



CMGMH CONNECTION

Social Justice Student Coalition at WJC

The **Social Justice Student Coalition** (SJSC) is a new student-led group at William James College (WJC) that is committed to building a bridge between psychology, the community, and larger governmental systems. Under the auspices of the Dean of Students Office, SJSC's primary mission is to create a platform for students with a shared interest in social justice to gain access to organizations and resources through which they can advocate for social causes. SJSC strives to disseminate evidence-based knowledge that will influence and instigate meaningful social changes, help close the gap between the community and the field of mental health, influence social policies, and equip clinicians-in-training with social advocacy skills.

SJSC's Core Leaders (from left to right): Carmaudely L. Galliotte, Alexandra Adair, Alexis Leca & Roni Rubins



On October 25th, the Core Leaders of SJSC were interviewed by CMGMH staff to learn more about the Coalition's mission and vision for the future. The **Core Leaders are Marie Carmaudely L. Galliotte, Alexandra Adair, Alexis Leca, and Roni Rubins** who are all 2nd year students in the Clinical PsyD Program. When asked about how the Coalition was formed, Carmaudely reflected,

"The idea of SJSC came to me during my first year at WJC. [It was during a] History and Systems course when one of my peers presented a case about a young African-American male who ended up in the prison system. There was a lot of doubt around his culpability. The conversation turned to social justice-related issues that impact minorities and how to understand the experiences of these groups. We ended up discussing the role of psychologists or psychologists-in-training, and our ability to instigate social change. . . . I've always struggled with the fact that we have a lot of clinical training, and a wealth of knowledge and information about our field and its history, yet there's not much on how to become a social change agent. I began to connect with others who shared a passion for social justice and I attended some local meetings. I was inspired to get WJC students more involved in becoming social change agents, even if that means starting with acquiring the basic skills for becoming social advocates.

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Social Justice Student Coalition (cont.)

The SJSC plans to offer a space for students to come together to process and develop activism strategies. To meet its mission, SJSC has created Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) to act in real time as events evolve. These teams will focus on **four major themes: (1) Immigration and Underserved Populations, (2) LGBTQIA Rights, (3) Women's Rights and (4) National and Natural Disasters.** Each Core Leader will oversee one of the four teams. They will also be responsible for organizing the activities of the RRTs and all SJSC-related events. Additionally, the Core Leaders will coordinate with outside organizations to gather information, build community resources and networks, and host events in partnership with social justice agencies.

"There are many issues around social justice and many ideas that people bring in. [What's important is] to find a way to integrate all of those perspectives and allow everyone to feel that their voices are heard; that is a challenge that we will have to balance out." — Alexandra Adair

A critical task of the SJSC is to create a platform where all students' voices are heard, where students feel supported and understood, and where their interests are represented through the group's activities. Roni Rubins stated,

"I think one of the challenges is going to be how to integrate all the voices. People who advocate for social justice, who are interested in the topic, are similarly minded. It is our responsibility to 'reach out across the aisle' like Dr. Covino [WJC President] said. Rather than just fall into the trap of what we see in the news, with us vs. them, I think that if we're willing and able, we can challenge that dichotomy.... [We need] to have those conversations where everyone is heard and acknowledged while recognizing that there are groups that are more marginalized and disempowered, and that there are groups that have more social power."

Alexis Leca remarked,

"I feel that there is a collective consensus among the Core Leaders that there needs to be a space within WJC for students to actively discuss recent political and social-cultural events that are impacting our nation, communities, student body, and clients. The Coalition will not only allow students to process these events, but also to feel a sense of activism and connectedness to the outside world, and be able to make change in their own capacity."



November 8th: SJSC held a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas.

SJSC members believe that it is crucial to use their voices and expertise to effect positive change in social and cultural issues, and public policies. SJSC will continue to provide a forum for students to share their knowledge, experiences, and passion for social justice as well as take action to support each other and the communities within and outside of William James College. To learn more about the SJSC or to become involved with the group, please contact Marie_Galliotte@williamjames.edu.

"It's very important for us to come together because together our voices are powerful. I hope that people who don't think that social justice is their 'thing' will realize that everyone has a perspective, and that everyone has something valuable to contribute. I think that it's also important to accurately represent those in the community who feel voiceless, who feel disempowered. For us to really be in touch with and accurately represent those voices, we must use our power and resources in the most effective and appropriate way." — Roni Rubins

December: A Month of Multicultural Holiday Celebrations

December is a month that celebrates many cultural and religious holidays from across the globe. **Christmas**, a Christian holiday honoring the birth of Jesus Christ, evolved over two millennia into a worldwide religious and secular celebration, incorporating many pre-Christian and pagan traditions. [Read More Here.](#)



Hanukkah or **Chanukah** is an eight day and night Jewish celebration that commemorates the rededication during the 2nd century B.C. of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Hanukkah celebrates the victory of the Israelites over the Greek-Syrian ruler, Antiochus, about 2,200 years ago. [Read More Here.](#)

Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday which celebrates family, community and culture. Kwanzaa was created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga to preserve, continually revitalize, and promote African American culture. Kwanzaa is a cultural holiday practiced by Africans of all religious faiths and beliefs. [Read More Here.](#)



For Pagans and Wiccans, **Yule** or **Yuletide**, is a festival that is celebrated during the winter solstice or the shortest day of the year. It focuses on rebirth, renewal, and new beginnings as the sun makes way back to the earth. [Read More Here.](#)

Multicultural Holiday Celebrations in the Boston Area

- ◆ December 18th, 2017: **Chanukah in the City.** <https://www.jewishboston.com/events/chanukah-in-the-city-2017/>
- ◆ December 22nd, 2017: **Open Yule Ritual.** <https://www.cornucopiaincollective.com/community-matters>
- ◆ December 24th, 2017: **Christmas Eve at Trinity Church Boston.** <https://www.bostonusa.com/event/christmas-eve-at-trinity-church-boston/39084/>
- ◆ December 28th, 2017: **Kwanzaa Celebration (Boston).** <http://roxburyculturaldistrict.org/new-events/2017/12/26/kwanzaa-celebration>

Scholarship Awardee Spotlights

AWARDS & Scholarships



In the spring of 2017, under the auspices of the Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health, William James College established the ***Serving the Mental Health Needs of the Underserved Scholarships***. The 2017-2018 cohort of awardees was 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**, the award recipients will engage in mentoring, outreach, social-cultural, and professional development initiatives at WJC. In this issue of the Newsletter, we profile three of the six Fellows.

Meet the New CMGMH Fellows!

Beverly Ibeh is a first-generation Nigerian who was born in London where she lived until the age of 5 when her family moved to Nigeria. Beverly migrated to the United States at the age of 8 and recently became a U.S. citizen. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and a minor in African-American studies from Syracuse University, and her Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling with an emphasis in Couples and Family Therapy from William James College (WJC). Beverly is the only person in her immediate family who holds a graduate degree. During her Master's program at WJC, she interned as a milieu counselor at Wild Acre Residential Program in Belmont and trained at the Preschool Outreach Program through the Home for Little Wanderers in Roslindale. Beverly is currently an Advanced Standing Student in the Clinical Psychology Program at WJC and is a trainee at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

Beverly's primary focus is on expanding her knowledge about clinical psychology, specifically cultural competence in psychological practice. One of her goals is to promote awareness of the roles of mentors in every part of one's journey—academic, professional and personal. She believes that mentoring promotes a sense of belonging and community in any environment, especially if considered a minority member. Beverly stated,



Favorite Quote: "You may shoot me with your words, you may cut me with your eyes, you may kill me with your hatefulness, but still, like air, I'll rise."

Still I Rise — Maya Angelou

"I am living proof that mentorship is needed for the underserved because I would not be where I am in life without it. From my 5th grade teacher who promoted self-love and humility in our classroom to the professor who always had time to check in about my experiences as a Nigerian Black woman in a predominately-white institution These experiences may not be readily available to people who identify as being a member of a marginalized group... Working with youth in the community is a great way to continue to plant the seed [of mentorship] for purposes of professional representation and fostering a sense of normalcy in individuals who intentionally seek valuable mentors throughout their lives. [As a CMGMH Fellow] I will continue to work in the community to empower and appreciate the strengths of people who are typically underserved and share resources that promote holistic wellness."

As a Scholar in the Black Mental Health Graduate Academy and a member of ALANAA at WJC, Beverly is part of a community of professionals who are committed to advocating for diversity and learning about various cultural groups in order to dismantle historical narratives that have proven to be false. Her priority is to be an active change agent for individuals in marginalized communities. In doing so, she will continue to hold hope that these repeated actions will contribute to a larger disruption of systemic disadvantages in this society.

Scholarship Awardee Spotlights (cont.)

Rosilyn Sanders received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas and her Master of Arts degree in Counseling with an emphasis in Rehabilitation and Disability from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Rosilyn is currently enrolled in the Organizational Leadership Psychology (OLP) Program at WJC. In addition to being a CMGMH Fellow, she plans to serve as a representative for the OLP Program and bring awareness to individuals with disabilities globally. Rosilyn has a nine-year professional background in program development for non-profit agencies representing people with disabilities and low-income families. In 2012, Rosilyn created and spearheaded a vocational program for low-income residents to receive a certified nursing assistant license by collaborating with a local medical staffing agency.



Favorite Quote: “So we grew together, like to a double cherry, seeming parted, but yet a union in partition, two lovely berries molded on one stem.”

— William Shakespeare

Rosilyn plans to seek practicum and internship opportunities in the field of OLP that will provide more hands-on experience to carve the career of her choice. Her long-term goals are to become one of the few, if not the first, African-American woman Organizational Leadership consulting psychologist from Arkansas; and continue to advocate for people with disabilities to help them become employable in their community. As a single mother and a caretaker of her mother who is experiencing renal failure, receiving the scholarship will provide invaluable financial assistance for Rosilyn to pursue her dream. Rosilyn stated, “Being an award recipient shows me that William James College supports my passion and advocacy for people with disabilities as well as understands the needs of those who come from single-parent, low-income families. I did not grow up in the modern two-parent household; therefore, I am the product of an underserved community. I am so grateful to represent Arkansas in such a positive capacity. Because WJC believes in me and chose me out of several applicants, it fuels my desire to believe in myself and I know that the best is yet to come.”



Darryl Sweeper, Jr. is currently an Advanced Standing doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology Program at William James College. He received his Master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling with emphases in Expressive Arts Therapy and African and Caribbean Mental Health at WJC.

Darryl has worked for non-profit mental health organizations in Reading and Lebanon, Pennsylvania; and state-funded community health centers and higher education in Boston and Fall River, Massachusetts. He has participated in international service learning programs in Thika, Kenya and Petit-Goâve, Haiti. To complement his clinical training at WJC, Darryl is currently enrolled in a certificate program to become a certified poetry therapist with the International Federation of Biblio/Poetry Therapy. His research and clinical interests include topics related to diversity, especially prejudice and stereotyping towards racial/ethnic/sexual minorities, positive youth development, global mental health, co-morbid mental illnesses in people of color, and the role of creative arts in medicine.

Favorite Quote: “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

— James Baldwin

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Scholarship Awardee Spotlights (cont.)

Darryl believes that the *Serving the Underserved Scholarship* speaks to the efforts of numerous WJC students, professors, and mentors who, through the sharing of their wisdom and tutelage, have created a space within the WJC community and in the larger society for social change, acceptance, and advocacy for those who are from different backgrounds. Darryl stated,

“The creation of this scholarship symbolizes WJC’s commitment and responsiveness to the overwhelming mental health needs of underserved populations; and recognizes future psychologists and counselors for their valiant, persistent, and diverse efforts to reduce the burden of disparities that impact so many lives. I hope this scholarship will bring forward those who are both powerful in voice and action to be seen and cherished while inspiring incoming and younger students to join the cause in creating an epidemic of good health. To be among the first cohort of award recipients is a tremendous honor.”

Darryl’s long-term goals include working in a behavioral medicine, hospital or integrated health care setting; conducting research on co-morbid illnesses and expressive arts in medicine; and doing international work and research in the Caribbean and Africa to understand the many conceptualizations of mental health and address health inequities. During his time at WJC, Darryl plans to collaborate with the PATHWAYS Program to help advocate for and address the mental health needs of youth in urban communities as well as work with programs that serve homeless youth. Darryl would like to create an expressive arts group for young boys of color in urban communities focusing on empowerment and positive identity formation.

Serving the Mental Health Needs of the Underserved Scholarships

To learn more about the application process and eligibility criteria, [click here](#) or contact CMGMH@williamjames.edu

Cultivating Appreciative Communities

Drs. Claire Fialkov and David Haddad, Associate Professors at William James College, were featured in a recent article about their work on Appreciative Inquiry (AI) with the Kimo Wellness Foundation in Kenya. The author, Ms. Nelly Ndirangu, has collaborated with Dr. Fialkov and Dr. Haddad in the development and implementation of a strengths-based AI curriculum for students in Kenya. Ms. Ndirangu stated, *“I am optimistic that working with diverse communities will one day give birth to an appreciative group of citizens in Kenya, and the tread will impact positively on other African countries, and eventually out into the wider world. I believe in continuing my work as a symbol of appreciative practice in the world.”* The Kenyan Education Empowerment Project (KEEP) is funded through a generous grant from Proctor and Gamble. [Click here to read the full article.](#)



Ms. Nelly Ndirangu is the Co-Founder of the Kimo Wellness Foundation, an international non-profit organization based in Kenya. A seasoned, practicing counselling psychologist and supervisor, having trained in addiction counselling and testing, child counselling, teaching and trauma healing, she is also the proprietor of the Kimo Wellness Counselling Centre. She holds a BA in Counselling Psychology and is earning her Master’s degree in Counselling Psychology at the Kenya Methodist University.

Working with Syrian Refugees: Medical and Psychological Implications for Self-Care

On Friday, October 27th, the Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health (CMGMH), in collaboration with the Syrian American Medical Society and the Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma, co-sponsored a one-day conference on confronting challenges and devising strategies to provide health and mental health care to Syrians and Syrian refugees. With the Syrian conflict now in its 7th year, five million Syrians have been displaced outside of their home country and more than 13 million people inside Syria are in need of aid. Panel presentations included “Introduction to the Medical and Mental Health Work of the Syrian American Medical Society,” “The Need for an Integrated Global Response to the Syrian Crisis,” and “The Importance of Self-Care for Helping Professionals”.



Conference presenters (from left to right:) *Mohammad Hamza, M.D., Mark Cameron, B. Hsc., Ammar Traboulsi, M.D., Richard Mollica, MD, Jill Betz Bloom, Ph.D., Yassar Kanawati, M.D., Rosanne Symons, MB ChB, Eugene F. Augusterfer, LCSW, James C. West, M.D., & Saleem Khaldoon Al-Nuaimi, M.D.*

Implications of Islamophobia: Its Impact Beyond the Muslim Community and Key Components of Allyship

On Monday, November 13th, CMGMH hosted a presentation on *Implications of Islamophobia*, which examined the impact of Islamophobia within the Muslim community, especially in the identity development of Muslim youth, and addressed the far-reaching influence of Islamophobia on other marginalized and minority communities. The presenter, Ms. Waheeda Saif, described different components of allyship and ways in which attendees can become allies to disenfranchised groups in both clinical and non-clinical settings.



Dr. Yousef AlAjarma introduced the Keynote Speaker



Ms. Waheeda Saif

Become A CMGMH Partner!!!

The primary mission of William James College's Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health (CMGMH) is to train, educate and mentor a cadre of professionals to address mental health disparities, practice trauma-informed care, and serve culturally diverse individuals and communities locally, nationally, and internationally. Our vision is to inspire and empower students, clinicians, educators, and other providers as agents of social justice with a passion for and a commitment to serving historically marginalized populations.



CMGMH is seeking partnerships with schools, clinics, community health centers, social services agencies, and faith-based organizations that serve immigrants, refugees, LGBTQ communities, and other underserved groups to offer clinical field placements, volunteer opportunities, and service learning experiences for graduate students at William James College.

To become a partner, please contact us at cmgmh@williamjames.edu.

"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does."

-William James

Save the Date: Upcoming CMGMH Events

The following events will take place at WJC:

- **January 22: Immigrant Stories: A Student Panel.** 6:30pm – 8:30pm (contact cmgmh@williamjames.edu)
- **April 6: Conference on Latino Mental Health.** (contact: [Mari Bennasar@williamjames.edu](mailto:Mari_Bennasar@williamjames.edu))
- **April 28: LGBTQ Youth: Magnifying the Splendor of the Rainbow.** 8:30 am—4:30 pm (contact [Meridith Apfelbaum@williamjames.edu](mailto:Meridith_Apfelbaum@williamjames.edu))
- **May 5: Biannual Conference on Haitian Mental Health.** 8:30 am—5:00 pm (contact cmgmh@williamjames.edu)

December Holidays & Observances

- **December 2: International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities.** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 5: International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development.** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 10: International Human Rights Day .** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 13 - 20: Hanukkah.** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 20: International Human Solidarity Day.** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 21: Yule.** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 25: Christmas.** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 26– January 1: Kwanzaa.** [Read Here.](#)
- **December 31: New Year's Eve.**

Professional Development Events & Conferences

- December 4th, 2017: **From the Prayer Rug to the Couch: Understanding the Culture of Islam and Best Practices in Treating Muslim Clients.** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/from-the-prayer-rug-to-the-couch-understanding-the-culture-of-islam-and-best-practices-in-treating-registration-39251350847>
- December 7th, 2017: **Navigating Racism & Other "Isms" in Therapy.** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/join-the-conversation-navigating-racism-other-isms-in-therapy-tickets-40717658613>
- January 27th-29th, 2018: **2018 5th International Conference on Education and Psychological Sciences (ICEPS 2018).** <http://www.iceps.org/>
- March 15th–17th, 2018: **10th Annual Muslim Mental Health Conference.** <http://mailchi.mp/380d7527b397/muslim-mental-health-conference-call-for-proposals-399495?e=5ba106d246>
- May 4th-5th, 2018: **LGBT Health Workforce Conference.** <http://bngap.org/lgbthwconf/>
- June 29th-July 1st, 2018: **Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues' 2018 Summer Conference.** <http://www.spssi.org/index.cfm?pageId=480>
- July 1st-5th, 2018: **International Congress of International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP).** <http://www.iaccp.org/node/627>
- October 18th-21st, 2018: **The National Latina/o Psychological Association Conference.** <https://www.nlpaconference.org/>
- November 13th-17th, 2018: **Caribbean Regional Conference of Psychology.** <http://>

Current Events Corner

Mental Health in the News

- **“The mental health toll of the Rohingya crisis”** *Aljazeera*. More than half a million Rohingya have arrived in Bangladesh since the Myanmar army began a campaign described as ethnic cleansing. [Read Here.](#)
- **“Texas shooter’s history raises questions about mental health and mass murder”** *NPR*. Mental illness is often thought to be the cause of gun violence, but the research say differently. [Read Here.](#)
- **“Diabetes and mental health: Anger, burnout, compulsive eating and depression”** *Forbes*. The focus is usually on the physical aspects of diabetes and its serious complications, there is less emphasis on the emotional burden and psychological distress that can come with the disease itself. [Read Here.](#)
- **“Mental health and nuclear weapons”** *Huffington Post*. The president fails to bring issues he raises regularly when it comes to weapons sales in the United States, mental health. [Read Here.](#)
- **“BME communities face ‘cultural taboo’ over mental health”** *BBC*. People from black minority ethnic (BME) groups are hiding mental health issues because of cultural stigmas about the condition. [Read Here.](#)
- **“The link between poor mental health and low income”** *Metro*. Poverty has a number of effects on physical health, as it can limit people’s access to healthcare, and alter their diet and habits. It can also take a huge toll of people’s mental health, though, and change their whole outlook on life. [Read Here.](#)