



# CMGMH CONNECTION



*2014 Latino Mental Health Program's Fiesta:  
A celebration of cultural diversity, community connections and networking*

## In This Issue

- Summer Immersion Program Highlights: Ecuador 2016
- Student Spotlight: Krizia Vinck
- A Wealth of Holidays Reflecting a Multicultural World by Jodie Kliman, Ph.D.
- Upcoming Events and Conferences
- Resources: Addressing Concerns Following the Election
- Current Events Corner
- Reporting Harassment and Hate Crimes to the Massachusetts Attorney General

## ***Looking Towards the Future: A Call for Compassion, Healing, and Hope***

It has been a difficult and trying year. The end of a long and emotionally-charged election and the recurring news of numerous natural disasters and incidents of violence across the nation and around the globe have left many people feeling confused and overwhelmed. As practitioners, educators, advocates, students and concerned citizens, there is a need to use the end of the calendar year as a time for reflection and as an opportunity to remain optimistic about the future.

In a correspondence to the William James College community, President Nicholas Covino reminded us that as "professionals [we] have an obligation to those with whom we work." Dr. Covino remarked, "Many marginalized people have heard: 'you don't belong here' or that 'you are the problem' and that policy changes will be coming that will be threatening to their family, their safety and their livelihood... For some, the issues raised in the last 18 months scratched at old wounds and make the future worrisome and uncertain... For some, this new administration holds great hope. You may see things differently, but diversity means listening with respect to those with a different point of view and endeavoring to find their truth."

As mental health professionals, we can positively contribute to communities in need of support in times of difficulty and uncertainty. "Our choice of profession requires us to turn to what needs healing," said Dr. Covino. "Use your talents and your energy to build bridges. Use your community... for support in your efforts." It is in that spirit that the Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health encourages on-going dialogues that can promote understanding, foster greater compassion for one another, and strengthen our resolve to appreciate and celebrate diversity. We wish everyone a joyous holiday season and a peaceful New Year!



# Summer Immersion Program Highlights - Ecuador 2016



The Latino Mental Health Program (LMHP) at William James College (WJC) was founded in the memory of Dr. Cynthia Lucero, a graduate of WJC. Each summer, LMHP students and faculty members travel to Ecuador for a month-long summer immersion experience.

In the summer of 2016, a team of nine LMHP students received a warm welcome from Dr. Lucero's parents upon their arrival. "Having the opportunity to connect with Mr. and Mrs. Lucero in the city they call home was remarkable," said Cassandra Guercia, a 2nd year Clinical PsyD student. "The passion they have to continue the mission of their beloved daughter, Cynthia, is so powerful, and experiencing this firsthand reminded me why I chose to be in LMHP."



**Eight WJC students** (Natalia Sofia Alves, Estefania Diaz Berrios, Cassandra Guercia, Lynwood McCassie, Michelle Michaels, Yayci Patino, Daniela Perez, Anita Tapia), **one faculty member** (Dr. Paola Michelle Contreras), and **one student TA** (Joselyn Rondón) participated in the 2016 Ecuador Service Learning & Cultural Immersion Program.

During the summer immersion program, students stayed with host families in the community, took Spanish classes to increase their level of Spanish language fluency, and worked at field placement sites that served Latino patients.



Supervised by local psychologists, WJC students conducted clinical rotations at three sites. They worked with families affected by HIV at Fundación VIHDA, collaborated with educational psychologists at Colegio Mercantil (a K-12 private school), and worked with Clinical Psychologists and Psychology interns to provide services to mothers and their newborns at Hospital Gineco-Obstétrico Enrique C. Sotomayor, one of the largest maternity hospitals in Latin America.

*Story continued onto the next page.*





In addition to their clinical rotations, the LMHP team participated in disaster relief efforts in response to the earthquake that devastated the Manabí region in April 2016. Dr. Paola Michelle Contreras, a faculty member in the Counseling Department at WJC, delivered a conference at the Universidad de Guayaquil on vicarious trauma and its impact on first responders. A workshop was conducted on the evaluation of sexual abuse in a post-disaster setting. LMHP students worked with Fábricas de Inteligencia, in collaboration with Plan International and 40 local volunteers, to provide psychoeducational and resilience building interventions to over 2,000 children affected by the earthquake.

"Working with families in Manta truly helped me understand what it means to be immersed in the Latino culture," explained Natalie Sofia Alves, a 2nd year student in the Counseling Department. "Seeing the resiliency of people who lost so much and still managed to be so happy, united, and hopeful, inspired me. This was an emotional experience for which I will forever be grateful."

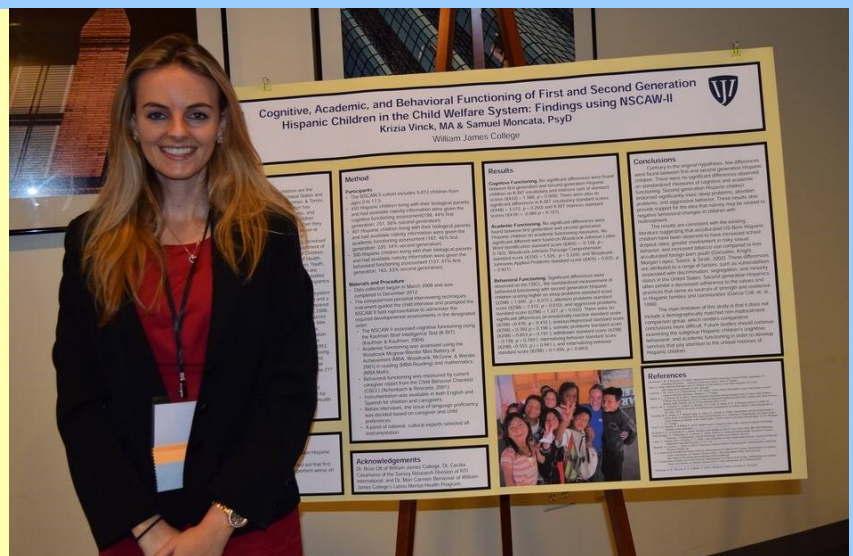
LMHP students will travel to Ecuador again in August 2017 to increase their cultural competency when addressing the unique needs of Latino patients. "Looking back at my experience in Ecuador," reflected Daniela Perez, a 2nd year student in the Clinical PsyD Program, "I feel grateful to have had an opportunity where I felt immersed in a culture, felt welcomed by its people, and also created memories that will last me a lifetime."

Immersion programs are an important component of concentrations offered through the Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health.

**To learn more about CMGMH concentrations and cultural immersion programs, visit [www.williamjames.edu/cmgmh](http://www.williamjames.edu/cmgmh) or email [cmgmh@williamjames.edu](mailto:cmgmh@williamjames.edu).**

## Student Spotlight: Krizia Vinck

Krizia Vinck, a 4th year student in the Clinical PsyD Program and LMHP, was recognized at the Massachusetts Psychological Association's (MPA) annual meeting. Her poster, entitled *Drawing Data from the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being II (NSCAW-II)*, was selected as one of the top three best student posters by MPA. "This study explored the differences between the cognitive, academic, and behavioral functioning of U.S. and foreign-born Hispanic children with histories of maltreatment," Vinck explained. "We found no significant differences in cognitive and academic functioning between the two groups. However, U.S.-born children experienced significantly more sleep problems, attention problems, and aggression problems than foreign-born Hispanic children. It was an honor to be recognized by the Massachusetts Psychological Association."



# A Wealth of Holidays Reflecting a Multicultural World

Jodie Kliman, Ph.D.

## Major Holidays of the World Religions

With the American secular holiday of Thanksgiving, which is a day of mourning for many Native Americans, past and Christmas approaching, it may seem “natural” to many that “the holiday season” begins now. The holiest days of the world’s religions, however, happen all year. Christmas, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, the savior of Christians (and a major prophet in Islam) just over 2,100 years ago, comes on Dec. 25th for Protestants and Catholics but Eastern Orthodox Christian churches celebrate Christmas on Jan. 7th. Many Latino and Caribbean Christians celebrate Three Kings Day (*Día de los Reyes Magos*) and the Epiphany, when Jesus’ birth was revealed, on Jan. 6th.

Central to Islam’s lunar calendar is the holy month of *Ramadan*, with daily cycle of dawn-to-dusk fasting, prayer, charity, contemplation, and nightly feasting with loved ones to celebrate the Prophet Mohammad receiving Islam’s holy text, the *Q’uran*. If possible, Muslims make *Hajj*, a pilgrimage to Mecca, during *Ramadan*, once in a lifetime. *Ramadan* occurs anywhere from late May until October; it starts on May 26, 2017. (Please respect your Muslim classmates and co-workers who fast during the summer; fasting is hardest on long summer days.) *Ramadan* ends with *Eid al-Fitr*, June 25th, soon followed by *Eid al-Adha*, the feast of the Sacrifice (celebrating Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his elder son, Ishmael). Islam, Arabic for “submission to God’s will,” is 1,400 years old.

***With the American secular holiday of Thanksgiving, which is a day of mourning for many Native Americans, past and Christmas approaching, it may seem “natural” to many that “the holiday season” begins now. The holiest days of the world’s religions, however, happen all year.***

Jews begin their lunar calendar with *Rosh Hashana*, the 5,777<sup>th</sup> New Year (though Judaism goes back over 3,000 years) in early to mid-fall. It marks the creation of the world and begins the ten Days of Awe, when Jews reflect, atone, and strive to better their relationships with God and others, and heal the world. The Days of Awe culminate in Jews’ holiest day, *Yom Kippur*, a time to fast, atone for personal and collective sins toward God and people, try to forgive others, and remember the dead. Three holidays follow over the next 12 days. Sukkoth is a harvest festival, *Shmini Atzeret* is the eighth day of Sukkoth and a day of remembrance, and *Simchat Torah* celebrates *Torah* (the first five books of the Jewish *Bible*). Spring holidays include Purim and Passover, celebrating Jews’ escape from massacre in ancient Persia and from slavery in Egypt, respectively, and Shavuot, celebrating Moses’ receiving *Torah*. Jewish holidays, like Muslim ones, begin on sundown the day before the Gregorian calendar says they do.

Some important holidays among many in the Hindu lunar cycle include *Vaikunta Ekadashi* (Jan. 8, 2017), a fast day honoring the god Vishnu, offering the possibility of escape from the cycle of future reincarnations. On Jan. 14, 2017 is *Makar Sankranti* or *Pongal*, which celebrates the sun-god’s entrance into the northern hemisphere and the elephant god Ganesha and the goddess Parvati. *Janmashstami* celebrates the god, Lord Shiva’s birth. *Diwali*, a fall five-day festival of light, celebrates light’s triumph over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. Hinduism is 4,000-5,000 years old.

*Story continued onto the next page.*

The most important Buddhist holiday of the year, *Vesak*, or *Visakah Puja*, commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha (born Prince Siddharta Gautama) who founded Buddhism some 2600 years ago. Other major holidays include *Sangha* Day or the Fourfold Assembly, commemorating the Buddha's visit to a monastery where 1,250 *arhats* (worthy ones) came to pay him respect, and *Dhamma* Day, when the Buddha first gave a sermon. *Ulammbana* (Ancestor Day) is a day for praying for the souls of one's ancestors. In some Buddhist cultures, ghosts of the dead visit the living during this 15-day period (much as for some indigenous peoples of Latin America on *el Día de los Muertos* or the day of the dead). The Buddhist New Year is a major holiday as well.

## New Year Celebrations in Many World Traditions

Both Christmas and the New Year are historically tied to northern hemisphere pagan solstice celebrations such as Saturnalia, celebrating the lengthening days that the winter solstice promises. The New Year begins on Jan. 1st in the Gregorian Calendar, but on Jan. 14th or 15th (in the Gregorian Calendar) for Eastern Orthodox churches, which follow two versions of the Julian Calendar. In 1966, African Americans began observing *Kwanzaa* from Dec. 26th-Jan 1st, a secular celebration of family, culture and community.

Some other lunar calendar celebrations of the New Year come later in winter. Some have spiritual meaning and others are more cultural. *Mayahana* Buddhists celebrate the New Year in China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Tibet on Jan. 14, 2017, honoring ancestors and the Buddhist deities and striving to improve spiritually. In some countries, it involves great celebration, though in the Zen tradition, solemn contemplation prevails. *Theravedan* Buddhists celebrate later: The Vietnamese *Tet* is from Jan. 27th-Feb 1st. The Thai New Year or Water Festival, *Songkran*, is April 13-15, 2017. Once a celebration of elders and ancestors when people venerated the Buddha, sprinkled water on monks and elders for good fortune, and sought monks' blessings, it now involves secular water parades with splashing of family and strangers alike. Chinese New Year (happy 4714, year of the rooster!), in Spring Festival Golden Week, is from Jan. 27 to Feb. 2, 2017, followed by the Lantern Festival (Feb. 11th) and *Zhonghe* Festival (Feb. 27th), a dynastic festival.

Hindu celebrations of the new year varies even more than Buddhist observances, from December 31st into spring, summer, and fall, depending on the stream of Hinduism and the country where the new year is celebrated. The Muslim new year also comes in fall, as does the Jewish new year, *Rosh Hashana*.

**For more information on world religions' holidays, see:**  
<https://diversity.umn.edu/eoaa/religiouscalendar20162017>

**For world population by religion, see:**  
<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/>

**For religious populations in the US, see:**  
<http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/>

*This overview of religious holidays attempts to honor the wealth of beliefs and religious and cultural observances observed by members of our WJC community, some of which are little-known outside their religious communities. The author apologizes for and requests corrections of any omissions and errors.*

Jodie Kliman, Ph.D. is a faculty member in the Clinical Psychology Program at WJC and CMGMH. Dr. Kliman is a social-clinical psychologist and family therapist who has a private practice in Brookline, MA. She may be contacted at [Jodie\\_Kliman@williamjames.edu](mailto:Jodie_Kliman@williamjames.edu).





## Upcoming Events & Conferences

- December 5: **Implications of Islamophobia: Its Impact Beyond the Muslim Community and How the Narrative is Being Changed**, 6:30PM-8PM, Room 335/336 at WJC. Free and open to the public but pre-registration is required. Email [cmgmh@williamjames.edu](mailto:cmgmh@williamjames.edu) or pre-register at <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=66tpz8bab&oeidk=a07edfy7mcq3a86793f>. For a list of all CMGMH events, [visit our website](#).
- December 9: **Trauma in the Village: A Boston Regional Gathering**. Hosted by COSEBOC and CPLAN. 9:30AM-4:30PM. Find cost and registration information at <http://www.coseboc.org/event/boston-regional-gathering-trauma-village>
- December 10: **Healing the Village: A Gathering for Parents and Families in the Greater Boston Area**. Hosted by COSEBOC and CPLAN. 10AM-4:30PM. The event is free but pre-registration is required ([healingthevillage@gmail.com](mailto:healingthevillage@gmail.com)). <http://www.coseboc.org/event/healing-village-gathering-parents-and-families-greater-boston-area>
- December 12: **"13th: From Slave to Criminal in One Amendment."** Film screening at WJC. 7PM. Co-sponsored by BMHGA, ALANAA, and the Dean of Students.
- January 16 (submission deadline): The Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing at Northwestern University and Center on Halsted is seeking submissions for the **5th Annual National LGBTQ Health Conference**, April 28-30, 2017 in Chicago. For more information, visit <http://isgmh.northwestern.edu/conference/#.WD8aGLIrKUK>

## Resources: Addressing Concerns Following the Election

- Anne & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago's Center for Childhood Resilience and Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition. **"Preliminary Messaging to Raise Awareness about the Significant Impact of the Presidential Election on Youth Health and Well-Being"**.
- In English: <http://files.constantcontact.com/dbfc7977001/4cd76665-963b-4d11-a376-2929792dee85.pdf>  
In Spanish: <http://files.constantcontact.com/dbfc7977001/00c16aca-a15b-496e-878c-1e09bc2dc26b.pdf>
- **Lambda Legal**: Mission is to achieve full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people through impact litigation, education, and public policy work: <http://www.lambdalegal.org/issues/transgender-rights>
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). **"Immigrants' Rights FAQs" (English and Spanish)**: [http://www.maldef.org/news/releases/2016\\_11\\_14\\_Immigrant\\_Rights\\_FAQs\\_Under\\_A\\_Trump\\_Presidency/](http://www.maldef.org/news/releases/2016_11_14_Immigrant_Rights_FAQs_Under_A_Trump_Presidency/)
- **National Immigrant Justice Center**: Dedicated to ensuring human rights protections and access to justice for all immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers: <http://www.immigrantjustice.org/>
- **Teaching Tolerance**, A Project by the Southern Poverty Law Center, **"The Day After"**: <http://www.tolerance.org/blog/day-after>

# Current Events Corner

## Mental Health in the News

- **“Where even nightmares are classified: Psychiatric Care at Guantánamo.”** NYT. Secrecy, mistrust and the shadow of interrogation at the American prison limited doctors’ ability to treat mental illness among detainees. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/13/world/guantanamo-bay-doctors-abuse.html?rref=collection%2Ftime%2Fmental%20health%20and%20disorders>
- **“Therapists see rise in election-related anxiety.”** Boston Herald. WJC professor, Dr. Jodie Kliman, expresses how election-related stress extends to children. [http://www.bostonherald.com/news/local\\_coverage/2016/11/therapists\\_see\\_rise\\_in\\_election\\_related\\_anxiety](http://www.bostonherald.com/news/local_coverage/2016/11/therapists_see_rise_in_election_related_anxiety)
- **“Can poverty lead to mental illness.”** NPR. High levels of stress and violence associated with poverty are believed to contribute to mental illness. <http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/10/30/499777541/can-poverty-lead-to-mental-illness>
- **“\$6.3 Billion Measure Aims to Cure Ailing Health Care Policies.”** NYT. Congress will vote this week on a measure that is the product of years of debate over health care policy issues, including the unwieldy mental health care system and opioid abuse. <http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/10/30/499777541/can-poverty-lead-to-mental-illness>



*Members of the Black Mental Health Graduate Academy (BMHGA) celebrating “Friendsgiving” on Sunday, November 20th.*

*For more information about BMHGA, visit <http://www.williamjames.edu/academics/centers-of-excellence/multicultural-and-global-mental-health/black-mental-health->*

## Reporting Harassment and Hate Crimes to the Massachusetts Attorney General

Attorney General Maura Healey’s office has launched a new hotline for Massachusetts residents to report incidents of harassment and intimidation of racial, ethnic and religious minorities, women, LGBTQ individuals and immigrants. Any Massachusetts resident who has witnessed or experienced bias-motivated threats, harassment or violence may call the **Attorney General’s Hotline at 1-800-994-3228** or fill out a civil rights complaint form:

<http://www.mass.gov/ago/consumer-resources/your-rights/civil-rights/civil-rights-complaint.html>

Residents may also contact the Attorney General’s Office through its social media platforms:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MassAttorneyGeneral/>

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/MassAGO?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/MassAGO?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)

Potential hate crimes - including bias-motivated assault, battery, and property damage - should be reported to the local police and residents who fear for their immediate safety should call 911. For more information, visit the Attorney General’s Office website:

<http://www.mass.gov/ago/consumer-resources/your-rights/civil-rights/hate-crimes.html>