

**Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Black & African Heritage Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC)
Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2025 10am-12pm**

WELCOME

Land Acknowledgement

Introductions/Check-In

Co-Chairs: Romalis Taylor and Queen Nina Womack

Attendees: Akili Warren, Alisha Manning, Belanie Brown, Blanca E. Watson, Brenda Ingram, Brigida Salinas, Candace Walker, Cindy Kim (captioner), Chell Le Jones, Coach Afi G., David Piller, Dewayne Hervey, Karen Gunn, Erica Melbourne, Erica Robinson, Gina Haase, Gregory Parker, Henna An, Irene Ratliff, Jenn Yates, Jibril Hussen, Jonnie Muckelroy, Jordan Thomas, Joy Ellington, Joyce Sales, Kalila Houston, Kevin Collins, Kirsten Pannell, Latrica Cooper, Lisa Schoyer, Malcolm Stokes, Nelly Arias, Nina M. Spain, Paula Estes, Pauline Giscomber, Rhoda Addam, Senait Admassu Wendy Cabil

DMH Admin: Dr. Chiyah A. Lawrence, Dr. Evelyn Espinoza, Jamie Walker, Dr. Jennifer Alquijay, Yailin Noreaga

Approval of Minutes

- Motion by Brenda Ingram to approve minutes and seconded by Dewayne Harvey
 - BAH UsCC Subcommittee approved February 2025 meeting minutes
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DMH Updates

Dr. Jennifer Alquijay provided the following DMH Updates:

- Other UsCCs are still rolling out some capacity building projects (CBPs) and with the June 30 deadline, we are really tight on the timeline. BAH UsCC is in a good space because all of the CBPs are up and running with the exception of the Homeless Outreach project that was discussed in the last BAH UsCC subcommittee meeting.
- The BHSA planning kickoff is March 28. Notification will be sent via DMH newsletter as well as UsCC subcommittee email distribution.
 - All BAH UsCC members are encouraged to attend virtually. There is an in-person meeting with a hybrid option on the second Tuesday of each month.
 - DMH wants the input of each community represented by the UsCCs. Kaylene Gilbert is asking UsCC subcommittee members to make sure that you let us know what the needs are of each community as well as your own comments. BAH UsCC members are invited and needed.
- Mirtala Parada Ward is working on getting the Office of Immigrant Affairs to do presentations in each of the UsCCs so the BAH UsCC can see how the Office of Immigration Affairs can provide support/how county is rolling out support for the community and how we can be informed and help each other.

Dr. Jennifer Alquijay Jamie Walker provided the following updates around BAH UsCC Co-Chair Elections:

- The current co-chair's terms are coming to an end in June. We need new volunteers to serve as BAH UsCC Co-Chairs: people who are willing to help steward this meeting and steward the

needs of the BAH community and be a representative and voice around the table in the BHSA planning.

- According to the bylaws, elections should be taking place in May or June of this year so now is a really great time to start thinking of people who could fill Queen Nina and Romalis' shoes. Anyone thinking about potentially filling the co-chair role, they need to meet the eligibility requirements. One of the eligibility requirements that a lot of people get hung up on is that they must attend 5 out of the last 9 meetings that have occurred. It is possible to meet the attendance requirement with continued attendance through May or June.
- We will revisit this conversation in May and have nominations so that the election can take place in May or June.
- Eligibility concerns: you cannot be an L.A. County employee due to conflict of interest, in one of our incubation academies, or if you have won a bid or plan on bidding a county grant, etc.
- Email co-chair nominations to BAHUsCC@dmh.lacounty.gov

Capacity Building Projects

- New capacity building projects will go out to bid after July 1. What is needed from BAH UsCC members is to provide reference quotes if/when asked by Dr. Chiyah. Not having reference quotes can hold up the solicitation process.

Life Links

Drs. Brenda Ingram and Karen Gunn shared a presentation on the MHSA Life Links project:

- The UMOJA Project team (Dr. Brenda Ingram, Dr. Stephanie Powell, Dr. Karen Gunn, and Brenda Blackburn) was awarded the project to develop the Life Links resource guidebook.
- Developing Life Links is a strategy that LACDMH, in collaboration with UMOJA Project, will advance to support individuals and families in underserved communities of color. Objectives of this project include the development of a resource guide for the BAH UsCC that will promote inclusivity, and equitable access to resources.
- The UMOJA Project has 4 months to accomplish the goals of the project. The goal is to develop and deliver a resource guide that lists culturally affirming and relevant community located services. want those services, again, to be community located services that support mental health and well-being for the black and African heritage residents of Los Angeles County. The UMOJA Project will be researching, to accomplish research the community services that currently exist.
 - Currently focusing on SPAs 1, 2, 6, and 8 because they contain the highest concentration of Black and African Heritage residents in those particular SPAs.
 - Going to be looking at databases on through the web. And we're going to look at SAMHSA, which lists mental health and substance abuse providers in different areas, 211, look at the black pages, gaggle, DMH website, BEAM, etc.
- Survey: Please name 5 qualities you look for in a community service provider, agency, or organization that make you feel that you will receive good services? What matters to you?

Break

Adolescent Suicide Prevention

Henna An and Brigida Salidas from the LACDMH Prevention and Outcomes Division shared a training presentation on Adolescent Suicide Prevention. The presentation and resources will be provided via email.



Community Engagement

Kevin Collins asked the group what topics communities are interested in talking about in preparation for a forum being planned for June but tabled the discussion for the next meeting due to time.

- Please email kecollins@dmh.lacounty.gov with any suggestions

Community Events and Announcements

March is Women's History Month. Queen Nina encouraged everyone to do something to participate (e.g., go to a women's history event, watch United Nations women's program, etc.)

Labor Acknowledgment

Upcoming Meeting: April 3, 2025 (10:00am – 12:00pm)

For more information about the BAH UsCC, please see its website:
<https://dmh.lacounty.gov/about/mhsa/uscc/black-african-heritage-uscc/>