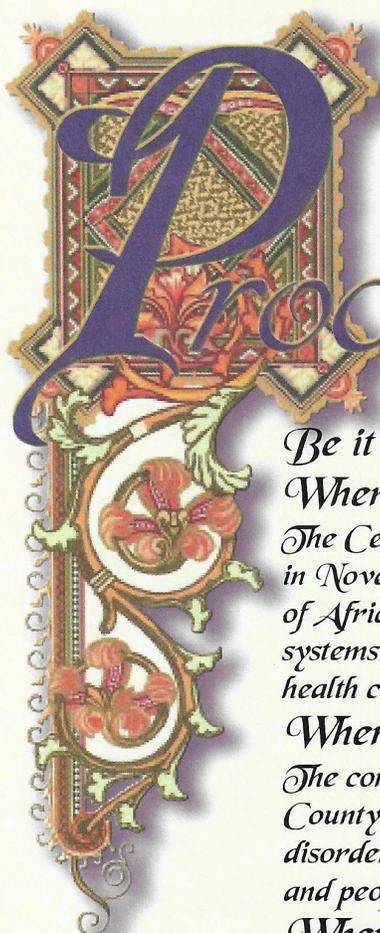
Sincerely,



David Evans, CEO
Integral Care



Willie Williams, Chair
CTAAFSC Planning Team



Proclamation

Be it known that

Whereas,

The Central Texas African American Family Support Conference, first convened in November 2000, was the first conference in Texas to focus on the healthcare needs of African Americans. The conference was born from a desire to confront the systems and cultural bias that have resulted in African Americans facing barriers to health care access; and

Whereas,

The conference, hosted by Integral Care, the local mental health authority for Travis County, is filled with the most current information on mental health, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities, led by caring health experts and people with their own lived experiences with these conditions; and

Whereas,

The goal was and continues to be to produce a culturally-relevant conference that dispels myths about mental illness and brings an end to health disparities;

Now, Therefore,

*I, Steve Adler, Mayor of the City of Austin, Texas,
do hereby proclaim*

February 11-12, 2020

as

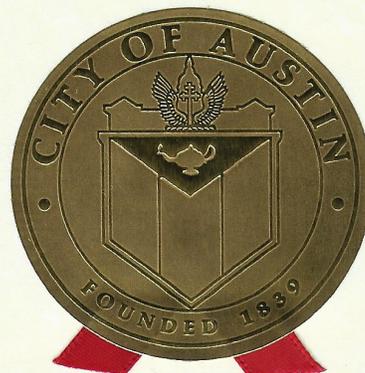
*Central Texas African American
Family Support Conference Days*

in Austin.

*In witness whereof, I have hereunto
set my hand and caused the seal of the City
of Austin to be affixed this 11th Day of
February in the Year Two Thousand Twenty*



Steve Adler, Mayor, City of Austin



The State of Texas



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The 20th annual Central Texas African American Family Support Conference is being held in Austin on February 11 and 12, 2020; and

WHEREAS, First convened in November 2000, the Central Texas African American Family Support Conference was the first conference in the Lone Star State and only the third in the nation to focus on the health care needs of African Americans; through educational workshops and presentations by inspirational speakers, the symposium seeks to address the systemic and cultural biases that raise barriers to health care access; and

WHEREAS, Hosted by Integral Care, the mental health and intellectual and developmental disability authority of Travis County, the conference brings together community leaders, innovative thinkers, and health care professionals to share the latest information on mental health, substance abuse disorders, physical health challenges, and intellectual and developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Scholarships are offered to individuals who would not be able to attend otherwise, and two awards, the Garnet F. Coleman "Eternal Flame" Award and the Richard E. Hopkins "Torch" Award, are presented to individuals who are dedicated to improving the quality of life for those African Americans in Central Texas who are struggling with health issues; and

WHEREAS, For two decades, the Central Texas African American Family Support Conference has brought together health care professionals and community leaders to share their stories and expertise, and their efforts have helped countless Central Texans live healthier, more resilient lives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 20th anniversary of the Central Texas African American Family Support Conference be commemorated and that all those in attendance be extended sincere best wishes for a meaningful and memorable event.

Sheryl Cole
State Representative
District 46

Day 1 Schedule



Registration
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM



Exhibitors Open
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM



Comfort Room
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM



Continental Breakfast
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

🕒 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM

📍 Exhibit Hall 2

👤 Moderators:
Vicky Coffee
Kimberly Holiday

Opening Session

- Welcome (**Trina Ita**, Associate Commissioner of Behavioral Health Services, HHSC)
- Moment of Silence & Prayer (**Pastor Ray Hendricks**, Rehoboth Baptist Church)
- Color Guard (Bowie High School AFJROTC) & Pledge of Allegiance
- “Lift Every Voice and Sing” (**Sharon Taylor**)
- Recognition of Conference Legacies (**Willie Williams**)

🕒 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Motivational Speaker **SaulPaul**

..... 10:00 AM - 10:15 AM BREAK, EXHIBITORS & POSTER PRESENTATIONS

🕒 10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

Morning Workshop Sessions

..... 11:45 AM - 12:00 PM BREAK, EXHIBITORS & POSTER PRESENTATIONS

🕒 12:00 PM - 1:55 PM

📍 Exhibit Hall 2



Dr. King Davis and Richard E. Hopkins Legacy Luncheon

Moment of Silence & Prayer (**Minister Daryl Horton**, Mt. Zion Baptist Church)

Scholarship Presentation

- Austin Area Mental Health Consumers Lodging Scholarship
- The Michele Bibby – Person in Recovery Educational Scholarship
- RR Coleman-Calahan Lodging Scholarship
- The Wood Group Educational Scholarship

Central Texas African American Healthy Minds Project Award Presentation
(**Vicky Coffee**, Hogg Foundation)

Entertainment: Slam Poetry, **Carlita Fielder**

🕒 12:45 PM - 1:55 PM

Keynote Speaker **Dr. King Davis**

Historical Solutions to the Problems Minorities Face **CEU**

..... 1:55 PM - 2:05 PM BREAK, EXHIBITORS & POSTER PRESENTATIONS

🕒 2:05 PM - 3:35 PM

Afternoon Workshop Sessions I

..... 3:35 PM - 3:45 PM BREAK, EXHIBITORS & POSTER PRESENTATIONS

🕒 3:45 PM - 5:15 PM

Afternoon Workshop Sessions II

🕒 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

📍 Palmer Events Center
2nd Floor Foyer & Balcony

Reception

Hosted by the Austin Area African American Behavioral Health Network

Day 2 Schedule



Registration
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM



Exhibitors Open
8:00 AM - 2:00 PM



Comfort Room
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM



Continental Breakfast
7:30 AM - 8:15 AM

🕒 8:30 AM - 8:35 AM

📍 Exhibit Hall 2

Welcome (Moderators **Vicky Coffee** and **Kimberly Holiday**)

🕒 8:35 AM - 8:45 AM

Entertainment: "Time Out to Turn Up," **Gangsta Granny**

🕒 8:45 AM - 9:45 AM

Poster Presentation: "Bold and Unapologetically Walking in Victory"
(in honor of Tress Berry 1956-2018)

..... 9:45 AM - 10:00 AM BREAK & EXHIBITORS

🕒 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Morning Workshop Sessions

..... 11:30 AM - 11:40 AM BREAK & EXHIBITORS

🕒 11:40 AM - 2:00 PM

📍 Exhibit Hall 2



Moderators:
Vicky Coffee
Kimberly Holiday

Garnet F. Coleman Awards Luncheon

- Welcome
- Moment of Silence and Prayer
(**Imam Asim Shareef**, East Austin Community of Al-Islam)
- Entertainment: **"Sugar" Williams & A Touch of Class**

🕒 12:00 PM - 12:25 PM

Richard Hopkins Torch Awards Presentation (**Judy Garner**)

- Community Impact
- Family Member
- Individual with Lived Experience
- Professional

🕒 12:25 PM - 12:55 PM

Legislative Update **Honorable Garnet Coleman**

Texas State Representative, Houston House District 147

🕒 12:55 PM - 1:00 PM

Garnet F. Coleman Eternal Flame Award Presentation

🕒 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Keynote Speaker **Dr. Altha Stewart**

Using Mental Health Research to Achieve Health Equity

..... 2:00 PM - 2:10 PM BREAK

🕒 2:00 PM - 2:20 PM

2020 Commemorative Artwork Signing with Artist **Brian Joseph**

🕒 2:10 PM - 2:20 PM

Poster Session Winner Announcement

🕒 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Keynote Speaker **Le'Andria Johnson**

🕒 3:30 PM - 3:40 PM

Closing Remarks

🕒 3:40 PM - 4:30 PM

Photo Opportunity with **Le'Andria Johnson**

📍 Riverside Lobby

Keynote Speakers



King Davis, PhD is Professor of Research in the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the principal investigator for an \$800,000 multi-disciplinary project focused on the archives from Central Lunatic Asylum for Colored Insane, America's first asylum for Africans in America. Dr. King was the inaugural director of the Texas Institute for Urban Policy Research & Analysis and served as Executive Director of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health from 2003-2008. He is a former Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. He has held endowed chairs at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, Medical College of Virginia and Eastern Virginia Medical School. In 2019, he was the recipient of the Benjamin Rush Award from the American Psychiatric Association for contributions to the history of psychiatry. Dr. King received his doctoral degree from Brandeis University following service in the United States Army medical service corps. He and his wife are restoring an 18th century mill and millhouse in rural Virginia.



Le'Andria Johnson is a Grammy and Stellar Award-winning musician and singer-songwriter. She also has had her share of experience with substance use and mental health issues. She is the winner of BET's *Sunday Best* Season 3. Her 2017 standout RCA album, *Bigger Than Me*, debuted #3 on the Billboard Gospel Album Chart. The single "Better Days" reached #1 in gospel digital song sales. The acclaimed artist's unmistakable vocal brilliance leads fans along on a powerful journey, delivering messages of inspiration and celebration. Her songs are immersive musical landscapes. Le'Andria remains a distinctive voice carving out her own lane as she intertwines genres sonically, with a modern vibe that is also a little retro. From R&B and soul to country, pop and gospel, she carries an energetic, fun style. Johnson was born into a musical family. She began singing at age two in her father's Florida church. She shares her story in a highly personal, transparent format.



Altha J. Stewart, MD is Senior Associate Dean for Community Health Engagement for the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) in Memphis. An Associate Professor and Chief of Social and Community Psychiatry, she is also Director of the Center for Health in Justice Involved Youth at the UTHSC. In 2018, she served as President of the American Psychiatric Association, the first African American elected to this position in the 175-year history of the organization. A native of Memphis, Dr. Stewart worked for decades as CEO/Executive Director in large public mental health systems in Pennsylvania, New York and Michigan. She received her medical degree from Temple University Medical School and completed her residency at Hahnemann University Hospital (now Drexel University). Dr. Stewart is a past President of the Black Psychiatrists of America, the Association of Women Psychiatrists and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation. She is the recipient of the Memphis Child Advocacy Center Community Advocate Award and the Black Psychiatrists of America Lifetime Achievement Award.

Moderators

Vicky Coffee, LPC-S has committed more than 30 years of her life to increasing awareness, providing services and enhancing systems in support of individuals, youth and families living with mental health conditions. With the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health since 2007, Ms. Coffee, in her current role as Director of Programs, leads the team responsible for developing strategies and implementing initiatives that transform how Texas communities promote mental health in everyday life. She has served as an Executive Board Member and Secretary for the National Leadership Council on African American Behavioral Health and is a founding member and Coordinator of the Austin Area African American Behavioral Health Network. A Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor and Mental Health First Aid instructor, she holds a Bachelor of Science in Child and Family Development and a Masters of Education from Texas State University.

Kimberly Holiday, known to most as LadyJoy, is an on-air radio personality at KAZI 88.7FM, The Voice and Soul of Austin. Find her Tuesdays and Fridays, 5am to 7am, on The Gospel Sweet Spot. As a published author and motivational speaker, Ms. Holiday has created global platforms of inspiration. She has a heart to serve others by modeling the potential to live with joy regardless of life's circumstances. She is a divine vessel for her passion to build people through genuine collaboration and relationships. Her authentic approach to networking has created direct and intentional connections with everyday people on everyday issues. Ms. Holiday is the Central Texas African American Support Conference Outreach Chair. She is active in the community and lives her life transparently, using only her smile as her logo and marketing #Gotjoy as her brand!

Committee Members

Naijean Bernard	Vickie Black	Stephany Bryan	Charlotte Caples
D'Shaunn Dixon	Deborah Duncan	Edwin Evans	Marisol Fray
Janice Goodspeed	Darcel Grounds	Tracee Hall	Kacey Hanson
Stephanie Harris	Sonia Hartman	Felicia Mason-Edwards	Debra Murphy
Jacqueline Miller	Joy Miller	Ulysses Moore	Estephanie Olivares
Margaret Paine	Gerald Pennie	Robin Peyson	Annie Powell
Flora Releford	Schechum Sauls	Maya Smart	Reggie Smith
Mallinee Smith-Diggs	Warren Stewart	Leonor Vargas	Nell Watts
Fabian Wood	Ladonna Woodley		

Michele Bibby, Co-Chair, Scholarships & Awards
Shannon Carr, Co-Chair, Program
Vicky Coffee, Co-Chair, Scholarships & Awards
Emmitt Hayes, Co-Chair, Fundraising & Sustainability
Kimberly Holiday, Chair, Outreach & Marketing

Sonya Hosey, Co-Chair, Program
Debra Price, Co-Chair, Outreach & Marketing
Falecia Rivers, Co-Chair, Fundraising & Sustainability
Kye Tavernier, Chair, Logistics Liaison
Willie Williams, Chair, Planning



Day 1 Morning Workshop Sessions | 10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

 Meeting Room 1

 Presenter:
Starla Simmons

CEU

Healing with Nature: Eco-Therapy for Black Well-Being

We depend on nature for our health, well-being and survival. A growing body of research proves the many benefits of spending time in nature – from simply walking in the park to using clinical eco-therapy interventions. Using a social justice lens, Ms. Simmons will inspire you to think critically about historical trauma’s impact on the relationship communities of color have with nature. We will talk about the power of nature to heal individuals and communities, while honoring the ways people of color have always leaned on Mother Earth to thrive.

 Meeting Room 2

 Presenter:
Jacklyn Hecht
Ray Hendrick
Daryl Horton

CEU

AMEN: African American Mental Health and Wellness Program

The AMEN program aims to reduce health disparity gaps through a comprehensive community-based program. The program focuses on improving mental health and physical wellness outcomes of African Americans with limited access to quality care. This multi-level program includes raising awareness and fostering conversations about mental health through a public media campaign and mental health literacy training within the churches. Mental health and primary care nurse practitioners will provide on-site clinical services within the church. Nurses will also lead a 6-week self-management program to help congregants better manage their chronic conditions, with assistance and support from lay health workers from both churches.

 Meeting Room 3

 Presenter:
Elliot Niblack

Black Youth, Mental Health, and the Power of Effective Advocacy

Mr. Niblack’s recovery from childhood trauma and diagnosis of bipolar with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is a springboard into discussing deficiencies in mental health support for black youth. Participants will gain insight into how to approach school-centric issues like misdiagnosis, overmedication, and others that stem from racial disparities in the education system. Concerns unique to the African American community tie into advocating for mental health and wellness. The presentation includes a Q&A session and resource sharing so participants can have their concerns heard and leave with clarity and action steps.

 Meeting Room 4

 Presenter:
Paul Toviessi

CEU

It’s Okay Not to Be Good

Many men are told, “You will get over it,” “man up” or “pray on it.” These solutions, no matter how well-meaning, contribute to a culture that is not fully informed as to the seriousness of our mental health issues. Due to stigma surrounding mental illness, men of color will often suffer in silence, thinking they should simply be able to deal with the pressures of life on their own, believing that otherwise they are to be considered “weak.” Mr. Toviessi aims to address the stigma and map out a plan forward for men of color.

 Meeting Room 5

 Presenter:
Jacqueline Miller

CEU

Addressing the Impact Adultification Has on African American Children

Research shows that adultification can lead to negative outcomes associated with mental health for children. This long-overlooked issue is frequently passed down from one generation to another while mental health implications go unrecognized and unaddressed. Youth who viewed their experiences as unfair and inequitable, found their outcomes detrimental to their health. Adultification isn’t isolated. It often overlaps with poverty, violence, addictions, incarceration and homelessness. Ms. Miller will share her lived experience and the impact it had on her mental health. Participants will engage in activities for building resilience and a toolbox. With post-traumatic growth, one can walk in victory!

CEU Continuing Education Unit eligible

*CEU Certificates of Completion will be distributed at the end of each qualified workshop.
To receive your CEUs, you MUST sign-in, complete the workshop evaluation, and stay the whole session.*

Day 1 Morning Workshop Sessions | 10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

 Exhibit Hall 2

 Presenters:
[SaulPaul](#)
[Bianca Neal](#)
[Raphael Travis Jr., DrPH](#)

CEU

Self-Care: Music, Mental Health and Metaphors

From music and poetry to other forms of creative expression, come ready to join this interactive workshop where you can learn how to tap into your own creative forms of expression. Learn how music production, songwriting and poetry help build self-worth, resilience and strength. You will be empowered to actively participate in self-care and gain tools from Musician with a Message and success coach SaulPaul, award-winning filmmaker and poet Bianca Neal, and learn about Dr. Raphael Travis' research in the creative arts as a source of health and well-being for individuals and communities.

Day 1 Afternoon Workshop Sessions | 2:05 PM - 3:35 PM

 Meeting Room 1

 Presenter:
[Kendale Brown](#)

CEU

Pushed to Purpose

In the African American community, addiction and mental health issues are stigmatized, but they are so very present. Ms. Brown has been affected by adult mental health, children's mental health, chemical dependency and the criminal justice system. She shares her experience to give hope to others. Removing the stigma, getting to wholeness. These experiences pushed her to her purpose.

 Meeting Room 2

 Presenter:
[Nakeenya Wilson](#)
[Robin Johnson](#)
[Michelle Rountree, PhD](#)
[La'Toya Swan](#)

CEU

Awareness Building: Supporting Black Mothers Experiencing Postpartum Depression

There is a maternal health crisis plaguing Black women. In Texas, Black women are 2.3 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes. Additionally, Black mothers are at an increased risk of being overlooked for assessment and treatment of conditions such as postpartum depression. Black Mamas Community Collective is working to disrupt the cycles of poor health outcomes by providing support through Sister Circles, doula services, and a home visiting program. This session will discuss signs and symptoms of postpartum depression, stigma and barriers surrounding diagnosis and care, and the support and community resources available to mothers and their families.

 Meeting Room 3

 Presenter:
[Billy Dorsey](#)

CEU

In the Right Seat

"In the Right Seat" is a conversation and training tailored to help audiences and organizations identify and live from their own purpose, at the nexus of their proficiencies, their passion and their positioning. After overcoming the trials of homelessness, extreme depression, and suicidal thoughts, Billy Dorsey went on to become an award-winning songwriter and producer, minister and public speaker. Learn how to apply his 3 keys to success and use your experiences to optimize your achievements. You are "In the Right Seat"!

 Meeting Room 5

 Presenter:
[Karen Ranus](#)

Crazy No More: Dispelling the Mental Health Myths That Keep Us Silent

In spite of its high prevalence, with 1 in 5 Americans impacted each year, most people still struggle with talking openly about mental health. We will engage in an interesting look at the flawed myths that keep us silent when addressing mental health. Using a powerful combination of information and storytelling as well as simple tools for engaging in mental health conversations, this presentation breaks down some of the most common mental health myths and challenges for each of us to be a catalyst for change in transforming the way communities talk about and address mental health.

 Meeting Room 1

 Presenter:
Barbara Fountain

CEU

911 – Saving Our Children in Turbulent Times

One would be hard pressed to ignore the shift that has occurred over the past few years in our cities, states, nations and world! We have been immersed in a season of violence, hatred and racism that has shaken many of us to our core. Our children have not escaped these social ills, but are being severely impacted. The result is fear and insecurities with heightened anxiety and depression. The community is responsible for the safety and well-being of our future generation. This workshop provides tools to raise our awareness to effect change.

 Meeting Room 2

 Presenter:
Tracee Black-Fall

CEU

Living Your Best Sandwich Life

The sandwich generation speaks to a generation helping to care for their aging parents or loved one while caring for their own children/grandchildren. Many African Americans may struggle financially while providing care, and are unlikely to utilize formal supports because of the cost. Individuals and families may be overwhelmed and emotionally stressed while living with their own chronic health conditions. This training explores and discusses the impact of culture on this squeezed generation and the importance of self-care. Through a lived experience, Ms. Black-Fall will share important self-care tips to support a healthy and positive journey.

 Meeting Room 3

 Presenter:
Rosalee Martin, PhD

CEU

Where is My Son?

This presentation will be a heart story of the journey of an adult son with mental illness. A Stanford graduate with an amazing future, he changed direction in his late twenties. Now 51, he has not been in contact with his family for years, even though he has been seen by others in the Austin community. Without a formal diagnosis, his behavior has characteristics of bipolar with schizoid tendencies. Even as an LCSW, LCDC and former LPC, attempts to reach him failed. How to hold on to hope while grieving the loss of a son will be shared.

 Exhibit Hall 2

 Presenters:
Ulysses Moore, PhD
Kimberly Holiday

CEU

When Grief Becomes Complicated

The purpose of this workshop is to explore and discuss grief in its simplest to most difficult form – Complicated Grief. We will discuss what good grief is, its signs and symptoms, and when good grief goes bad – complicated grief disorder. At the end of the presentation, the audience should know: What is good grief and what is complicated grief disorder, signs and symptoms of both and what to do about both forms of grief.

 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

 Palmer Events Center
2nd Floor Foyer & Balcony

Reception

Take some time to unwind and visit with others like yourself who are interested in the emotional wellness of African Americans in Central Texas. Please join the Austin Area African American Behavioral Health Network (4ABHN) immediately following the first day of the conference for light hors d'oeuvres and networking.

CEU Continuing Education Unit eligible

*CEU Certificates of Completion will be distributed at the end of each qualified workshop.
To receive your CEUs, you MUST sign-in, complete the workshop evaluation, and stay the whole session.*

Day 2 Morning Workshop Sessions | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

 Meeting Room 1

 Presenters:
William Lawson, MD
Richard Hopkins
Marilyn Poole
Joe Powell 

Reentering from Corrections to the Community

The correctional system has become the largest provider of mental health and substance abuse services in the country in a system in which treatment is not a priority. Diversion programs are often ineffectual in maintaining or restoring linkage to effective therapeutic services. This program will provide vignettes to the impact of the correctional system to the community, identify effective programs, and explore what can be done to improve true rehabilitation and reentry.

 Meeting Room 2

 Presenter:
Altha Stewart, MD


Addressing the Mental Health Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Integrating Policy and Advocacy to Achieve Equity

This workshop will address the lack of understanding of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on mental health and the importance of appropriate policies to address these issues and advocate for changes in treatment systems that promote health equity. Recommendations will be offered on ways to better understand these issues and how to deal with them in order to improve mental health services and reduce negative outcomes for adults and children in the community.

 Meeting Room 3

 Presenters:
Deborah Rosales-Elkins
Lizzie Martinez


Alternative Perspectives in Mental Health: Using Nutrition, Complementary Medicine, and Detoxification to Heal Our Brains

Traditional medical and therapeutic methods have improved over the years, but often they do not completely lessen or eliminate symptoms of mental illness. As a result, many people use complementary and alternative methods to help with recovery. Come hear about some of these approaches that have worked for some people, and please keep in mind that it is critical to check with your doctor before trying any of these approaches.

 Meeting Room 4

 Presenters:
Drew Brooks
Rev. Monteic Sizer, PhD


Building Faith Leader Capacity for Community Prevention and Family Recovery Support Efforts

Research has linked religiosity and spirituality to positive health outcomes. A congregational addiction team ministry, often initiated by community coalitions, agencies, ministerial associations or denominational leadership, has the ability to implement both prevention efforts across the lifespan and addiction recovery support. Faith Partners has trained 1,000 congregational teams in 29 states with 23 different faith traditions. This interactive workshop describes the Faith Partners model that moves faith leaders from rare conversations about behavioral health to active involvement in community prevention and recovery support activities.

 Meeting Room 5

 Presenters:
Sonia Hartman
Monica Reyes
Bertha Rodriguez


Collaboration is Not a Dirty Word

Collaboration is not a dirty word. It's not about "it's their problem" or "what they are not doing" but about how we are working together to serve the children and families that we work with on a daily basis. Collaboration includes not only agencies and community partners but also the families. Presenters will discuss how the Travis County Children's Partnership has effectively collaborated for the past 21 years with juvenile justice, the Local Mental Health Authority, Department of Family and Protective Services, several school districts and the parents we serve.

 Exhibit Hall 2

 Presenter:
Jarret Patton, MD


You Get That Trauma from Yo Momma: Remain Licensed to Live

This workshop is designed for parents, counselors, social workers and family advocates alike. Trauma is experienced in many different ways over the lifetime of a child. However, there is a predisposition to trauma that comes through the parent's lifetime experience. These effects lead to chronic health conditions, poverty, prison and early death. Workshop attendees will learn more about the multi-generational effects of trauma and strategies to stop the cycle.

Poster Presentations

 Presenter:
Whitney Williams

Black Mothers Study: Experiences and Perceptions in Perinatal Care

Black mothers in the U.S. are significantly more likely to suffer obstetric complications. Research has focused on measuring outcomes and investigating the biological roots of the disparities for this population. A qualitative research study was conducted with Black mothers (N = 19) and obstetric providers (N = 10). Themes were defined to understand the experiences of Black women with perinatal care. Major themes included: perception of appointments feeling rushed and without individualized care, dissatisfaction with the academic medicine environment, and more. Advocacy should continue to improve access for low-income mothers and fund pregnancy and disparity education efforts that target Black women.

 Presenter:
Ignatius Mwela

Comedy + Performance Poetry: Tools for Unpacking & Managing Mental Health

COMETRY's approach is using comedy and poetry to talk about really big topics. We use art because people learn and retain information best when they are emotionally attached to topics. Art is the way to anyone's heart. Comedy and performance poetry is the medium we think works best when experiencing breakdowns and looking for breakthroughs. People don't necessarily need MORE information; they need information presented to them in their language. This poster session will address violence (specifically domestic violence) and illustrate how being open or approachable can build human connections in an authentic way.

 Presenter:
kYmberly Keeton

Cultural Competence and Health Care Resources for African American Communities

This poster focuses on understanding the importance of being culturally literate about African American health issues and using resources at the local, regional and national level.

 Presenter:
Icye Walker

The Effects of Absent Mentorship Amongst At-Risk Communities

Lack of mentorship amongst at-risk communities have proven to have adverse effects on the overall development of youth and young adults. At-risk youth and young people are more likely to miss classes, be suspended or expelled from school. These challenges can have effects like homelessness or being the child of a teenage parent. The absence of a consistent, caring adult could mean the difference between a young person thriving as a student or dropping out. We must close this mentoring gap, and ensure all children have the mentoring supports they need to grow, thrive, and succeed.

 Presenters:
Jhana Rice
Tenisha Hunter

Mental Health and Spirituality in the African American Community

Mental health and spiritual tasks are often seen as contradictory within the African American community. In this poster presentation, we will first explore how historical attitudes towards mental health create challenges to African Americans receiving mental health treatment. Next, we will compare and contrast the capabilities of the mental health field and the church to support individuals through life transitions. Finally, we will identify ways that the church and mental health community can mutually support spiritual and emotional health. In short, mental health treatment is not contradictory, but complementary to improving spiritual and emotional well-being within the African American community.

Poster Presentations



Presenters:
Rhonda Franklin-Romar
Flora Releford
Donald Seamster

The Pathway From a Traumatic Heart to an Empowered Purpose

Depression, anxiety and PTSD are some of the major mental illnesses in African American families and communities. African American women with depressive symptoms suffer more chronic conditions such as heart disease. Raising awareness and educating African American families and communities on the signs and symptoms of mental health and heart disease will increase personal responsibility and accountability for making healthy mental and physical behavior changes, and help people navigate greater pathways to empower a brighter future.



Presenter:
Marlie Harris

Perceived Norms, Mental Health Literacy and Internalization of Stigma in African Americans

This poster will detail previous literature focused on the stigmatization of mental health in the Black community and a project proposal for addressing the issue. Previous research has shown that across age ranges, African American students typically endorse more negative attitudes about mental health services than white and Latino students. Causation of these negative attitudes have been linked to lower mental health literacy and perceived norms from peers and family. In the present study, we plan to examine the effects of mental health literacy and perceived norms from family and peers on the internalization of stigma with an online cross-sectional study.



Presenter:
Tammy Hanna

Resilience, Resources & Respect: A Wellness Rx that Works!

This poster will provide understanding for loved ones and inspiration for others to see that living a prosperous life with a mental health diagnosis is possible! Tammy Hanna will share her journey, which began in high school. Negative experiences and not living a fulfilling life were the initial years of her bipolar and anxiety diagnoses. She has been taught RESILIENCE: living a full life despite the obstacles. She will share RESOURCES: Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance, International Bipolar Foundation & WRAP training. Natural remedies, therapy and medication assist in her wellness journey. Finally, RESPECT: self-love, forgiveness of others and advocacy works.



Presenter:
LaQueeta Humes

Respect and Dignity

Everyone is entitled to respect and dignity, no matter what their mental health issues. As a Black woman, I was not afraid to tell my family and friends about what was going on inside my mind and the challenges I was facing. My diagnosis proved to be more than my family and friends could handle. I was thrown away by all the people who claimed to love me. They did not want to deal with the stigma and thought it was just an act. My goal is to teach others how to love their family, friends and patients through this type of challenge.



Presenter:
Maisha Berrett

A Solution to Recidivism (Trauma Responsiveness)

With over 2.3 million individuals incarcerated in the US and another 4.5 million being supervised in the community by a parole or probation agency, 1 in 38 adults are under some form of correctional oversight. These statistics disproportionately affect the African American community. The lack of mental health support services and trauma responsive solutions available to our community is alarming. There are a growing number of programs that address this critical concern. One of those solutions is a curriculum developed by an individual who has personal lived experience with incarceration and trauma.

Awardees

Garnet F. Coleman Eternal Flame Award



Joe Powell, LCDC is in long-term recovery from alcohol and other drugs. He is the Executive Director of the Association of Persons Affected by Addiction (APAA) in Dallas, a recovery community organization for people seeking or in recovery. As a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor, he has served the community for over 20 years. He was appointed by the Governor to the Rehabilitation Council of Texas and is active on the National Institute of Health, Justice Community Opioid Innovative Network Stakeholder board.

The Richard E. Hopkins Torch Awards



Community Impact

Dr. Billy Reese is pastor of the God's Way Christian Baptist Church in Taylor, Texas. He is married to Dollie E. Reese and lives in Pflugerville, Texas. He is the author of [Mental Health Care at Church & Beyond](#). He serves as a community leader and is involved in numerous programs throughout the state. He currently serves on the board of directors for the Pavilion Mental Health Initiative in Round Rock.



Family Member

Teena Gray-Hale was raised by her father who had mental health challenges. When her son was diagnosed with a mental health condition, she quickly jumped into action, working to learn about his condition and help him succeed. She connected with the National Alliance for Mental Illness, where she became a certified volunteer teacher. One of her life purposes is to advocate and help educate others about mental health and make changes to the broken areas of the mental health system.



Individual with Lived Experience

Clarence Watson is the co-founder of "Students With A Purpose". As a teenager and student, Mr. Watson's world was turned upside down when he was racially profiled, arrested, and later introduced to a world of crime. After being incarcerated, he encountered numerous obstacles in completing his education – the worst being his internalizing that he was inferior. Today, he fights to eliminate systemic barriers for others previously incarcerated who are seeking an education.



Professional

Rosalee Martin was raised on welfare in New York City. Her way out was education. Her Christian principles of unconditional acceptance and love, along with her passion to help others led her to dual careers. A Master's in Social Work and teaching 47 years at Huston-Tillotson University have allowed Dr. Martin to assist thousands in achieving their personal and professional goals, what she considers her ultimate fulfillment.

Scholarship Awardees

Austin Area Mental Health Consumers Lodging Scholarship

Larry Collins is better known as Mr. C. – a husband, father, grand/great-grandfather and volunteer at the Joy Community Development Center in Houston, TX for 13 years. He served in the United States Air Force and is now a disabled Veteran. He is a person with lived experience and has been a Peer Supporter and Recovery Coach for 13 years.

The Michele Bibby - Person in Recovery Education Scholarship

Lia Jones is a senior at McCallum High School. She is active in choir and the music ensemble, playing guitar. She is also a member of the Students of Color Alliance and has twice received the Top African American Female Award for highest GPA in her class.

RR Coleman-Calahan Lodging Scholarship

Valisa Clark is a native Austinite, raised in Clarksville, the daughter of Evelyn Eason. Her family moved to East Austin where she attended Reagan High School, now called Northeast Early High school. Her passion is singing gospel and she loves to dance and spend time with family and friends. She is an advocate for women and people with HIV/AIDS. She volunteered at AIDS Services of Austin for many years until her stroke in 2017 left her with physical limitations. She is a survivor of depression and bipolar disorder. Her favorite color is purple, which is a symbol of royalty.

The Wood Group Educational Scholarship

Chantier Johnson is a 26-year-old single mother pursuing her Art of Business Degree online with Southern New Hampshire University. Chantier has been pursuing her degree for nearly a decade. Not having familial support, she suffered her first depressive episode while attending Agnes Scott College in Decatur, GA, which led to her dropping out after her first year. Chantier is now thriving in the online college program, and will obtain her Bachelor's degree in 2022. Chantier is starting her own non-profit catering to adolescent anxiety/depression by providing artistic expression in an after-school program called Dicere (meaning 'to speak' in Latin).

The Wood Group Educational Scholarship

Maceo Sheehy is a part-time online student at Southern New Hampshire University, as well as a part-time server at The Cheesecake Factory. He was born and raised in Anchorage, Alaska and has lived in Texas for almost 11 years. He's honored to be a part of this award ceremony and encourages anyone struggling with anything to keep their head up and keep moving forward.

Presenters

Maisha Barrett began her college degree at Loyola New Orleans and finished at St. Edward's University in Austin. She has spent ten years in the nonprofit sector in fields that address trauma. These include mental health, domestic violence, and sexual violence. Her educational background includes music therapy, psychology, women's studies, and art. She is currently the Training Coordinator at Via Hope.

Tracee Black-Fall is the founder/Executive Director of Tova's N.E.S.T, Inc. She is a graduate cum laude of Columbus State Community College in Applied Science and the Ohio State University John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy Leadership Academy, despite a dim prognosis of recovery from a brain aneurysm. As a Certified Community Health Worker, she assists populations traditionally underserved and fights to eliminate health disparities. Through a spirit of gratitude, she lives her passion every day.

Drew Brooks serves as Executive Director of Faith Partners, a non-profit organization providing leadership and training for congregational addiction team ministries. He has provided ministry leadership most of his life and is in long-term recovery. Mr. Brooks has worked in the prevention, treatment, and public health fields for over 36 years, providing consultation to faith communities, schools and community organizations across the country. He served as Co-Chair of the Austin, Texas Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care Initiative.

Kendale Brown, LPC, LCDC is a trained EMDR Therapist, Certified Life Coach and former teacher. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Monmouth College, an MBA from Olivet Nazarene University, and in 2017, a Master of Arts in Counseling from Dallas Baptist University. Ms. Brown currently works as a Counselor at The Potter's House Center for Counseling and Behavioral Health, where she works with issues such as trauma, addiction, abuse, anxiety, divorce, family, couples conflict, self-esteem, sexuality and shame.

Billy Dorsey is a Grammy, Dove, and Stellar Awards-winning, Billboard chart-topping music producer and songwriter. He is also an international speaker and brand manager. He received the Spirit of Excellence "Overcomer of the Year" Award, for overcoming homelessness to become one of the brightest stars in the music industry. Now, he teaches others how to overcome and find their purpose.

Rhonda Franklin-Romar, formerly Rhonda Douglas, began her recovery journey in 2003. Rhonda has been a proud participant of the CTAAFSC since 2007. She started as a volunteer and has served on the Outreach and Planning Committee, as a moderator, spokesperson, award recipient and presenter. She has chosen to create a defining moment to share thoughts from past presentations as well as give conference attendees the opportunity to dialogue about past presenters and personal experiences.

Carlita Fielder began public speaking and travelling throughout the United States competing in speech and debate tournaments in high school. Her passion is creating slam poems and prose to express biblical interpretation from scripture. (Entertainment)

Barbara Fountain, LPC is the founder of Lifeline Family Enrichment Counseling Services in Austin. She has over 17 years of experience serving children and families, including 13 years in advocacy and awareness for children's mental health services and 11 years in private practice. She is passionate about providing education to remove stigma associated with mental illness.

Tammy Hanna earned a Bachelor's of Social Work from Prairie View A&M University. She has close to 25 years of experience working or volunteering in social services. Education is her greatest interest. Her experience ranges from elementary to high school, as a Special Education Coordinator to Special Education and General Education Teacher. Her greatest passion is working with individuals who have not had the opportunity to tap into their true abilities, assisting them to feel empowered to reach life goals.

Presenters

Marlie Harris is from Duncanville, TX. She is a junior studying Human Development and Family Sciences at UT Austin. She is a McNair scholar with research interests in multicultural psychology and human sexuality. She is the current president of the UT Austin chapter of the Association of Black Psychologists. Her future intention is to get her PhD in Counseling Psychology.

Sonia Hartman is employed at Travis County Health & Human Services as the Social Services Program Administrator for The Children's Partnership and System of Care Initiatives. She has 29 years of experience working with juvenile justice, children's mental and behavioral health, and as a trainer of System of Care and Wraparound. She is dedicated to working, advocating, educating and collaborating for the children and families in Travis County.

Jacki Hecht, RN, MSN, CHWI is the Managing Director for the AMEN project at the University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing. She has dedicated her career to community-based research and has helped to design, deliver and evaluate motivational interventions to promote health behavior change in numerous populations. Ms. Hecht has also delivered hundreds of Motivational Interviewing training and coaching workshops to lay and professional healthcare workers.

Ray Hendricks, Pastor, CEO works diligently throughout the Austin community. He is the Pastor of Rehoboth Baptist Church and CEO of the non-profit Rebuilding Broken Communities. He focuses on evangelizing, educating and empowering others. He is committed to repairing the brokenness in families and individuals and has held various positions in the following organizations: Austin African American Firefighters Association, St. John's Neighborhood Association, Austin Disproportionality Advisory Committee and Texas CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates).

Kimberly Holiday, known to most as LadyJoy, is a DJ at KAZI and a motivational speaker across the country. She has a heart to serve others by modeling the potential to live with joy regardless of life's circumstances. She is active in the community and lives her life transparent, using only her smile as her logo and marketing #Gotjoy as her brand. She received her BA in Social Psychology from Park University.

Richard Hopkins, is a longtime conference supporter and past Vice-Chair of the Integral Care Board of Trustees. He fights for the rights of people living with mental health issues. Mr. Hopkins served in key roles during his tenure with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services. He currently serves as lead deacon and treasurer for Austin Agape Ministries Inc. and is serving temporarily as Assistant Technology Consultant and Director of Assistive Technology with New Life Medical.

Rev. Daryl Horton MDiv, MATS, BS is a native Austinite and Youth Pastor/Assistant Pastor at Mt. Zion Baptist Church. He is engaged in the health community through organizations like the Michael and Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living Community Collaborative. He is a leader of diverse organizations in the faith community and a doctoral student at Texas Christian University.

LaQueeta Humes has a lived experience of family violence, PTSD and postpartum depression. She has faced homelessness twice this year. Ms. Humes lives every day in faith, strength and recovery. She is a proud mother of a 14-month-old beautiful daughter.

Tenisha Hunter, LMSW is a Licensed Master Social Worker at Ascension Seton Behavioral Health who provides resources for the mental health community. Tenisha has led outpatient group therapy and provided inpatient, residential and partial hospitalization care to individuals suffering with mood and personality disorders. Tenisha enjoys serving the geriatric community and providing Dialectical Behavioral Therapy to those in need.

Robin Johnson, LMSW is Board Secretary of Black Mamas Community Collective and is a local therapist who specializes in trauma and working with veterans, children and families. Before transitioning to private practice, Ms. Johnson worked at The Samaritan Center as a Hope for Heroes therapist. She is trained in Trauma Based Relational Intervention, EMDR and Cognitive Process Therapy. Ms. Johnson has served in the military for 13 years, is the mother of one daughter and expecting a second child this spring.

Presenters

kYmberly Keeton is a native Texan, a nationally published writer, an art librarian and genealogy curator. By day, she is the African American Community Archivist & Librarian at the Austin History Center, Austin Public Library. Independently, Keeton is the Founder and Chief Thought Eradicator of Bookista Media Group, a creative multimedia production company. The creative mixologist can be seen on the regular with her dog, Roxy Blue. And if nothing else, kYmberly is always taking time to read books, write books and design the next.

William Lawson, MD is the Medical Director of the Urgent Care Center at the D.C. Superior Court. He is currently Adjunct Professor at both George Washington University and University of Maryland. Dr. Lawson is former Assistant to the Dean at the University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical School and former Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Howard University as well as Editor in Chief of the Journal of the National Medical Association.

Rosalee Martin, LCSW, LCDC, PhD is a professor at Huston-Tillotson University. Her workshops, conducted at schools and agencies in the U.S. and abroad, include ethics, ethnic/cultural/sexual diversities, HIV/AIDS and parenting. At past Central Texas African American Family Support Conferences, Dr. Martin presented professional workshops, but for this conference will tell the story of her journey with her mentally health-challenged son.

Lizzie Martinez, MA, MHom, CCH is a board-certified homeopath and functional medicine practitioner. She specializes in treating mood disorders, auto-immune disease, chronic infections, and complex illnesses. She treats children, teens and adults in private practice at the East-West Family Health Center in Austin, Texas. You can learn more about her practice and methods at: www.lizziemartinez.com.

Jacqueline Miller has worked within the social work industry as a counselor advocate and trainer for the past 28 years. She holds a certification in Financial Social Work. Since 2017, Ms. Miller has traveled the nation, utilizing research studies and her lived experience to address adultification on African American children.

Ulysses Moore, PhD, MEd, LPC is a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with the Department of Veteran Affairs and operates a private practice as a Licensed Professional Counselor. He is owner of The Hope Project of Central Texas, which provides community living supports and training to youth and families dealing with psychological disabilities. His proudest accomplishment is being a retired First Sergeant of the US Army, with more than 28 years of service.

Ignatius Mwela is co-founder of COMETRY, which blends comedy and poetry. COMETRY uses art to unpack tough subjects, such as social, mental, and emotional health, diversity appreciation, confidence and leadership skills. Mr. Mwela has traveled the nation for 11 years presenting at high schools, universities and conferences. COMETRY's biggest stages have been SXSW-Edu, TEDx, FCCLA Nationals and more. Our passion is teaching & inspiring; our chalkboard just happens to be a stage!

Bianca Neal is an award-winning artist who tells stories through film, spoken word and the written word. With 15+ years of experience in the arts and entertainment industry, Bianca has played an integral role in several education, community public art and cultural arts initiatives throughout the country. She empowers people to tell their stories to enrich and energize them personally and professionally.

Elliott Niblack is a PreK-12 antiracism educator. Specializing in racial awareness, social emotional learning and responsive practices, he provides consulting for organizations working with youth from racially marginalized communities. His partnerships include Austin Independent School District, KIPP Charter Schools, The Boys and Girls Club, MEASURE and the Texas Empowerment Academy. His podcast, *Teachers Lounging*, can be found on popular media platforms.

Jarret "Doctor Jarret" Patton, MD has served thousands of children in eastern Pennsylvania for nearly 20 years. Throughout his career as a pediatrician and a top hospital executive, he has remained an advocate for children's health issues. He is an award-winning author of [Licensed to Live](#) and [Whose Bad @\\$\\$ Kids Are Those?](#) He is the founder and CEO of Doctor Jarret, PLLC, a coaching and consulting firm, which helps educate, enlighten and improve healthcare.

Presenters

Marilyn Poole is a local attorney who also holds degrees in psychology and sociology. A native Austinite and mother of four, she is concerned about developments within our community that impact the well-being of our youth, because good mental health begins with both a positive self-image and a proper assessment of ability and possibilities. She spends much of her time as director of The Children’s Haven Association, a 70-plus-year-old East Austin-based non-profit. She is most proud of her family’s nearly 100-year connection to Ebenezer Baptist Church.

Joe Powell, LCDC is in long-term recovery with 30 years free of alcohol and other drugs. He is the Executive Director of the Association of Persons Affected by Addiction (APAA) in Dallas, a recovery community organization for people seeking or in recovery. As a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor, he has served the community for over 20 years.

Karen Ranus is the Executive Director of the Central Texas affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). She has developed and implemented numerous mental health programs to address the needs of faith communities, law enforcement, workplaces and parents of teens and believes in the power of storytelling to engage people in important mental health conversations.

Flora Releford is personable, tenacious and highly motivating with over three dedicated decades in the health and wellness profession. She has a passion for sharing her knowledge, experiential wisdom, and education in emotional wellness, heart disease, stroke prevention, whole health, and healing arts to support others in a conscious transformation from mental, physical, emotional or artistic blocks by releasing trauma through a variety of traditional and alternative healing modalities.

Monica Reyes has been employed at Travis County Health and Human Services as a Parent Liaison/Certified Family Partner for 15 years. She has utilized the Systems of Care’s philosophy and Wraparound process to support families and community partners in creating a family driven, culturally component and community-based plan of care. As a parent liaison, she provides advocacy, mental health education, crisis support, community resource linkage and parent-to-parent support.

Jhana Rice, LPC, LCDC-I is a Licensed Professional Counselor at Ascension Seton Behavioral Health who leads intensive outpatient group therapy. Before counseling, Ms. Rice spent several years in the military and seminary. After completing degrees in Counseling and Biblical Studies, she now provides therapy in community mental health settings to adults who struggle with trauma, mood disorders and substance use.

Bertha Rodriguez is employed at Travis County Health and Human Services as a Parent Liaison/Certified Family Partner. She utilizes her lived experience to partner with families and provide them with education, advocacy, linkage and support. She ensures that family voice and choice is heard and adhered to, as she works across systems with families. She empowers them to use their voice, collaborate and advocate for their families.

Deborah Rosales-Elkins, MA is the Peer Support Specialist at Integral Care’s Mood Treatment Center and UT Dell Med Bipolar Specialty Clinic. In 2016, she was the Hogg Foundation Peer Policy Fellow at NAMI Texas. Previously, Ms. Rosales-Elkins has held a wide range of positions, including program coordinator and trainer for the Children’s Mental Health Partnership and clinic manager for Planned Parenthood. She has a BS in Human Services and an MA in Human Development from the University of Saint Mary’s in Minnesota.

Michele Rountree, PhD is an Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin Steve Hicks School of Social Work. Dr. Rountree has created an interconnected body of research, teaching, leadership and service that focuses on health promotion and health equity. The focus of her research is on the wellness of marginalized communities, particularly of Black women. She seeks to address health disparities by developing and testing prevention interventions and understanding the impact structural determinants have on health outcomes.

SaulPaul is a Musician with a Message. In 2017, he was named Austinite of the Year. In 2018, he was honored to have two hit singles climb the charts and become #1 songs on Sirius XM radio. SaulPaul has shared his story and his music at two TEDx talks, *America’s Got Talent*, as well as the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts.

Presenters

Starla Simmons, LCSW is a Clinical Assistant Professor and Field Liaison at the University of Texas at Austin Steve Hicks School of Social Work. She is strongly rooted in social justice and racial equity, with a passion for supporting the vitality and resilience of communities of color. Ms. Simmons has over a decade of experience working as a school social worker, providing a range of direct care services to students, families and staff.

Rev. Monteic A. Sizer, PhD serves as Executive Director of Northeast Delta Human Services Authority (NEDHSA). Rev. Dr. Sizer's expertise enables him to speak practically about relevant policies, procedures and programs needed to help advance causes on behalf of the poor, working-class and related vulnerable Americans. Rev. Dr. Sizer is also a thought leader in the areas of behavioral and primary healthcare integration and faith-based community change strategies.

Altha J. Stewart, MD is Senior Associate Dean and Director of the Center for Health in Justice Involved Youth at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, TN. In 2018, she became the 145th President of the American Psychiatric Association, the first African American elected to this position.

La'Toya Swan, BS, CHES, CHWI serves as a Black Mamas Community Collective (BMCC) board member and participates often on BMCC's panel presentations about her afterbirth experiences with postpartum depression. Professionally, Ms. Swan has a rich background in HIV/AIDS education/advocacy and continues to grow her career in grassroots initiatives in the Austin area. Ms. Swan is the mom of two boys and is deeply committed to Black mothers and their infants, social change and community empowerment.

Paul Toviessi, LPC, LCDC received his Master's from Amberton University in 2017. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor. Mr. Toviessi is a generalist-trained clinician who is open to working with different populations and issues. However, his specialty areas include at-risk African American males, juvenile offenders, individuals struggling with substance abuse and suicidal ideation.

Raphael Travis, Jr., DrPH, LCSW is an Associate Professor and Bachelor of Social Work Program Director at Texas State University School of Social Work. Dr. Travis' research, practice and consultancy work emphasize healthy development over the life-course, resilience and civic engagement. Author of the book, [The Healing Power of Hip Hop](#), he also investigates creative arts as a source of health and well-being for individuals and communities.

Icy Walker is a graduate of Huston-Tillotson University. For the last 7 years, she has brought programs and events to youth and young adults by way of GrowThru, a mentoring organization dedicated to empowering youth and young adults to develop social/emotional competencies. Her work is concentrated on inspiring communities to develop strong networks through mentorship and entrepreneurial collaboration.

Nell Watts (a.k.a. Gangster Granny) is a former public school teacher. Her raps reflect her challenges managing life HIV+ for 23 years. Stigma and shame isolate many women, so her salutation to all is "Hello, my beauty queen." (Entertainment)

Nakeenya Wilson, MA is the Executive Director of Black Mamas Community Collective (BMCC), a local non-profit whose mission is to keep Black women from dying before, during and after childbirth in the 5-county Austin region. Ms. Wilson advocates for the improvement of Black maternal health within health care, legislation and community education. Ms. Wilson knows first-hand the importance of BMCC's work, having received vital pregnancy and postpartum doula services and support after being diagnosed with postpartum anxiety and depression.

Eileen "Sugar" Williams is a native Texan, established songwriter and vocalist with gospel roots. She wrote "Here We Are" by A Touch of Class, and the lyrics to "Take Care of Your Bitness." (Entertainment)

Whitney Williams is a fourth-year medical student and member of the inaugural class at UT Austin Dell Medical School. Originally from Upstate NY, she graduated with a B.S. in Biology from Davidson College. She was then exposed to social aspects of medicine through a non-profit fellowship in Asheville, NC. Scholarly interests include health inequities and maternal mortality.

Event Recap



In celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Central Texas African American Family Support Conference, the first-ever youth-focused pre-event was held at St. Edward's University on Saturday, February 8, 2020. Yes to BEST!, a mental health and wellness summit, was created for youth and young adults ages 14 to 24. The goal – develop and learn skills to live Beyond our Emotional Stressors and Trauma.

The day was filled with music, food and workshops that addressed leading topics around emotional and social wellness. Activities were designed to build personal skills to strengthen mind, body and spirit. Interactive sessions focused on mental health, depression, body image, loss and grief, the school to prison pipeline and much more. Inspirational speakers – Dr. Jinneh Dyson, award-winning mental health advocate and best-selling author, Fabian Wood, Sr., mental health advocate and founder of The D. Wood Foundation, and Dr. Nicole Cross, local TV personality and psychotherapist – shared their knowledge and insight with attendees. Four non-profit organizations who offer mental health education, awareness, resources, and support for youth, were announced as awardees of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health's Central Texas African American Healthy Minds project. The event also included exhibitors who shared information and local resources.

A special thank you to our sponsors who helped make Yes To BEST! possible. Because of their support, the event was free to the community. Thank you Austin Area African American Behavioral Health Network, Central Texas African American Family Support Conference, D. Wood Foundation, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, Integral Care, Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, and You're Not Alone (Y.N.A.) Fellowship.

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Exhibitors

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AIISD: Parent Engagement Support Office
Alliance for African American Health in Central Texas
Alzheimer's Association Capital of Texas
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Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area
Ascension Seton
Austin Area Urban League
Austin Public Health
Austin Recovery
Black Mamas Community Collective
Caritas of Austin
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Foundation For a Drug Free World
Georgetown Behavioral Health Institute
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Integral Care
Integral Care Foundation
Brian Joseph, Commemorative Artist
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