

LGBTQ Youth: Magnifying the Splendor of the Rainbow



On April 28, 2018, William James College hosted a day-long conference on *LGBTQ Youth: Magnifying the Splendor of the Rainbow*. Presenters included members of the LGBTQ youth community, providers, educators, parents, and allies that support and champion the well-being and resilience of LGBTQ youth.

The Keynote Speaker, Dr. Asa Sevelius, principal of the Heath School in Brookline, is the first out transgender principal in the Commonwealth and amongst the very few out trans school leaders nationwide. As an educator, Dr. Sevelius has a clear commitment to issues of social justice, closing opportunity gaps, high-quality early childhood education, and fair assessment and evaluation practices. School culture and professional development are particular passions of his.

The conference also featured panelists from [BAGLY: The Boston Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth](#), [Boston GLASS at Justice Resource Institute](#), [The Triangle Program at Arbour-HRI Hospital](#), [The Meeting Point](#), and [The Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Youth](#). The day included an inspiring choral performance by [Voices Rising](#).



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LGBT Pride Month

In the early hours of June 28, 1969, New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club located in Greenwich Village. The raid sparked a riot among bar patrons and neighborhood residents as police roughly hauled employees and patrons out of the bar, leading to six days of protests and violent clashes with law enforcement personnel outside the bar on Christopher Street, in neighboring streets and in nearby Christopher Park. The Stonewall Riots served as a catalyst for the gay rights movement in the United States and around the world (History, 2017).



In the United States, the last Sunday in June was initially celebrated as “Gay Pride Day”. In major cities across the nation the “day” soon grew to encompass a month-long series of events. In 1994, a coalition of education-based organizations in the U.S. designated October as LGBT History Month. In 1995, a resolution passed by the General Assembly of the National Education Association included LGBT History Month within a list of commemorative months (Library of Congress, 2018). LGBT Pride Month is also celebrated with annual month-long observances of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender history, along with the history of the gay rights and related civil rights movements (GLAAD, 2017).



William James College at Boston Pride on Saturday, June 9. It was a beautiful day for a parade! Thank you to our Rainbow Alliance for organizing our group. Happy Pride!

Over time, the smaller marches and gatherings organized by community members evolved into a highly organized slate of events attracting a broad range of LGBT community members and straight allies. The increasing popularity and visibility of Pride events can partially be attributed to greater levels of acceptance towards the community. While Pride events play a key role in raising the profile of the community and commemorating the history of the LGBT social movement, Pride also marks an opportunity for the community to come together, take stock and recognize the advances and setbacks made in the past year, and celebrate in a festive, affirming atmosphere (Human Rights Campaign, 2014).

Today, celebrations include pride parades, picnics, parties, workshops, symposia and concerts. LGBT Pride Month events attract millions of participants around the world. Memorials are held during this month for those members of the community who have been lost to hate crimes or HIV/AIDS (Anti-Defamation League, 2017). The purpose of the commemorative month is to recognize the impact that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals have had on history locally, nationally, and internationally.

References:

- ♦ Anti-Defamation League. (2017). *LGBTQ Pride Month*. Retrieved May 14, 2018, from <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/lgbtq-pride-month>
- ♦ GLAAD. (2017, January 12). *Pride Month Resource Kit for Journalists*. Retrieved May 14, 2018, from <https://www.glaad.org/publications/pridekit>
- ♦ History. (2017). *Stonewall Riots*. Retrieved May 14, 2018, from <https://www.history.com/topics/the-stonewall-riots>
- ♦ Human Rights Campaign. (2014, June 27). *The history of LGBT Pride, from 1970 to now*. Retrieved May 14, 2018, from <https://www.hrc.org/blog/the-history-of-lgbt-pride-from-1970-to-now>
- ♦ Library of Congress. (2018). *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month About*. Retrieved May 14, 2018, from <https://www.loc.gov/lgbt-pride-month/about/>

Caribbean American Heritage Month



Caribbean Americans have played a key role in shaping American history since the first Caribbean immigrants arrived in Jamestown, Virginia in 1619 (Dvorak, 2013). To help bring attention to this long and diverse history, Dr. Claire Nelson founded The Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS) in 1993 to raise awareness and advocate for the Caribbean American community in both the private and public sectors.

In 1999, ICS sent a letter to President Clinton requesting a month dedicated as Caribbean American History Month (The Institute of Caribbean Studies, 2017). In 2004, Congresswoman Barbara Lee introduced legislation for such a proclamation. Reintroduced a year later, the House unanimously passed the bill in June 2005 and the Senate passed their own version in February 2006. On June 5, 2006, President George W. Bush issued the first Presidential proclamation declaring June Caribbean American Heritage Month (The Institute of Caribbean Studies, 2017).

Through the commemoration of this month, America is reminded that its greatness lies in its diversity. With Caribbean immigrants from founding father Alexander Hamilton to journalist Malcolm Gladwell, Americans with Caribbean roots have sewn their own unique thread into the fabric of our Nation. Dr. William Thornton, a native of the British Virgin Islands, designed the United States Capitol and is generally considered the first “Architect of the Capitol” (National Caribbean American Heritage Foundation, 2018). Jean Baptiste du Sable, the first permanent resident of Chicago, was born in Haiti and is widely recognized as the “Founder of Chicago”.



During Caribbean-American Heritage Month, we honor America’s long-shared history with our neighbors in the Caribbean and celebrate all Caribbean Americans who have enriched the United States. This month, we acknowledge the numerous contributions of Caribbean Americans to our Nation, including the estimated 12.6 million Caribbean Americans and Caribbean American descendants who live in the United States today (Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2018).

References:

- Dvorak, K. (2013, June 17). *Caribbean American Heritage Month*. Retrieved May 23, 2018, from <https://www.nwhm.org/articles/caribbean-american-heritage-month>
- National Caribbean American Heritage Foundation. (2018). *National Caribbean-American Heritage Month marks 13th celebration in 2018*. Retrieved May 23, 2018, from <https://www.caribbeanamericanmonth.org/>
- Natural Resources Conservation Service. (2018). *June is Caribbean-American Heritage Month!* Retrieved May 23, 2018, from <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/pr/about/civilrights/?cid=nrcseprd1331869>
- The Institute of Caribbean Studies. (2017). *Celebrate June... Caribbean American Heritage Month*. Retrieved May 23, 2018, from https://www.icsdc.org/caribbean_american_heritage_month

WJC in Action: Practicing What We Teach

CAN-DO Community Event

By Meghan O'Dell, AmeriCorps VISTA Project Coordinator

On Saturday, June 9th, William James College (WJC) and the Citizens for Affordable Housing in Newton Development Organization (CAN-DO) hosted a family-friendly community event. WJC students Arialda Fejzic and Beverly Ibeh led a mindfulness and self-care workshop for a group of mothers while Cassandra Guercia and Patrick Sviokla led arts and crafts activities for their children.

CAN-DO is a local non-profit developer of affordable housing for individuals and families with low and moderate incomes. Founded in 1994 by Josephine McNeil, CAN-DO has since developed 62 units of housing for various populations, including survivors of domestic violence and their children, formerly homeless families, veteran families, mixed-income condominiums, and a group home for adults with developmental disabilities. Access to affordable housing provides a foundation from which individuals and families can gain stable footing and navigate the path from poverty to economic self-sufficiency.



Pictured from left to right: Josephine McNeil, Cassandra Guercia, Arialda Fejzic, Beverly Ibeh, Kathy Laufer, Patrick Sviokla, Meghan O'Dell, and Gemima St. Louis

Due to building constraints in the city of Newton, each housing unit holds one or two families, leaving little opportunity for community building across the CAN-DO residential population. Kathy Laufer, the social worker at CAN-DO, and Ms. McNeil recognized the need for creating a forum to bring the residents together and forge greater connections between them. Ms. McNeil then contacted Dr. Nicholas Covino, President of William James College, for some support. In collaboration with the CAN-DO team, Dr. Gemima St. Louis (Associate Professor at WJC) and Meghan O'Dell (AmeriCorps VISTA Project Coordinator for the PATHWAYS Program) planned a community event and reached out to the WJC community. Within a few hours of posting a recruitment flyer, four WJC students generously volunteered their Saturday morning to offer a family-friendly workshop at Eliot Church in Newton Centre.



The event was a hit! Four families brought their children to the playground outside the church, where Cassandra and Patrick led them in a series of art activities. They painted mini pots, planted seeds that they could watch grow, and made their own play dough. As the kids shouted and ran around the playground, the mothers took a few quiet moments of peaceful contemplation in the mindfulness workshop. Focusing on the fresh smell of mint, the smooth feel and tangy taste of a blueberry, the echoing sounds of the singing bowl, and the colors in the park outside, Arialda and Beverly led a discussion with participants about how to ground themselves in the midst of life's chaotic moments. Afterwards, everyone came together for a pizza lunch and casual conversations. Participants and volunteers alike requested that WJC and CAN-DO continue to host more community events in the future.

An enormous THANK YOU goes out to all the students who volunteered—Arialda, Beverly, Cassandra and Patrick—and to Kathy Laufer, Josephine McNeil, and the Eliot Church of Newton. We are looking forward to continuing the partnership!

“Meeting the need—making a difference”

“Poto Mitan”: Change Agents that Promote Well-Being in the Haitian Community

On May 5th, 2018, William James College and the Haitian Mental Health Network hosted a *Bi-Annual Conference on Haitian Mental Health*. In the Haitian community, the term “Poto Mitan” refers to individuals, agencies, and institutions that serve as pillars of the community. A “Poto Mitan” is vital to the livelihood, survival, and sustainability of the society at large. The primary aim of the conference was to identify assets that exist within the Haitian community, and recognize the many individuals and organizations that serve in the role of a “Poto Mitan” or as agents of social change in promoting the overall health and well-being of Haitians living in Haiti and in the Diaspora. A particular focus of the conference was on acknowledging multi-disciplinary collaborations that provide comprehensive, integrated, and systems-level programs to improve community wellness.



Pictured from left to right: Gemima St. Louis, Gina Dessources, Didi Bertrand, Marie Pierre-Victor, Marline Amedee, Olivia Apollon and Marie St. Fleur

Haitian Art Exhibition & Celebration of Haitian Heritage Month Affinities: Maternity & Creativity

Affinities: Maternity and Creativity features 30 paintings from New England-based artists and guest-artists from Jacmel, Haiti, exploring the intersection between the state of maternity and creativity.

Hosted by the Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts, Haitian Mental Health Network, and the Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health at William James College

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Workshop on Global & Diverse Leadership



On June 21st, William James College's Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health & Organizational Leadership Psychology Program, in partnership with the Massachusetts Psychological Association, hosted a workshop on **Global & Diverse Leadership**. Dr. Jean Lau Chin, a Professor at Adelphi University in New York and the 2018 Fulbright Scholar as Distinguished Chair to the University of Sydney, Australia presented her current research on examining the leadership styles of diverse leaders and how they are influenced by their social identities, lived experiences, and contexts. Her research findings from her work were discussed with implications for what this means for higher education institutions and those interested in leadership.

We were honored to welcome Dr. Jean Lau Chin to our campus. Dr. Chin has held leadership roles as former Dean at Adelphi University, Systemwide Dean at Alliant International University, Executive Director of South Cove Community Health Center, and Co-Director of Thom Mental Health Clinic. Currently, her scholarship is on global and diverse leadership, which includes examining women and ethnic minority issues. She has published numerous books, including *Global and Culturally Diverse Leaders* and *Leadership: Challenges for Business, Education and Society*. Dr. Chin is the first Asian American to be licensed as a psychologist in Massachusetts. Active in service to the profession, she is the Past-Chair of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Council Leadership Team and President of the International Council of Psychologists. **Dr. Chin is currently running for APA President 2020.**



Pictured from left to right: Drs. Charmain Jackman, Jill Bloom, Jean Lau Chin, Gemima St. Louis, and Mari Carmen Bennasar

Save the Date! Fall Conferences

Saturday, September 29th, 2018

Asian Mental Health Matters:

Integrative and Holistic Approaches to Mental Health Care for Asians

Friday, November 9th, 2018

Conference on Spirituality & Social Justice

For more information, please contact CMGMH@williamjames.edu

Celebrating CommUNITY!

On June 7th, CMGMH held its end-of-the-year *Cultural Diversity Celebration*. The performers included a local spoken word poet, Harlym 1Two5, and William James College students Sean Carmichael (Singer/Guitarist), Sohenga Depestre (Drummer), and Sothavy Doeur (Breaker).

Thank you to all the volunteers, performers, students, friends, and allies who attended the event!
Have a wonderful summer! We look forward to reconnecting in the fall.



Mental Health in the News

- **Life in Gaza: Palestinians' struggle to survive.** *Aljazeera*. In the midst of the economic struggle to survive, Palestinians in Gaza are dealing with a mental health crisis as new traumas compound old ones.
- **Michael Phelps opens up about his struggles with mental health.** *Boston.com*. After revealing the depths of his depression and even thoughts of suicide after his second drunken-driving arrest, Phelps is hoping to make a difference for those who are dealing with similar issues.
- **Separating parents from their kids at the border contradicts everything we know about children's welfare.** *LA Times*. Since October, the federal government has separated more than 700 children from their parents as they entered the U.S., according to Office of Refugee Resettlement. Officials at the Department of Homeland Security claim they act solely "to protect the best interests of minor children."
- **With suicide rates on rise, can therapy apps like Talkspace, BetterHelp help?** *USA Today*. Millions of Americans, often younger adults, are experimenting with mobile apps as a preferred or complementary method of therapy.
- **How do we help students feel safe in school again?** *Psychology Today*. Another school shooting and no end in sight. Another brutal, senseless act, lacking human compassion. It's hard to comprehend when you consider what goes into raising just one life, how many circles of attachment and commitment surround that life.
- **Rural areas have the highest suicide rates and fewest mental health workers.** *Huffington Post*. There is a severe shortage of mental health workers across the U.S., but the problem is most pronounced in rural areas. There isn't a single psychiatrist in 65 percent of nonmetropolitan counties, and almost half of those counties don't have a psychologist.

Holidays & Observances

- June 1: **Global Day of Parents**
- June 1-30: **Pride Month**
- June 1-30: **Caribbean American Heritage Month**
- June 2: **National Gun Violence Awareness Day**
- June 4: **International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression**
- June 5: **World Environment Day**
- June 12: **World Day Against Child Labor**
- June 14-15: **Eid-Al-Fitr**
- June 16: **International Day of the African Child**
- June 17: **Father's Day**
- June 19: **Juneteenth**
- June 20: **World Refugee Day**
- June 21: **Summer Solstice**
- June 26: **International Day in Support of Victims of Torture**
- June 27th: **PTSD Awareness Day**

Community Events, Workshops & Conferences

- 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>
- July 5th-10th, 2018: **Summer Institute in Global Mental.** <https://listserv.tc.columbia.edu/t/2405723/19467986/6419/8/>
- July 9th-13th, 2018: **Biennial International Seminar on the Teaching of Psychological Science.** <https://bistops.org/>
- September 13rd-16st, 2018: **Cape Cod Symposium on Addictive Disorders (Call for Volunteers).** <http://sgiz.mobi/s3/bfcob3357e41>
- September 27th-28th, 2018: **3rd Annual Black Mental Health Symposium.** <https://blackmhsymposium.com/>
- October 5th-7th, 2018: **7th International Conference of Community Psychology, Chile 2018.** https://www.cipc2018chile.cl/modalidades-de-trabajo/?lang=en#presentacion_carteles
- October 10th-13th, 2018: **5th World Congress of the World Association of Cultural Psychiatry.** <http://wacp2018.org/>
- October 18th-21st, 2018: **The National Latina/o Psychological Association Conference.** www.nlpaconference.org/
- October 19th-20th, 2018: **Diversity Challenge 2018:"Making Race and Culture Work in the STEM Era: Bringing All People to the Forefront.** <http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/bc1/schools/lsoe/sites/isprc/Diversity%20Challenge/2018%20Diversity%20Challenge%20Call.pdf>
- November 3rd, 2018: **Nurturing Resilience in Children & Families: A shift from Deficits to Strengths.** <http://www.cvent.com/events/nurturing-resilience-in-children-and-families-a-shift-from-deficits-to-strengths/event-summary-e6cb45e1dbca4392958c71d1779e545c.aspx?Refid=MasterCalendar>
- November 12th-16th, 2018: **Caribbean Regional Conference of Psychology.** <http://crcp2018.org/>
- November 18th-28th, 2018: **APA International Learning Partner Program to Cuba.** <http://www.apa.org/international/programs/learning-partner/cuba.aspx>

Enjoy your summer!!!