



CMGMH CONNECTION

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2018

WJC Received \$100,000 in Scholarship Funds From Hearst Foundations!

William James College (WJC) has been awarded \$100,000 by the Hearst Foundations in support of the *Serving the Mental Health Needs of the Underserved* scholarship program. Established in 2017 under the auspices of the Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health, the scholarship program aims to recruit, train and mentor graduate students committed to pursuing careers in which they provide culturally informed mental health or organizational wellness services to historically underserved communities. The highly competitive scholarship covers 2/3 of tuition costs and recognizes the achievements and promise of students who are seeking Master's, Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies or Doctor of Psychology degrees at WJC.



The Hearst Foundations award will provide partial financial support for the 2018-2019 **scholarship awardees—Regina Banks, Presceia Olivia Cooper, Emily Crain, Christopher Rosales, and Jessica Sharp**—who were selected based on a

combination of academic achievements, volunteer and community service to underserved groups, demonstrable commitment to social justice and advocacy, leadership skills and financial needs. As CMGMH Fellows, they will actively engage in mentoring, community service, social-cultural and professional development initiatives at WJC.

The Hearst Foundations are national philanthropic resources for organizations working in the fields of culture, education, health and social services. The Foundations “*identify and fund outstanding nonprofits to ensure that people of all backgrounds in the United States have the opportunity to build healthy, productive and inspiring lives.*” To read more about the Hearst Foundations grant announcement, click [here](#).

To learn more about the WJC scholarship program, click [here](#).

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Suicide: A Public Health Crisis

By Rose Cheyette & Allison Newman
Samaritans, Inc.

As the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, suicide is a major public health crisis. Each year, nearly 45,000 people die by suicide in this country, with more than 1.2 million attempts nationwide. In Massachusetts alone, more than 600 people die by suicide each year. Suicidal feelings are complex, and there is rarely just one event or isolated incident that leads to an attempt. Individuals who are feeling suicidal may be coping with depression and other life stressors as well as experiencing a range of emotions, including confusion, isolation, helplessness, hopelessness and worthlessness.



Perhaps shockingly, suicide is now the second leading cause of death among young people ages 10 to 24. Young people deal with countless stressful situations every day: bullying, harassment on social media, academic difficulties, unhealthy friendships, violence in their home or community, and economic hardships. Additionally, as suicide does not discriminate, people of all races and ethnicities can be at risk of suicidal thoughts.

General risk factors for suicide such as mental illness, experiences of trauma and limited social support may be exacerbated by a lack of cultural competency in mental health care, pervasive stigma around mental illness, environmental stressors, discrimination and other racial disparity issues. *Unfortunately, many people struggle to talk openly about their suicidal thoughts and feelings due in part to the stigma associated with suicide and mental illness, which may inhibit them from reaching out and getting the help that they need.*

Samaritans, Inc.

Each day, people who are struggling with thoughts of suicide turn to Samaritans in search of compassionate support. Samaritans is a suicide prevention nonprofit organization in Boston that offers crisis services to individuals who are feeling sad, lonely, hopeless or uncertain about their future. Samaritans provides support to anyone who wants to talk about how they

are feeling, to people who are grieving the loss of a loved one to suicide, and to those who want to learn how to help others in crisis. **Samaritans operates a confidential Helpline at (877) 870-4673 that can be accessed 24/7.**



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Suicide: A Public Health Crisis (cont.)

In addition to the confidential helpline, Samaritans offers a range of programs and services, including the following:

Community Education & Outreach -

Samaritans' workshops on suicide prevention are delivered to schools, corporate offices, elder care facilities, and community-based organizations across Greater Boston and MetroWest. With the help of our workshops, your group can learn about building resiliency, dispelling myths, identifying someone at risk, and helping someone in crisis.



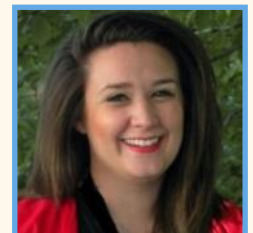
Grief Support Services - Losing a loved one to suicide is a uniquely painful experience. Samaritans offers suicide loss survivors non-judgmental listening, compassion, and peer support. If you have lost someone to suicide, Samaritans offers several programs to support you in your grieving.



Volunteer Opportunities - Whether you have a personal connection to suicide, a passionate desire to change the world, or simply want to help others, Samaritans offers a number of opportunities for volunteering with our community to make an impact on individual lives each day.

For more information on Samaritans' services and volunteer opportunities, please visit samaritanshope.org

Rose Cheyette is the Community Education and Outreach Manager at Samaritans, Inc. She previously worked with a youth-based organization and for the U.S. Department of Labor. She served in the Peace Corps in Ukraine, and was a Samaritans volunteer before joining the staff.



Allison Newman is the Marketing and Communications Manager at Samaritans, Inc. She previously worked for the Commonwealth of MA and the University of Richmond.

Multicultural Holidays & Celebrations

December is a month that celebrates many cultural and religious holidays from across the globe.

Christmas is celebrated to honor the birth of Jesus Christ who Christians believe was the Son of God. An early Christian tradition indicated that the day Mary was told that she would have a very special baby was on March 25th, which nine months later led to the birth of Christ on 25th of December. The name “Christmas” comes from the Mass of Christ. A mass is a service where Christians remember the death and resurrection of Jesus.



Diwali is a five-day Hindu holiday of lights usually celebrated in the fall as dates depend on the moon cycle. This year, Diwali started on November 7. Diwali celebrates the victory of light over darkness or the triumph of good over evil. Hindus also take advantage of this period to contemplate and dispel the darkness of ignorance.

Hanukkah or Chanukah is a Jewish celebration that lasts for eight days and starts on the 25th of Kislev, the month in the Jewish calendar that occurs at about the same time as December. Because the Jewish calendar is lunar, Kislev can happen from late November to late December. In 2018, Hanukkah will be from the evening of Sunday, December 2nd until the evening of Monday, December 10th.



Kwanzaa is a seven day festival that celebrates African and African American culture and history. Kwanzaa takes place from December 26th to January 1st. The Kwanzaa festival was created by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966 who wanted a way to bring African Americans together and remember their black culture. The festivals are celebrated all over Africa, a time when people come together and celebrate and give thanks for the good things in their lives and communities.

Multicultural Holiday Celebrations in the Boston Area

- ♦ November 28, 2018 – January 1, 2019: [Blink! Light and Sound Show.](#)
- ♦ December 2nd, 2018: [35th Annual Menorah Lighting on the Boston Common.](#)
- ♦ December 22th, 2018: [The Rebirth of the Sun and the Winter Solstice.](#)
- ♦ December 15th, 2018: [Tafuta! A Young Child’s Search for the True Meaning of Kwanzaa.](#)

Asian Mental Health Conference

On Saturday, September 29th, CMGMH hosted an *Inaugural Conference on Asian Mental Health* at William James College. The primary aim of the conference was to convene mental health clinicians, researchers, and college and school professionals to address the needs and challenges of providing culturally-competent care for diverse Asian communities. Using an integrated and holistic approach, the Conference focused on the risk and protective factors that affect the physical, social, emotional and spiritual well-being of Asian individuals and families; and offered prevention/intervention strategies for optimal health and empowerment of Asian communities.



The Invited and Keynote Speakers were **Dr. Jean Lau Chin** and **Dr. Kenneth Fung**. Other presenters included Dr. Manoj Bhasin, Ms. Betty Chan, Dr. Danielle Godon-Decoteau, Dr. Kumiko Ide, Ms. Thanh Phan, Dr. Sukanya Ray, Ms. Ziyi Xiu, and Dr. Albert Yeung. The Conference also included an Art Exhibit featuring traditional Chinese calligraphy and contemporary brush paintings from Quanzhou (Jack) Zhao, Lily Chin and members of the Chinese Calligraphy Association as well as cultural performances by Mouli Pal and Suvadip Sengupta.

[To download the Conference Proceedings, click here!](#)



Conference on Spirituality, Faith & Social Justice

On November 9th, CMGMH hosted a *Conference on Spirituality, Faith and Social Justice* at William James College, which aimed to engage agents of social change who are grappling with contemporary social issues that affect vulnerable and oppressed groups in the U.S. Its primary focus was to promote greater awareness of the need for more socially conscious and spiritually sensitive mental health providers who could pursue a social justice agenda that includes a concern for others, a willingness to advocate for the holistic needs of historically marginalized people and the commitment to ensure equity and human rights for all in society.



The Keynote and Invited Speakers were **Dr. Rockey Robbins** and **Imam Taymullah Abdur-Rahman**. Other presenters included Dr. Nicholas Rowe, Ms. Colleen Sharka, Ms. Debra Johnson, Rabbi Victor Hillel Reinstein, Dr. Richa Gawande, Ms. April Clayton, Mr. Nelson Wong, Dr. Shamaila Khan, Dr. Yvette 'Lepolata Aduke' Modestin, and Dr. Tony Menelik Van Der Meer. The Conference also

included an Art Exhibition featuring art pieces by artist Johnetta Tinker and *ArtsBridge* as well as musical performances by Damon Pryor, Jonathan Newell Roberts, Stephen Allsop, Meredith Apfelbaum, and Sohenga Depestre.

[To download the Conference Proceedings, click here!](#)



International Service Learning & Cultural Immersion Program Presentations

Each year, William James College (WJC) students and faculty take part in international service learning and cultural immersion initiatives in low and middle-income countries. These programs are designed to give students and faculty an opportunity to volunteer at various clinics, hospitals and social service agencies that serve historically marginalized communities.

On November 7th, CMGMH hosted the *Annual Service Learning and Cultural Immersion Program Presentations* where WJC students and faculty discussed their experiences in Ecuador, Guyana, Haiti and Kenya as well as learned more information about future immersion trips.



Dare to Speak

On October 25th, members of ALANAA (African/Caribbean American, Latino, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Native American/Native Alaskan and Arab American) and the Social Justice Student Coalition hosted an event at WJC focusing on the disjointed and fragmented world of political warfare. It highlighted once bold lines between good and evil, love and hate, equality and injustice that now seem to be tainted, spawning societal ramifications filled with dichotomous ambiguity. Presenters used art to spread awareness which dared attendees to speak up, be heard, and love.



From left to right: Donicka Suprice, Fatuma Dzilala, Adetutu Ajibose, Dr. Natalie Cort, Carmaudely Galliotte, Sohenga Depestre and Beverly Ibeh

Belongingness: Where do you fit in?

We all struggle with our complex identities... whether we're veterans, Christian, Muslim, disabled, cisgender, transgender, Asian, Latinx, gay, heterosexual, immigrant, 1st gen... On November 5th, the Black Mental Health Graduate Academy hosted a *Chat & Chew* to explore concepts of identity and belongingness humorously addressed in the Netflix series, *Dear White People*. The Academy Scholars are grateful to The Dean of Students Office for sponsoring this thoughtful conversation. Our thanks goes to Josh Cooper (Dean of Students), Beverly Ibeh (Academy Lead Mentor), and Donicka Suprice (Academy Coordinator) for organizing and participating in this event.



Announcement:

CMGMH Welcomed Dr. Abu-Jamei!

On November 19th, the Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health (CMGMH) at William James College welcomed Dr. Yasser Abu-Jamei, a world-renowned child psychiatrist, researcher and Executive Director of the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMHP). Dr. Abu-Jamei has been with the GCMHP since 2004 playing different supervisory, clinical and research roles. He oversees the general operations of the organization in providing mental health care to Gaza Strip communities.



From left to right: Dr. Devin Atallah-Gutierrez, Dr. Gemima St. Louis, Dr. Yasser Abu-Jamei, Dr. Jodie Kliman and Dr. Yousef Al-Ajarma

On November 18th, Dr. Abu-Jamei delivered a presentation entitled, ***Centering Gaza: Trauma & Resilience on the Frontlines***, at

Boston University where he spoke about the interconnections between mental health and human rights in Palestine. The event was co-sponsored by Kilachand Honors College, Wheelock College School of Education and Human Development, and Students for Justice in Palestine at Boston University.

Dr. Abu-Jamei will be collaborating with Dr. Devin Atallah-Gutierrez, Dr. Yousef Al-Ajarma, Dr. Jodie Kliman and Dr. Gemima St. Louis to organize a Conference on Palestinian Mental Health to be held in October 2019.

November Holidays & Observances

- National American Indian Heritage Month
- November 12: Veterans Day Observed
- November 12–19 National Collection Week
- November 13: World Kindness Day
- November 18: International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day
- November 20: Transgender Day of Remembrance

December Holidays & Observances

- December 2: International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
- December 2–10: Chanukah/Hanukkah
- December 3: International Day of Disabled Persons
- December 5: International Volunteer Day for Economic & Social Development
- December 10: International Human Rights Day
- December 21–January 1: Yule
- December 25: Christmas
- December 26 – January 1: Kwanzaa
- December 31: New Year's Eve

Mental Health in the News

- An increasing number of children are showing up in U.S. emergency rooms in the throes of a mental health crisis, researchers reported. And the increases are seen in minority children. [Read here.](#)
- Mental health service use and treatment up among college students. [Read here.](#)
- Lady Gaga opens up about mental health at the SAG-AFTRA Foundation's Patron of the Artists Awards. Lady Gaga gave a speech on the importance of mental health. [Watch the video here.](#)
- New Medicaid waivers available for short-term residential mental health services. [Read here.](#)
- Chronic pot use may have serious effects on the brain. Experts say more research needs to be done to highlight the long-term effects of marijuana use on the brain, body and behavior. [Read here.](#)

Save the Date: CMGMH Events

- December 6: **Intersectionality of Religious Identity and LGBTQ Identity**
- December 14: **LMHP Fiesta**
- April 7, 2019: **Lucero Walk**
- June 13, 2019: **Annual Cultural Diversity Celebration**
- June 19, 2019: **Juneteenth Celebration**

For more information, please contact cmgmh@williamjames.edu

Professional Development Events & Conferences

- January 22 - 23, 2019: [California Student Mental Wellness Conference](#)
- January 28-30, 2019: [6th International Conference on Education and Psychological Sciences](#), Singapore.
- March 21-23, 2019: [The Asian Conference on Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences](#), Tokyo, Japan.
- March 28-31, 2019: [Anxiety and Depression Conference](#), Chicago, IL.
- April 13-14, 2019: [Global Health and Innovation Conference](#), New Haven, CT.
- May 3-4, 2019: [7th Annual LGBT Health Workforce Conference](#), New York City.
- June 13-15, 2019: [Annual Mental Health Conference Dueling Diagnoses](#), Washington, DC.
- June 21-23, 2019: [The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues](#), San Diego, CA
- June 25-27, 2019: [19th Annual IAFMHS Conference Cultural Diversity at the Intersection of Mental Health and the Law](#), Montréal, Canada.