



# CMGMH CONNECTION



*"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value, no matter what their color."*

-Maya Angelou

## Upcoming CMGMH & WJC Events

- September 15-October 15: **Hispanic Heritage Month**
- October 4: **"Reflection on Colombia's Peace Agreement"**, First Session: 11:45am-1pm, Room 335. Second Session 6:30pm-8:00pm, Room 231
- October 7: **Student Social**, Sponsored by ALANAA & Co-sponsored by CMGMH. 7:30pm, KINGS Legacy Place (600 Legacy Place, Dedham, MA 02026)
- October 10: **World Mental Health Day**
- October 15 : **Deadline to declare a CMGMH Concentration** (email [cmgmh@williamjames.edu](mailto:cmgmh@williamjames.edu) with any questions)
- October 18 & 20: **Brown Bag Discussion Series**, 12pm-1pm, Room 334
- October 19: **Immersion Program Presentation**. 11:45AM-1PM, Room 334/335
- October 20: **Black Mental Health Graduate Academy Inaugural Celebration**, 6PM-7:30PM, Room TBD

For a list of all CMGMH events, [refer to our website.](http://www.williamjames.edu/cmgmh)

## In This Issue

- Upcoming CMGMH & WJC Events
- Black Mental Health Graduate Academy
- Summer Immersion Program Highlight: Kenya 2016
- Reclaiming Columbus Day for Indigenous People
- Holidays and Global Mental Health Events Calendar
- Current Events Corner
- Brown Bag Discussions: Focusing on Diversity

# Black Mental Health Graduate Academy

## “Achieving Excellence Through Diversity”

According to the Annapolis Foundation and the American Psychological Association, although ethnic minorities represent 30% of the population, approximately 90% of mental health professionals identify as White and only 5.3% of psychologists are Black.

In order to serve an increasingly multiracial, multiethnic, and multilingual country, William James College (WJC) is committed to diversifying the mental health field by recruiting, mentoring, and supporting Black students interested in becoming leaders in the field.

As evidence of this commitment, President Dr. Nick Covino selected Dr. Natalie Cort to chair the Black Mental Health Initiative (BMHI) which aims to recruit and retain Black faculty, staff, and students at WJC. The Black Mental Health Graduate Academy (BMHGA) is an academic pipeline that embodies the goals of the BMHI by providing critical support and opportunities for Black graduate students.

“Students need role models and mentors to provide academic and career support,” explained Dr. Cort. “We will create enrichment programs culturally tailored to fill any gaps created by educational disadvantages in order to promote students’ success in grad school.”

BMHGA addresses racial and ethnic disparities in the mental health field by diversifying WJC and, ultimately, the mental health care workforce. The BMHGA, under the auspices of the Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health, provides opportunities to enhance student success. Scholars in the BMHGA receive professional mentorship support through the Academy Mentorship Program, participate in academic and professional development opportunities through the Academy Scholar Institute, and engage in service learning opportunities by working with historically disadvantaged groups in the community.

***“BMHGA addresses racial and ethnic disparities in the mental health field by diversifying WJC and, ultimately, the mental health care workforce.”***



Students and faculty gathered for the BMHGA Welcome Brunch in September

The Black Mental Health Graduate Academy's Inaugural Celebration will take place on October 20<sup>th</sup> to welcome its pioneering members. For more information about the BMHGA, email [Natalie.Cort@williamjames.edu](mailto:Natalie.Cort@williamjames.edu) or visit <http://www.williamjames.edu/academics/centers-of-excellence/multicultural-and-global-mental-health/black-mental-health-initiative.cfm>

#### Sources:

American Psychological Association (2015). *Health disparities & mental/behavioral health workforce*. Retrieved from: <http://www.apa.org/about/gr/issues/workforce/disparity.aspx>

The Annapolis Coalition On the Behavioral Health Workforce (2007). *Action plan on the behavioral health workforce*. Retrieved from: <http://annapoliscoalition.org/?portfolio=action-plan-on-the-behavioral-health-workforce>



# Summer Immersion Program

## Highlight: Kenya 2016



***Students representing all of WJC's academic programs*** (Fabiola Jean-Felix, Ewelina Kotowska, John Meigs, Adetutu Ajibose, Kaitlyn Cournoyer, Darryl Sweeper, and Omar Bah) ***and two faculty members*** (Dr. David Haddad and Dr. Claire Fialkov) ***represented WJC in Kenya this summer.***



An important component of academic concentrations in the Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health is cultural immersion through both local and international service-learning programs.

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).

In July 2016, seven WJC students and two faculty members launched The Kenya Education and Empowerment Project (KEEP) in Thika, Kenya. As part of a project sponsored by a Higher Education Grant from Proctor and Gamble, the WJC team worked with a primary school in a rural community to implement an innovative character strengths program designed to increase protective hygiene practices and social-emotional learning in the community.

In this collaborative effort between Kimo Wellness Foundation and the Gathage School, WJC students worked with 310 children and over 400 community members in a “whole community” intervention effort to support health, well-being and community healing.

“The model for our project is the concurrent delivery of health and hygiene products in tandem with a whole community, social-emotional learning program to insure sustainability and continuity of care within schools and families,” explained Dr. Claire Fialkov, co-faculty leader of the Kenya immersion trip.

The results of the program have been incredibly positive and include increases in children’s awareness of character strengths, physical well-being, and hand-washing and other hygiene practices. In addition, the Gathage School now has access to water and has installed concrete flooring, both of which promote the health and wellbeing of the students and teachers.

“Participating in the Kenya immersion trip reaffirmed my desire to serve others in the field of psychology,” said Darryl Sweeper, Jr., a second year Counseling student with concentrations in Expressive Arts Therapy and African & Caribbean Mental Health. “I knew that our program was impactful when I saw the proud smiles of parents as their children were able to express their character strengths. It was incredibly rewarding work.”

CMGMH immersion programs provide WJC students and faculty with hands-on global mental health service learning to support and enhance their academic coursework. “Global mental health is a lens from which we can see that the world is a very small place, one that reminds us that we are all connected,” explains Dr. David Haddad, co-faculty leader of the trip. “A global lens cultivates clinical humility, inviting counselors to better understand the culture and community practices that can enhance and support treatment.”

# Reclaiming Columbus Day for Indigenous People

Though Columbus Day has been a designated federal holiday since 1937, there is controversy surrounding its continued celebration. Since 1977, there has been a movement to rename Columbus Day as “Indigenous Peoples’ Day” in an effort to reclaim the day for the countless number of Native Americans who were marginalized, raped, killed, and enslaved under Columbus’s leadership.

***“American Indians and Alaska Natives are five times more likely to die of alcohol and substance-related causes than white Americans and have higher rates of suicide and PTSD than the national rate.”***

“I would definitely feel more comfortable and respected working in an environment that acknowledges the impact of colonization versus celebrating it,” said Michelle Harris, Core Faculty in the Expressive Arts Therapy Emphasis in the Counseling Department at William James College. “I think it is a step toward offering a broader dialogue about our history and the American Genocide.”

Native Americans in this country still feel the effects of European colonialism and oppression by the United States government. 28% of Native Americans live in poverty and one third do not have access to health care (Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). American Indians and Alaska Natives are five times more likely to die of alcohol and substance-related causes than white Americans and have higher rates of suicide and PTSD than the national rate (Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Hazards to Native American health and security are currently making headlines as native populations protest against the construction of the Dakota Access pipeline that would run near burial grounds and

potentially threaten the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe’s water supply (Huffington Post).

Holidays like Columbus Day often do not leave room for those who have been brutally oppressed throughout our history. These holidays encourage Americans to engage in collective forgetting of our imperfect past.

There are many local efforts in Massachusetts to abandon the traditional Columbus Day holiday. This summer, the Cambridge City Council unanimously voted to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples’ Day (Boston Globe) and a few local colleges and universities, such as Tufts University, are observing the day in honor of Native Americans.

Organizations focused on mental health care are actively involved in this conversation. In September, the Australian Psychological Society “issued a formal apology to” Indigenous Australians, “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, acknowledging psychology’s role in contributing to the erosion of culture and to their mistreatment” (ABC, 2016).

As an institution focused on providing mental health care and services to those who need them, what role can William James College take to further prioritize the recognition of minority populations who have been particularly disadvantaged throughout our history?



Keith Barcongco (2008). <https://www.flickr.com/photos/kitoy/2721384052>

## Sources:

Brennan, B. *Australian Psychological Society apologizes for failing Indigenous Australians*. Australian Broadcasting Corporation (September 2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-15/aps-sorry-for-failing-indigenous-australians/7849694>

Capelouto, J.D. *Columbus Day now Indigenous Peoples’ Day in Cambridge*. Boston Globe (June 2016). Retrieved from: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/06/07/cambridge-city-council-changes-columbus-day-indigenous-peoples-day/SOL7u5r3pLxjSdWee4qGpI/story.html>

Harte, J. *North Dakota pipeline to halt temporarily after tribe’s protest*. The Huffington Post (September 2016). Retrieved from: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/north-dakota-pipeline-tribe\\_us\\_57cf3702e4b03d2d4597288f](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/north-dakota-pipeline-tribe_us_57cf3702e4b03d2d4597288f)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2001). *Mental health: Culture, race and ethnicity*. A supplement to mental health: A report of the Surgeon General. Rockville, MD: DHHS, U.S. Public Health Services, Office of the Surgeon General.

# Current Events Corner

Mental health in the news

- **“When black death goes viral, it can trigger PTSD-like trauma”**. PBS **Newshour** (September 20, 2016). Explores research suggesting that repeated images of violence against people of color can lead to long-term mental health effects.
- **“Syrian refugees adjusting to U.S. bring complex health needs.”** PBS **Newshour** (August 8, 2016). Podcast that discusses the needs of refugees in America related to trauma, language barriers, and discrimination.
- **“Rejecting the deadbeat dad stereotype”** - **The Atlantic** (September 25, 2016). Photojournalism exploring parenting in the age of mass incarceration, the War on Drugs, and **frequent exposure to crime and trauma**.
- **“20 veterans die by suicide every day. Here’s what the VA is doing about it.”** **The Huffington Post** (July 12, 2016). Describing the efforts of the VA to address mental health services and access for veterans.

*CMGMH aims to collaborate with various groups at William James College, in our community, and internationally to celebrate diversity. If you have any ideas or contributions to our Newsletter, please email us at [cmgmh@williamjames.edu](mailto:cmgmh@williamjames.edu)*



**WILLIAM JAMES  
COLLEGE**

**Center for Multicultural &  
Global Mental Health**

## Brown Bag Discussions

Focusing on Diversity

This year, there will be six brown bag discussions at WJC, many of which will focus on topics relating to diversity.

“My team and I are very excited that this year we are doubling the number of Brown Bag Discussions for the community,” expressed Josh Cooper, Dean of Students. “This week we kicked off the series with two meetings around the topic of how William James can support and celebrate diversity. Along with great conversation and positive ideas for our community, many themes for future discussions around multiculturalism were shared and we look forward to future discussions throughout the year.”

For more information, email  
[Josh\\_Cooper@williamjames.edu](mailto:Josh_Cooper@williamjames.edu)

## Holidays and Global Mental Health Events Calendar

- October 1-9: Navaratri/Dussehra
- October 2 : Muharram (Al Hijrah - New Year)
- October 3-4: Rosh Hashana
- October 6th: **Framingham Coming Together: A Community Forum On Disparities In Mental Health Care**. *Featured Speaker: Dr. Natalie Cort (William James College)*. 7pm-9pm. Nevins Hall, Framingham Town Hall, 150 Concord Street, Framingham, MA.
- October 11-12: Yom Kippur
- October 24th: **SPCC Webinar: Addressing Intimate Partner Violence In Immigrants, Refugees, and Ethnoracial Communities**. 1-2:30pm. Register online at: <https://psychiatryandculture.org/webinars>
- October 28-29: **2016 Annual Diversity Challenge Conference: Educating our youths**. WJC faculty and students will be presenting. [http://www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/isprc/Call\\_for\\_proposals\\_2016/dc2016registrationinfo.html](http://www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/isprc/Call_for_proposals_2016/dc2016registrationinfo.html)
- October 30: Diwali