

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Anti-Racism, Inclusion, Solidarity & Empowerment (ARISE) Division presents



MENTAL HEALTH MULTICULTURAL CONFERENCE 2026

*Healing in a Land of Diversity:
A Multicultural Approach to Mental Health*
March 17-18

PROGRAM

GUIDE



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HILDA L. SOLIS

CHAIR, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISOR, FIRST DISTRICT

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2026 Mental Health Multicultural Conference presented by the Anti-Racism, Inclusion, Solidarity, and Empowerment (ARISE) Division of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the ARISE Division, the organizers, speakers, and partners who made this important gathering possible, as well as to the many mental health professionals and community advocates joining us. Your dedication to serving our communities and advancing culturally and linguistically responsive care makes a meaningful difference in the lives of residents across Los Angeles County.

By coming together to share knowledge, experiences, and strategies, you are helping strengthen a more inclusive and compassionate mental health system that honors the diversity of the communities we serve and ensures that no one is left behind.

Thank you for the work you do every day to support healing, dignity, and well-being in our communities. I wish you a meaningful and inspiring conference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hilda L. Solis".

Hilda L. Solis
Chair, First District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors





BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HOLLY J. MITCHELL
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT

Dear Friends and Honored Guests,

It is my honor to join the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's ARISE Division in welcoming you to the 2026 Mental Health Multicultural Conference. I want to thank LACDMH and the ARISE Division for their steadfast commitment to anti-racism, inclusion, solidarity, and empowerment in mental health care — values that are not just aspirational, but essential to the health and dignity of our communities.

Over these two days, clinicians, advocates, community members, and leaders will come together to explore the intersection of culture, identity, and mental wellness. From intergenerational trauma and community resilience to the unique experiences of our LGBTQ+, immigrant, Indigenous, AAPI, Black, and Latine communities, this conference centers the voices and lived experiences that are too often absent from mainstream mental health conversations. The breadth of this gathering reflects a powerful truth that healing is not one-size-fits-all, and culturally responsive care saves lives.

I am proud to support spaces like this one, where we move beyond stigma and toward genuine connection, innovation, and healing for all. Mental health is health — and every resident of Los Angeles County deserves care that sees, honors, and reflects who they are.

On behalf of the two million residents who call Los Angeles County's Second Supervisorial District home, I wish you an inspired and transformative conference.

Sincerely,

Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor, Second District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors



Welcome Message for the 2026 Mental Health Multicultural Conference

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), I am honored to welcome you to the 2026 Mental Health Multicultural Conference, Healing in a Land of Diversity: A Multicultural Approach to Mental Health.

There is no more fitting place for this conversation than Los Angeles, one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse regions in the world. Our communities are shaped by rich histories, global migration, resilience and strength. However, we struggle on a daily basis to battle inequities that continue to impact access to care and overall wellbeing.

A multicultural approach to mental health requires more than awareness. It calls for intentional action: designing services that are culturally responsive, linguistically accessible, trauma-informed, and grounded in community partnership.

At LACDMH, this commitment guides our work every day. We continue to expand culturally and linguistically competent services across our directly operated clinics and contracted providers. We are strengthening our peer workforce and community health worker programs, recognizing the importance of lived experience and trusted messengers in building connections and reducing stigma. We partner closely with community-based organizations, faith leaders, schools and grassroots advocates to ensure services are relevant, accessible and responsive to local needs.

We are working to move our efforts upstream by investing in prevention, early intervention, and community education, so that support is available before individuals and families reach crisis. At the same time, we are examining our data and systems to identify disparities and improve equity in access, engagement and outcomes.

Over the course of this conference, I encourage you to engage fully — share your expertise, challenge assumptions, and build new partnerships. Together, we can cultivate a mental health system that reflects the dignity, diversity and resilience of the communities we serve.

Thank you for your passion, dedication, and heart for the work you do and for being part of this important conversation.

With gratitude,



Lisa H. Wong, Psy.D. Director
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health



Dear Colleagues,

It is a pleasure to welcome all of you to the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's Multicultural Conference. I want to begin by thanking all of you, and your presence reflects a shared commitment to strengthening mental health services that honor the diversity of the communities we serve.

Our County is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse regions in the world. Every day, our system of care supports individuals and families from many different backgrounds, cultures, and languages. This diversity is one of our greatest strengths, but it also challenges us to ensure that our services are accessible, culturally responsive, and rooted in the lived experiences of the people we serve.

Our work at the Department of Mental Health is grounded in partnership. We cannot do this work alone. We rely on collaboration with community-based organizations, contract providers, cultural leaders, and the communities themselves to build systems of care that are effective and equitable. Conferences like this help strengthen those partnerships and allow us to learn directly from the people and communities we serve.

Thank you for your dedication to supporting the mental health and well-being of our communities. I hope today's conference provides meaningful insights and strengthens the partnerships that help move this important work forward.

Warm regards,



Rimmi Hundal, M.A.
Chief Deputy Director
Department of Mental Health



Dear Colleagues,


On behalf of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to each of you for taking the time to attend the ARISE Mental Health Multicultural Conference 2026, presented by our Anti-Racism, Inclusion, Solidarity & Empowerment (ARISE) Division.

At LACDMH, we pride ourselves on providing culturally responsive services that honor the extraordinary diversity of Los Angeles County. This conference reflects our shared commitment to equity, inclusion, and clinical excellence in serving communities whose cultural identities, histories, and lived experiences must be understood and respected.

Your presence signifies more than professional development—it represents a collective investment in deepening our awareness, strengthening our skills, and advancing mental health care that is affirming, compassionate, and just. By coming together in this space of learning and dialogue, you help ensure that our system of care continues to evolve in ways that truly meet the needs of the people we serve.

Thank you for your dedication to this work and for being part of a movement that centers dignity, cultural humility, and empowerment.

With appreciation,



Curley L. Bonds, M.D.



Welcome from Our ARISE Division Managers

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, we are honored and pleased to welcome you to the 2026 Healing in a Land of Diversity: A Multicultural Approach to Mental Health conference.

This conference will honor Los Angeles County's rich cultural diversity while examining innovative, comprehensive strategies and treatments tailored to our community's diverse behavioral health needs. In addition, it will serve as a significant platform to advance equity, belonging, and inclusion, providing behavioral health professionals and community members with relevant tools to foster recovery and resilience and to improve public mental health services.

We express our gratitude to Dr. Lisa H. Wong, the planning committee, the keynote speakers, panelists, workshop leaders, and, most importantly, our esteemed guests, for their unwavering commitment and dedication to this cause. We trust you will find this experience enriching and profoundly impactful.

Respectfully,



Mary Barraza, LCSW



Dr. Robert D. Byrd, PsyD



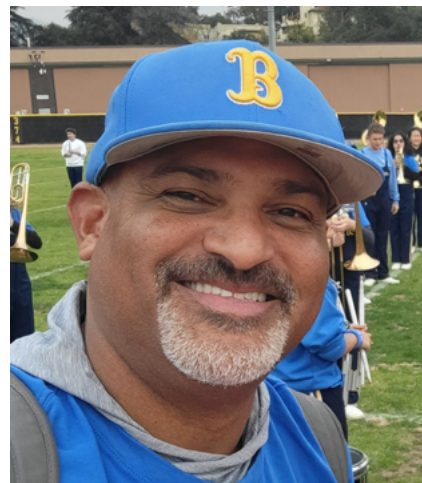
Mirtala Parada Ward, LCSW

Master of Ceremonies

James Coomes

LCSW

James Coomes is a licensed clinical social worker and serves as a Program Manager III with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. In this capacity, James provides support and resources to the public mental health system in the Antelope Valley. He has been in this role for 3 1/2 years and previously served as the manager of the Olive View Community Mental Health Urgent Care Center. James has served in various capacities within the Department of Mental Health for the past 27 years and was involved in advocating for the establishment of the LACDMH ARISE Division.



James is a graduate of UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs where he received his MSW in 1996, has been the announcer for the UCLA marching band for the past 18 years, remained actively involved in anti-racism work for 4 decades, and volunteers with his spouse in the building of the annual Burbank Tournament of Roses Rose Parade Float.

James is a graduate of UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs where he received his MSW in 1996, has been the announcer for the UCLA marching band for the past 18 years, remained actively involved in anti-racism work for 4 decades, and volunteers with his spouse in the building of the annual Burbank Tournament of Roses Rose Parade Float.

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Wendy Ashley, Psy.D

LCSW



Wendy Ashley, Psy.D, LCSW, is a Professor and Department Chair of the MSW program at CSUN. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has over thirty years of clinical experience. Dr. Ashley is a certified EMDR provider; is the author of multiple publications; speaks at conferences nationwide and internationally; maintains a trauma informed, anti-oppressive private practice and provides antiracist training and consultation for multiple organizations.

Her pedagogical acumen centers on conducting and facilitating antiracist, culturally relevant research and practice with marginalized individuals and communities. Dr. Ashley's research interests emphasize the promotion of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in clinical practice, education and organizational culture.

Kristen Lewis

Director and Co-Founder, Measure of America



AFTERNOON

DAY 1

Kristen Lewis is the director and co-founder of Measure of America, a project of the Social Science Research Council. She is coauthor of two volumes of The Measure of America (Columbia University Press, 2008, and NYU Press, 2010); well-being reports for California, Louisiana, and Mississippi as well as Marin and Sonoma Counties and the Los Angeles and New York City metro areas; and the Measure of America youth disconnection series. Before starting Measure of America in 2007, Kristen was senior policy advisor to the water and sanitation task force of the United Nations Millennium Project, led by Jeffery Sachs, and was coauthor of the task force report, Health, Dignity and Development: What Will It Take? (Earthscan, 2005). She previously worked at the United Nations for many years, first with UN Women and then with the policy bureau of the United Nations Development Programme, and has served as a consultant on gender equality, development indicators, and water governance issues for numerous international development organizations, including UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, and the World Bank. She holds a bachelor's degree from Bryn Mawr College and a master's degree from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

Mastaneh Moghadam

LCSW



MORNING

DAY 2

Mastaneh Moghadam, LCSW, is a licensed clinical social worker with more than 25 years of experience working with individuals, couples, and families. She is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Cross-Cultural Expressions, a nonprofit that provides mental health services and community programs for immigrant, refugee, and underserved populations across Los Angeles County. A fluent Farsi speaker, she specializes in multicultural counseling, trauma-informed care, and mental health concerns impacting Eastern European and Middle Eastern communities.

Mastaneh has served on multiple Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health subcommittees and founded We Do Care, a support group for Iranian American parents of LGBTQ+ individuals. She is also a filmmaker, having written, directed, and produced three mental health films in partnership with LACDMH.

Day 1 Conference at a Glance

- 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM** *Registration, Breakfast, and Entertainment*
Music by: Project KnuckleHead
- 8:40 AM - 8:55 AM** *Welcome and Opening Remarks*
Land Acknowledgment/Salutations
Rimmi Hundal, M.A.
- 8:55 AM - 9:00 AM** *Introduction and Acknowledgements of the Director*
James Coomes, LCSW
- 9:00 AM - 10:20 AM** *Healing in Uncertain Times: Cultivating Trauma-Informed, Culturally Responsive, and Antiracist Organizations*
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Wendy Ashley, Psy.D, LCSW
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** *Morning Workshops*
- 11:40 AM - 12:55 PM** *Lunch, Networking and Entertainment*
Music by: DJ, Give a Beat
- 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM** *Afternoon Workshops*
- 2:05 PM - 2:25 PM** *Break/Networking/Arts & Culture Movement*
Versa Style Dance
- 2:25 PM - 2:30 PM** *Introduction and Remarks for Afternoon Plenary Speaker*
James Coomes, LCSW
- 2:30 PM - 3:35 PM** *A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2026*
Keynote Speaker: Kristen Lewis, Measure of America
- 3:45 PM - 4:00 PM** *Closing Remarks*
James Coomes, LCSW

Day 2 Conference at a Glance

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM

Registration, Breakfast, and Entertainment

Music by: Project KnuckleHead

8:30 AM - 8:55 AM

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Land Acknowledgment/Salutations

Mary Barraza, LCSW

8:55 AM - 9:00 AM

Introduction of the Keynote Speaker

James Coomes, LCSW

9:00 AM - 10:20 AM

***Our Immigrant Stories: The Healing Power of Stories and
Storytelling for Immigrants and Immigrant Communities***

Keynote Speaker: Mastaneh Moghadam, LCSW

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Morning Workshops

11:40 AM - 12:55 PM

Lunch, Networking and Entertainment

Music by: DJ, Give a Beat

1:05 PM - 2:05 PM

Afternoon Workshops A

2:05 PM - 2:25 PM

Afternoon Break/Networking

2:30 PM - 3:35 PM

Afternoon Workshops B

3:40 PM - 4:00 PM

Main Ballroom: Closing Comments & Performance

Music by: Project KnuckleHead

Keynotes And Workshops Overview

KEYNOTE

DAY 1

WILSHIRE BALLROOM 9:00 AM - 10:20 AM

Healing in Uncertain Times: Cultivating Trauma-Informed, Culturally Responsive, and Antiracist Organizations (1.5 CE/CEU)

Wendy Ashley, Psy.D., LCSW

This keynote provides an integrative overview of the current socio-political landscape and examines how prolonged uncertainty, collective trauma, and systemic inequities impact both mental health providers and the clients they serve. The facilitator will explore core principles of trauma-informed care and the ethical necessity of cultural humility, antiracist practice, restorative self-care, and radical healing. The session emphasizes practical application across clinical, supervisory, and organizational contexts. Dr. Ashley is the author of multiple publications; speaks at conferences nationwide and internationally; maintains a trauma informed, anti-oppressive private practice and provides antiracist training and consultation for multiple community agencies. She specializes in deconstructing intersectional oppression, privilege and racialized trauma to promote healing.

Her pedagogical acumen centers on conducting and facilitating antiracist, culturally relevant research and practice with marginalized individuals and communities. Dr. Ashley's research interests emphasize the promotion of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in clinical practice, education and organizational culture. She is passionate about social justice advocacy, and infuses an intersectionality lens in her teaching, practice, training and research.

MORNING

DAY 1

SILVERLAKE ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Coming to Terms with Historical Trauma: Practical Strategies for Building Resilience Through Culturally Responsive Mental Health Practices (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in Khmer / Korean), Sara Pol-Lim, Ed.D., St. Mary Medical Foundation Center

Drawing from my memoir, "Coming to Terms with Historical Trauma," I will share pivotal moments from my life and offer practical strategies for building resilience.

My presentation will blend personal anecdotes, interactive discussions, and evidence-based approaches to healing. Attendees will explore how education, cross-generational support, and community engagement can strengthen individuals and families facing adversity.

MORNING

DAY 1

HOLLYWOOD ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Building Resilience and Community Wellbeing: A Model for Supportive Projects of Creative Expression and Engagement

Karen S. Gunn, Ph.D., Gunn Consulting Group, Julie Rusk, B.A., Civic Wellbeing Partners, Lizeth Antonio, B.S., Community Wellbeing Program

Present a description and explanation of the SMBA-HRC Community Wellbeing Microgrant Model; “Funding People, Purpose & Possibility.” The importance and value of these grants to personal growth, individual agency, inner harmony, and sense of empowerment will be discussed. These community-based projects provide opportunities that promote well-being and foster self-care through creative expression. As an innovative Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) approach, the projects have purposely been awarded to and centered the voices, experiences, and strengths of BIPOC and marginalized people.

Microgrant recipients channel their aspirations and creativity through various forms of arts and crafts, self-care strategies, skill-building, civic and community engagement. Post-project evaluation data indicates positive changes for the grantees. Workshop participants will learn about the programs’ design, implementation, 1st person accounts, and outcomes. Participant sociodemographic characteristics, (i.e., multicultural, multilingual, multi-generational) will be described. The challenges and implications will be shared.

MORNING

DAY 1

ECHO PARK ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Unstoppable: The Power of Healing & Growth - A Disability-Inclusive, Culturally Affirming Framework for Mental Wellness (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in ASL / CART) Leon Maultsby, DBH, Erica Robinson, BA-CIS, Health Matters Clinic

Unstoppable is a trauma-informed, experiential workshop designed to strengthen resilience, mental health literacy, and community connection among multicultural communities—particularly Black individuals and families impacted by disability. The program integrates accessible movement, somatic grounding, culturally rooted healing practices, and reflective exercises to support emotional wellbeing and reduce stigma. Participants learn practical tools that can be applied with clients, families, and community groups.

MORNING

DAY 1

HANCOCK PARK ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Listening Beyond the Crisis: Culturally Responsive De-Escalation and Violence-Prevention Strategies for the Latino Community (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in Spanish) Luis Orozco, DSW, LCSW, Whitter Counseling Center

This dynamic 60-minute workshop introduces participants to the STAMP Model, a practical framework for crisis de-escalation, and elevates it through a culturally rooted adaptation specifically designed for Latino communities in Los Angeles County. While STAMP was originally developed for the general population, this session reframes each component through key cultural values such as respeto, personalismo, familismo, and face-saving that profoundly shape communication, emotional expression, and escalation patterns among Latino individuals and families.

Participants will explore how immigration experiences, multigenerational dynamics, racialized stress, and systemic inequities intersect with neurophysiological responses to intensify crises. Using real-world scenarios, role-play demonstrations, and applied skill practice, the workshop provides concrete tools for building trust, preventing violence, and strengthening safety for clients and providers.

MORNING

DAY 1

BOYLE HEIGHTS ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Creative Wellbeing: Healing Centered Arts Practices for Building Communities of Wellness

Elisabeth Nails (She/Her), LA County Department of Arts and Culture

This session will feature an introduction to Creative Wellbeing, including experiential arts activities and a panel and discussion where teaching artists, youth, County and Community partners will share stories and examples of how this adaptable approach is being implemented. Panelists will reflect on how partnerships rooted in cultural equity and healing centered practices offer a new way of working together to build communities of wellness, leading to positive outcomes for youth and the adults who serve them.

Facilitators will share strategies and resources to nurture cultures of belonging, connection, and wellbeing for youth and adults through culturally relevant healing-centered arts practices. Creative Wellbeing can also customize additional activities and engagements to infuse the Summit with Healing-Centered Arts engagement.

MORNING

DAY 1

LADERA HEIGHTS ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Hidden Spaces, Visible Outcomes: Queer Youth and Substance Use in Schools

Jess Esquivel, MPA, California LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network

Across school campuses, students often seek moments of safety in “unseen spaces” such as locker rooms, bathrooms, and empty hallways. For queer and trans youth, these areas can serve as both refuge and risk. They offer temporary relief from harassment and hyper-visibility, yet they are also places where students face gender policing, social pressure, and increased exposure to substances like tobacco and vaping. These overlapping dynamics highlight the deep connection between physical environments, identity safety, and behavioral health.

This presentation will explore how tobacco use in these pseudo-private spaces is a behavioral health response shaped by minority stress, social exclusion, and the desire to belong. Traditional discipline-focused approaches frequently overlook these underlying factors. Instead, we will introduce a queer care framework that centers wellness, agency, and cultural belonging. Participants will be able to think critically about where harm and support occur on school campuses, learn practical strategies for transforming campus cultures, and gain culturally responsive insight about the relationship between physical spaces and behavioral health outcomes.

MORNING

DAY 1

K-TOWN ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Cultivating Calm, Creativity & Connection: Expressive Arts for Multicultural Healing

(Translation provided in Armenian), Carla Lavelle, LCSW, PPCS, Full Bloom Group

Participants will explore how expressive activities help individuals process complex emotions, honor cultural identity, and build shared spaces of safety and belonging. By the end of the workshop, attendees will leave not only with strategies they can use in their own settings, but also with the felt experience of calm, creativity, and connection. This session is ideal for practitioners who want to integrate low-barrier arts-based tools and inclusive circle approaches that uplift cultural wisdom and foster healing across diverse identities.

“Si te Ríes, Gozas: Community Theater for Multicultural Healing,” a one-hour performance in Spanish-language

Patricia Veliz, BA, PCC, Generaciones en Acción

Si te Ríes, Gozas is a one-hour Spanish-language community theater performance that explores the emotional realities of immigrant life through humor, vulnerability, and cultural storytelling. The play addresses sensitive topics such as abuse, masculinity, LGBTQ+ identity, grief, family conflict, the fear of not fitting in, and the silent emotional pressures experienced by many immigrant families. Performed by immigrant adults and elders, the presentation reflects authentic cultural perspectives and highlights intergenerational wisdom as a mental health resource. Following the performance, a facilitated forum invites participants to engage in open dialogue about the themes presented and their relevance to behavioral health.

The discussion emphasizes how laughter, storytelling, and culturally rooted practices can reduce stigma, foster emotional expression, and strengthen resilience across communities. This session aligns with the conference’s focus on multicultural wellness by offering a non-traditional, arts-based approach to mental health education. Bringing Si te Ríes, Gozas to ARISE 2026 would be a valuable opportunity to uplift diverse voices and illustrate a community-centered model of healing and emotional connection.



Thriving Between Two Worlds: Healing Identity, Stress, and Stigma Through Improv, Movement, and Culturally Rooted Storytelling

JR Kuo, MA, CoffeeWithJR

Introduces an innovative, culturally grounded approach that uses improv, physical movement, and embodied storytelling to help participants understand and transform how stress, identity conflict, and stigma show up in the mind and body. Led by a nationally recognized expert in Asian American mental health, trauma-informed practice, and arts-based healing, this session draws on real community case studies from Los Angeles County and 15+ years of frontline experience. Participants will examine how acculturation pressures, filial expectations, masculinity norms, and intergenerational trauma uniquely affect Asian and immigrant families, as well as those living at the intersection of multiple cultural identities.

Through accessible activities rooted in theater, mindful movement, and narrative healing, attendees will learn tools to reduce shame, foster psychological safety, and increase engagement among communities traditionally underserved by mainstream mental health systems. This workshop equips clinicians, community leaders, and program staff with high-impact, culturally attuned strategies to support resilience and belonging across diverse immigrant populations.



AFTERNOON**DAY 1****HANCOCK PARK ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Rewriting the Narrative: Men's Mental Health, Identity, and Fatherhood (1 CE/CEU)

Dr. Lance Lenford, Emmanuel Torres, LCSW, Edward Armstrong, Psy.D., LACDMH

Explores the intersection of masculinity, fatherhood, stigma, and healing, with a focus on supporting men, particularly fathers of color in accessing and sustaining mental health care. Inspired by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's Fatherhood Well-Being Initiative, the presentation highlights the systemic barriers that have historically hindered father involvement and showcases the innovative, culturally responsive strategies designed to overcome them. Participants will examine how traditional masculine norms, stigma, and cultural expectations create barriers to treatment, and how trauma-informed, father-inclusive approaches can promote healing, emotional literacy, and healthier family relationships. The session will also showcase the role of Fatherhood Champions, specialized training, and father-centered programming in expanding access across all eight Service Areas within Los Angeles County. Through case examples, evidence-based practices, and real-world implementation strategies, attendees will learn how integrating father engagement into mental health systems enhances outcomes for men, children, and communities. Ultimately, this workshop positions father engagement as an essential component of mental health practice and a foundation for community wellbeing.

AFTERNOON**DAY 1****ECHO PARK ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Reframing Deafness: Silent Struggles, Strong Signs (1 CE/CEU)

Andrea Grimes, LCSW, LACDMH

This presentation explores the unique mental health challenges and strengths within the Deaf and hard of hearing community (DHH) while also considering how broader social and global issues contribute to today's mental health crisis. While deafness is often viewed as a disability, it also represents a rich cultural and linguistic identity. Deaf and hard of hearing individuals frequently face communication barriers, a shortage of licensed ASL-fluent clinicians, and systemic stigma shaped by gaps across healthcare, education, immigration, and economic systems. The session highlights common misconceptions about deafness and examines strategies for fostering inclusive and culturally sensitive support. It also addresses how intersectional identities such as race, gender, immigration status, and socioeconomic background can intensify these challenges. Attendees will gain insight into empowering Deaf and hard of hearing individuals to actively participate in their care and consider ways to reimagine systems that not only accommodate difference but celebrate the full spectrum of Deaf identities within our interconnected world.

AFTERNOON**DAY 1****K-TOWN ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Complex Trauma within the Armenian Community (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in Armenian), Anna Yaralyan, Psy.D., LACDMH

This presentation provides information about history of oppression of the Armenian people and ways in which many years of massacres, the Armenian Genocide, Communism, poverty, living amongst dominant groups as a minority, immigration & migration, the 1988 Earthquake in Gyumri, and 1st & 2nd Wars for Nagorno Karabagh Wars collectively impacted the Armenian Community. This presentation will discuss how there has been a direct rejection to the Armenian identity on ongoing, systemic level due to facing continuous atrocities and its mental health effects. It will also discuss the adaptation & survival, resilience, coping strategies which have been present on individual and collective level across generations within the Armenian Community, and how these skills & abilities helped Armenians to not only survive but also thrive. Scientifically based mental health interventions & treatment tips when working with the Armenian Community members will be provided to help heal from historical trauma.

AFTERNOON**DAY 1****LADERA HEIGHTS ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

From Stigma to Stability: Housing, Reentry and Mental Health Navigation

Gerald Garth, MBA , Lanelle P. Laws, LMFT, AMAAD Institute

A hands-on guide and scenario-rich workshop built from AMAAD's housing and reentry practice. Participants simulate warm handoffs across clinics, courts, shelters, and workforce partners; craft strengths-based care plans; and rehearse brief DBT-informed skills for distress tolerance. Using stigma-interrupt scripts and microaggression response tools, attendees practice advocacy in hostile systems while safeguarding dignity. Techniques include motivational interviewing, harm reduction, and safety planning for transgender clients and people living with HIV. Tools feature a Reentry Care Map, appointment-ready documentation templates, and a one-page crisis escalation flow.

The session closes with a 30/60/90-day implementation introduction so teams return home ready to launch or strengthen integrated housing-reentry-mental health navigation. Includes consent protocols and confidentiality safeguards throughout training.

AFTERNOON**DAY 1****BOYLE HEIGHTS ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

TAY Wellness Film Partnership

Moderator: Natalie Hanna, Ph.D.

Panelists: Erica Reynoso, Ph.D., LCSW; Joseph Roa; London Jones; & Natalie Arbid

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) has made efforts to bring person centered solutions to young people of all backgrounds with the launch of the Office of Transition Age Youth (TAY), which focuses solely on the mental health and well-being of young people ages 16 to 25. This is best exemplified by a short film developed in partnership with Kids in the Spotlight (KITS), an organization that assists foster youth's healing and growth from trauma through the power of storytelling and filmmaking, and UCLA's Prevention Center of Excellence. The film amplifies the voices of youth and explores the realities of coping with mental health and substance use challenges. This panel will discuss the path the Office of TAY, UCLA, and KITS took to create the film. The panel will highlight lessons learned from this multi-agency collaboration with an emphasis on how to sustain youth leaders in policy and programming. Youth leaders with lived experience will discuss the ways they can engage with the office to make powerful change.

AFTERNOON**DAY 1****ROOSEVELT ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Neurodivergent Voices: A look into serving communities at the intersection of LGBTQ+ and neurodivergent identities

Rex Wilde, (They/Them) Educator/ Speaker, Rex Wilde Consulting

This interactive workshop explores the Neurodivergent Voices Album (NDVA), a first-of-its-kind music project centering LGBTQ+, neurodivergent, and artists with disabilities. Designed as both an artistic incubator and wellness initiative, NDVA created culturally responsive structures for creative expression, peer connection, and mental health support. Through case study insights and participant storytelling, this session will highlight the inclusive strategies that shaped the program, ranging from trauma-informed artist advocacy to adaptive performance planning and accessible recording practices. Attendees will engage in reflection and discussion on how to apply these methods within mental health programs, community spaces, and creative initiatives. This session is ideal for behavioral health professionals, community-based organizations, and cultural workers looking to better serve LGBTQ+, neurodivergent, and people with disabilities in mental health settings. Participants will walk away with tools and frameworks adaptable to a wide range of clinical and community environments.

A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2026

Kristen Lewis, Measure of America

This presentation will focus on the key findings of Measure of America’s newly released report, A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2026, which is an update to the 2017 edition. The report serves as a detailed portrait of wellbeing, need, and access to opportunity in Los Angeles County. This report was supported by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, and it tracks change over time, community by community as well as for different demographic groups, and creates a shared frame of reference for setting goals and tackling important health, education, standard of living, and equity challenges. The report also included a community-based participatory research process in which residents of several Los Angeles geographic and demographic communities participated in a series of “data walks,” and were able to share their insights on the report’s findings. Included in the presentation will be a demo of a local voices portal in which you can hear Angelenos describe well-being challenges in their own words.

Our Immigrant Stories: The Healing Power of Stories and Storytelling for Immigrants and Immigrant Communities (1 CE/CEU)

Mastaneh Moghadam, LCSW, Executive Director, Cross Cultural Expressions, Community Counseling Center

This keynote explores how storytelling serves as a powerful tool for healing within Eastern European and Middle Eastern immigrant communities. Drawing on clinical experience, cultural traditions, and the lived experiences of immigrant families, the presentation highlights the ways in which stories help individuals make meaning of displacement, trauma, loss, identity, and resilience. Participants will learn how narrative expression whether through spoken stories, writing, art, or film—supports emotional processing, strengthens cultural pride, and nurtures intergenerational understanding.

The keynote will address how immigrant communities often carry unspoken grief, inherited trauma, and cultural stigma around mental health, and how storytelling creates safe pathways to acknowledge these experiences. Using examples from community-based work and creative projects, including film and collective writing initiatives, the session illustrates how stories build connection, reduce stigma, and foster healing.

AAPI Storytelling as Community Healing – Cultural Identity, Antiracism, and Mental Health Beyond the Therapy Room (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in Khmer/ Korean), Vicky Kwan, LCSW

Moderator: Kevin Nguyen Therapist, Pacific Clinics Asian Pacific Family Center

Panelists: Diana Chung, LMFT, Program Director, Soo Jin Lee, LMFT, Executive Director, Yellow Chair Collective & Co-Founder of Entwine Community Asian Youth Center

Rena Song, PhD, Therapist, Pacific Clinics Multicultural Family Center

Stephanie Zapata, LMFT, Program Director, Pacific Clinics Multicultural Family Center

This panel examines how personal and collective cultural identity formation among Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities shapes and strengthens anti-racism work within mental health spaces. While stigma and shame remain common entry points in discussions of AAPI mental health, this panel expands the frame: exploring how storytelling and narrative practice can transform identity formation into a site of resistance, solidarity, and systemic change. Through LACDMH-sponsored community initiatives, panelists will share how art, intergenerational dialogue, and community narratives become vehicles for reclaiming identity, challenging racial hierarchies, and cultivating belonging that extends beyond the clinical setting.



MORNING**DAY 2****ECHO PARK ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

From Tradition to Innovation: American Indian Leadership in Expanding Mental Health Access Across Sectors (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in ASL / CART), Moderator: Garcia, Andrea, MD, MS

Panelists: Stephanie Mushrush, LCSW, Monique Castro, LMFT, Carrie Johnson, Ph.D.

This workshop brings together leaders from for-profit, nonprofit, and governmental practice to explore the evolving landscape of American Indian and Alaska Native mental health care. Panelists will discuss the broad spectrum of Indigenous identity today—from those reconnecting to their roots, to multicultural and intersecting identities—and how history, policy, and resilience shape the ways AIAN people access and experience care. The conversation will examine assumptions and challenges surrounding “traditional” healing in contemporary mental health systems, including cultural expectations, systemic barriers, and resource limitations. Panelists will discuss why community-designed, evidence-informed practices matter at a systems level, and share how they integrate traditional values and Native evidenced based practices into individual care. Panelists will also reflect on what it means to heal in community.

Because each panelist represents a different practice environment, the session will also explore how interdependent relationships across sectors strengthens access to culturally responsive mental health care for AIAN in Los Angeles County. The workshop will conclude with concrete recommendations for individuals, systems, and future practitioners committed to equitable, culturally grounded mental health access.

MORNING**DAY 2****ROOSEVELT ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Restoring Dignity and Wellbeing: Centering Cultural Influences in Suicide Prevention During the Postpartum Period

Amber Cardenas LCSW, Alisha Manning, LCSW, PMH-C, Verónica Chávez, PhD

Death by suicide is a leading cause of maternal mortality and accounts for about 20% of postpartum deaths. This workshop provides an overview on mental health in pregnancy and postpartum, Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs), and centering cultural influences in suicide prevention during this vulnerable time period. Attendees will learn about risk factors and unique challenges associated with perinatal mental health, including hormonal, emotional, and social changes that can contribute to suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Increasing protective factors, centering culture in the conversation, intervention strategies and resources designed to promote the wellbeing of individuals during this critical time will also be addressed.

MORNING

DAY 2

BOYLE HEIGHTS ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Black Mothers Navigating Pregnancy, Birth, and Postpartum Recovery

Dominique DjeDje, MLIS, Summer McBride, BA, Maternal Mental Health NOW

Black mothers navigating pregnancy, birth, and postpartum recovery often face systemic inequities and cultural pressures that impact mental health. Traditional approaches for mental health practitioners frequently rely on slides, didactic teaching, or checklists—tools that, while informative, can lack the experiential empathy needed to truly understand the lived realities of Black birthing people.

This immersive, interactive session invites mental health practitioners to engage with a community-tested model developed and piloted with Black mothers in the Strength in Tiny Steps support group. Both facilitators are Black mothers who have navigated the NICU journey with their newborns, connecting through a peer-to-peer approach that centers around understanding, validation, and support. Participants will explore how empathy, particularly when paired with awareness of systemic inequities and lived realities, enhances engagement, trust, and outcomes for Black mothers.

MORNING

DAY 2

HOLLYWOOD ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Building Cross-Generational Resilience: Implementing EBPs with Fidelity Scorecards to Strengthen Youth and Families

(Translation provided in Spanish) Jasmine Martinez, MPH, Program Coordinator

Panelists: from Center for Healthier Communities, Dignity Health Northridge Hospital
Joni Novosel, MHA, Director Emerita, Christine Schaeffer, Ph.D., MBA, MPH, Program Evaluator
Angelica Crook, BA, Community Educator

This presentation will illustrate a cross-generational approach to building resilience in youth using the Resourceful Adolescent Program for adolescents (RAP-A) and its complimentary curriculum for caregivers (RAP-P).

The panelists will introduce and promote the use of a Fidelity Scorecard to ensure implementation fidelity and promote the use of inclusive language to address implicit bias, continually improve instructional program delivery, provide feedback for professional development, and support sustainability. Panelists will also preview their research in process that investigates the impact of using this cross-generational approach supplemented by a community referral network to support the overall environment of healthy adolescent development.

MORNING

DAY 2

K-TOWN ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Trans and Nonbinary Equity in Behavioral Health Settings

Jesse Gilbert, Advocacy & Disability Justice Professional

This project equips mental-health providers with a clearer, more holistic understanding of the barriers transgender and nonbinary clients face in accessing care, as well as the essential role of gender-affirming practices in psychiatric settings. The training covers community-informed language, core principles of gender-affirming care, current data on suicidality within trans communities, and other critical considerations. By combining education with practical strategies, the training gives participants tangible tools for delivering culturally competent, affirming care.

Ultimately, increasing providers' knowledge of gender-affirming care empowers them to create safer, more respectful spaces where clients feel comfortable sharing their identities and seeking comprehensive support aligned with their needs.

MORNING

DAY 2

LADERA HEIGHTS ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

From the Mat to the Community: Culturally Grounded Approaches to Youth Mental Health Through Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Community Belonging

Maritza Flores

Explores how culturally grounded, relationship-based programming, specifically Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) and structured movement communities, can strengthen mental health and resilience across Los Angeles County's diverse youth populations. Drawing from research in criminology, social work, and public health, this session highlights how culturally safe, identity-affirming spaces reduce isolation, improve emotional regulation, and counter traumatic stress among youth of color. Participants will learn how embodied practices like BJJ help youth develop stress-management skills, interdependence, and a positive sense of identity while creating cross-cultural solidarity.

The workshop will also share case studies from the Northeast San Fernando Valley, demonstrating how after-school movement-based programs can serve as protective factors against anxiety, grief, behavioral crises, and community violence.

MORNING

DAY 2

HANCOCK PARK ROOM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Cultural Bridges: How Community Partnerships Transform Mental Health Access

United MH Promoters

Panelists: Elisa Fonseca, Harrelson Notah, Rubou Sous, Danah Kim, Donnise Vonner, Norma Rossana Palencia, Jenna Gutierrez

Standard outreach often misses the mark when it targets “everyone” without considering “anyone’s” specific cultural context. This panel discussion brings together a dynamic group of mental health promoters who are successfully dismantling stigma in historically underserved communities.

AFTERNOON

A

DAY 2

SILVERLAKE ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Resilient Families, Resilient Communities: Parenting for Cross-Generational Wellbeing (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in Korean), Joyce Javier, MD, MPH, MS, FAAP

Building resilience across generations is essential to strengthening communities and advancing mental health equity. This presentation will highlight lessons learned from the Filipino Family Health Initiative Study, a community-academic partnership currently funded by the National Institutes of Health. Led by a multidisciplinary team of parents, pediatricians, mental health providers, occupational therapists, schools, churches, and community-based organizations, this initiative has implemented culturally-tailored, evidence-based parenting interventions designed to enhance family wellbeing and prevent teen suicide.

Beyond the Filipino community, these interventions have been adapted and offered across diverse cultural groups, affirming their relevance in Los Angeles County’s multicultural landscape. Through compelling parent and child video testimonials, participants will gain insight into how cross-generational strategies foster resilience, belonging, and solidarity. This session will equip behavioral health professionals and community members with practical tools to promote healing and strengthen public mental health services in a land of diversity.

AFTERNOON**A****DAY 2****K-TOWN ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

The Emergent and Unrecognized Domestic Violence-Traumatic Brain Injury/Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy Pandemic: The Need for Culturally Responsive and Competent Care and Services (1 CE/CEU)

Maria Garay-Serratos, MSW, PhD

This presentation highlights the silent, unrecognized, and under addressed pandemic of domestic violence (DV)- traumatic brain injury (TBI) and potentially chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) impacting the health and mental health of women, children, and men. Studies have consistently found that between 75% to 95% of female DV victims report TBI, 60% to 90% of men who abuse report a history of TBI, and of the children who suffer abuse, over 60% of them also experience TBI. However, across the country, DV-TBI/CTE is not systematically screened, leaving affected individuals without care. This presentation raises awareness of this pandemic with a special emphasis given to immigrants, ethnically diverse individuals, and other marginalized DV-TBI/CTE victims/survivors who often face additional disparities and inequities.

The presentation also spotlights DV-TBI and its link to CTE and other progressive neurodegenerative diseases. The workshop equips participants with the tools and knowledge on how they can ensure mental health access across cultures for the DV-TBI/CTE population by utilizing traditional and non-traditional health methods.

AFTERNOON**A****DAY 2****HANCOCK PARK ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Ancestral Elevation & Emotional Shadow Work: A Multicultural Healing Model for Intergenerational Trauma in Black Afro-Diasporic and Latino Communities

Afimaye “Coach AFI G” Galarraga

Explores the intersection of intergenerational ancestral trauma healing, emotional shadow work, and multicultural mental health practices as effective tools for supporting Black and Afro-Diasporic communities impacted by historical, racial, and intergenerational trauma. Drawing from Afro-Cuban, African Diasporic, and community-centered traditions, participants will learn a practical framework—The Ancestral Elevation Model—that integrates cultural identity, emotional literacy, and trauma-informed healing practices. Providers will walk away with actionable tools to support clients in reconnecting with cultural strengths, processing generational narratives, and fostering belonging, agency, and emotional healing in diverse populations.

AFTERNOON**A****DAY 2****ECHO PARK ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and Behavioral Health: Brain-Based Understanding for Promoting Mental Wellness

(1 CE/CEU)

Roxanne Chang, Michele Walker-Bauer, Lisa Schoyer, Ana Cardenas, LACDMH

This interactive interdisciplinary workshop—led by a pediatrician, a psychologist, a psychiatric social worker, a disability advocate, and a person with living experience—will offer a practical overview of FASDs, their mental health impacts, and how intersectionality shapes access, recognition, and support. Presenters will address challenges such as cross-cultural assessment, the need for translated materials, and reducing bias in clinical practice. Participants will examine barriers to identification and the consequences of misinterpreting brain-based differences such as behavioral problems. The session will highlight resilience factors and outline opportunities for mental health systems to implement inclusive, FASD-informed, divergence-affirming approaches through case discussions, reflective dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving.

AFTERNOON**A****DAY 2****ROOSEVELT ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Pláticas, Ritual and Resilience: Culturally Grounded Grief Support for Spanish-Speaking Adults in Los Angeles County. Insights and Future Directions from OUR HOUSE Grief Support Center's Spanish Community Program (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in Spanish), Claudia Reyes, Jenny Rivera-Cruz, LCSW

Sophia Cortes, Social Work Student Intern, Tiya Parasseril, Social Work Student Intern, OUR HOUSE

Invites participants into a conversation about grief and why it is an essential part of community wellbeing. Presenters from the Spanish Community Program at OUR HOUSE Grief Support Center will explore how grief influences emotional, physical, social and spiritual health for individuals and families. The session highlights how pláticas, cultural rituals and the OUR HOUSE Model support Spanish-speaking adults and reduce stigma around expressing pain. Participants will learn how common cultural messages such as “tienes que ser fuerte” or “no llores” shape grief across generations and may limit emotional safety. The workshop will also explore how grief shows up alongside immigration experiences, housing instability, community violence, substance use and other challenges that many communities in Los Angeles face. Through stories, activities and clear language, participants will see how talking openly about grief creates space for healing and connection.

AFTERNOON**A****DAY 2****HOLLYWOOD ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Collective Care in Action: Multigenerational Healing, Digital-Age Disconnection, and Workforce Pathways in Multicultural Mental Health (1 CE/CEU)

Nakeya Fields, LCSW, PPS

This multisector panel explores how culturally grounded, community-integrated mental health models operationalize collective care to address intergenerational trauma, restore human connection, and improve access to care in the digital age. Led by the developer of an equity-centered wellness framework currently implemented across school and community settings, the discussion will feature leaders from education, Medi-Cal managed care, and county behavioral health systems.

Panelists will examine how exposure to trauma, disrupted socialization, and digital dependency have reshaped emotional regulation, identity formation, and relational development across generations. Speakers will share real-world strategies for culturally responsive engagement, school-based prevention, creative and land-based healing, and intentional workforce alignment that reduce stigma, improve trust, and increase sustained participation in mental health services.

AFTERNOON**A****DAY 2****LADERA HEIGHTS ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Bridging the Divide: A Public Health Approach to Loneliness

Bill Sive

Loneliness is a public health crisis affecting the U.S. across all ages and identities. This session moves beyond viewing loneliness as an individual failing, proposing it as a systemic issue stemming from social isolation and minority stress particularly impacting BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities.



AFTERNOON**A****DAY 2****BOYLE HEIGHTS ROOM 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Supporting Urban Native American Transitional Youth through Culturally Based Services in Higher Education

Harrelson Notah

Addressing the mental health and wellbeing of Native American youth through culturally appropriate ways involves consideration of Relational Worldview Framework (RWV). This framework focuses on balance among the domains of mind, body, spirit and context. By promoting culturally grounded interventions to overcome the traumatic histories and current oppressive conditions affecting Urban Native American youth. Through group discussion and practical exercises, participants learn how these dimensions intertwine to affect daily life, identify areas of support and create personalized strategies to foster holistic health and achieve greater balance and fulfillment.

AFTERNOON**B****DAY 2****ECHO PARK ROOM 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

Healing Through Community: Supporting Black Birthworkers to Strengthen Perinatal Mental Health

(Translation provided in ASL / CART), Kimberly Gray, MTS, Anita Burdette, LCSW

This presentation will introduce the Black Birthworkers Community, a co-designed model that strengthens the social, economic, and physical conditions needed for Black birthworkers to thrive. Rooted in cultural humility, community leadership, and healing justice, this model positions Black birthworkers as essential partners in improving perinatal mental health for Black birthing people and their families. Participants will learn how peer support networks and access to mental health and economic supports build sustainability and reduce the strain placed on birthworkers who navigate systemic inequities while caring for others.

Designed for behavioral health professionals, community-based practitioners, public health partners, doulas, midwives, and program administrators, this session will show how investing in the well-being and joy of Black birthworkers expands access to culturally congruent care and strengthens resilience across families, creating conditions that foster emotional safety, positive mental health, and improved outcomes for Black families in Los Angeles County.

AFTERNOON**B****DAY 2****LADERA HEIGHTS ROOM 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

Healing-Centered Peer Support: Building Multicultural Care Networks

Gerald Garth, MBA, Lanelle P. Laws, LMFT

This immersive session translates healing justice into practical action. Participants learn to design peer-led support that honors race, gender identity, sexuality, and lived experience. Participants practice trauma-informed facilitation, motivational interviewing, and harm-reduction conversations. Tools include Safety & Wellness Action Plans, culturally responsive screening prompts, and community agreements for psychological safety.

The workshop centers AMAAD's lessons from South Los Angeles: peer power, visibility, and protection. Participants leave with a plug-and-play facilitation script, a referral map template, and a 30-day implementation checklist—ready to seed resilient, multicultural peer networks in their own contexts. We'll also model inclusive data collection, privacy practices, and quick post-incident reviews and accountability.

AFTERNOON**B****DAY 2****K-TOWN ROOM 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

Applying Radical Healing Framework to Asian/Asian American Communities (1 CE/CEU)

Brian Ilagan, LCSW

Radical Healing, rooted in liberation psychology, Black psychology, ethno-political psychology, and intersectionality, offers a framework for how communities of color move beyond coping to center healing, reclaim identity, and pursue collective well-being. While Radical Healing was developed broadly for people of color, the Healing Our People through Engagement (HOPE) Program adapts radical healing for Asian and Asian American communities. Developed by Asian American psychologists and implemented as a pilot within the AAPI Equity Alliance, HOPE was facilitated across five Los Angeles agencies and by Stop AAPI Hate, providing culturally grounded spaces for participants to reflect on experiences with racism, explore identity, build community, and engage in practices that support resilience and collective action.

This workshop will outline how HOPE integrates connection-building, storytelling, cultural authenticity, critical consciousness, radical self-care, and radical hope. Implications for clinical practice will be discussed, along with recommendations for incorporating Radical Healing principles to strengthen culturally responsive care for Asian/Asian Americans.

AFTERNOON**B****DAY 2****HOLLYWOOD ROOM 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

The Intersections of Trauma-informed Care and Culture: Building Awareness and Humility (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in Spanish), Dana Wyss, PhD, LMFT, ATR-BC, RPT, Patrick Foreman, LMFT

Trauma-informed care (TIC) is a flexible framework that can be used as a clinical intervention for youth and families or as an organizational strategy to promote safety, empowerment, and healing. While this innate flexibility can be liberating; it can be challenging to integrate these styles into your own therapeutic framework and maintain cultural humility. Using the core principles of trauma-informed care this training will help professionals and clients explore how culture, diversity, and inclusion are integral to this approach. Through discussions and creative activities, participants will increase their own awareness of intersectionality, learn to honor cultural identity to build stronger communities, and be inspired to help clients realize their full potential.

AFTERNOON**B****DAY 2****SILVERLAKE ROOM 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

From Risk to Resilience: Mental Health and Cultural Identity Among Asian American and Pacific Islander Youth (1 CE/CEU)

(Translation provided in Korean) Madonna P. Cadiz, PhD, LCSW, Lalaine (Lainey) Sevillano, PhD, MSW Hillary Nicole Peregrina, MA, MSW , John Bosco Bunyi, MA, MFT

Rates of suicidality have drastically risen among Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) youth, yet research on their developmental and mental health needs remains strikingly limited. This presentation weaves together four papers highlighting the complexities of AAPI youth and young adult mental health. The first paper utilizes disaggregated national data to examine disparities in suicidality across East, South, and Southeast Asian college students, revealing increased risk among Southeast Asians. The second paper synthesizes research on internalized racism as a critical factor shaping the racialized experiences and psychosocial well-being of AAPI youth. The third paper highlights the potential of digital mental health help-seeking tools and AI-based interventions in addressing the paradox of high mental health need and low service utilization among AAPI emerging adults. The final paper describes a grounded theory connecting acculturation, developmental processes, and suicidality among 1.5-generation Pilipinx American young adults. Collectively, these papers foreground the roles of internalized racism, discrimination, and colonization in shaping AAPI mental health, and how culturally responsive interventions may facilitate healing.

AFTERNOON**B****DAY 2****BOYLE HEIGHTS ROOM 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

From Overwhelm to Grounding: Somatic Micro-skills and Peer Support for Queer and Trans Parents

Alex Villalba, MA, Durga Abbas, CA Peer Support Specialist, Certified Trauma Informed Yoga Teacher, Somatics Practitioner/Teacher

This workshop blends practical somatic care with lessons learned from two years of facilitating the Your Queer Parenting Journey support group, a weekly space serving queer parents, parents to be, and caregivers. The session begins with a brief overview of how the group was created, how its structure has evolved, and the themes that consistently emerge, including identity development, navigating systems, community isolation, and the emotional demands of early parenthood. Participants will then engage in an immersive, hands-on experience that models the grounding practices regularly used in the group. Attendees will also rotate through stations that introduce low-cost grounding tools such as scent, temperature, texture, and flavor, demonstrating how these quick interventions help reduce anxiety, support emotional regulation, and promote connection in moments of overwhelm.

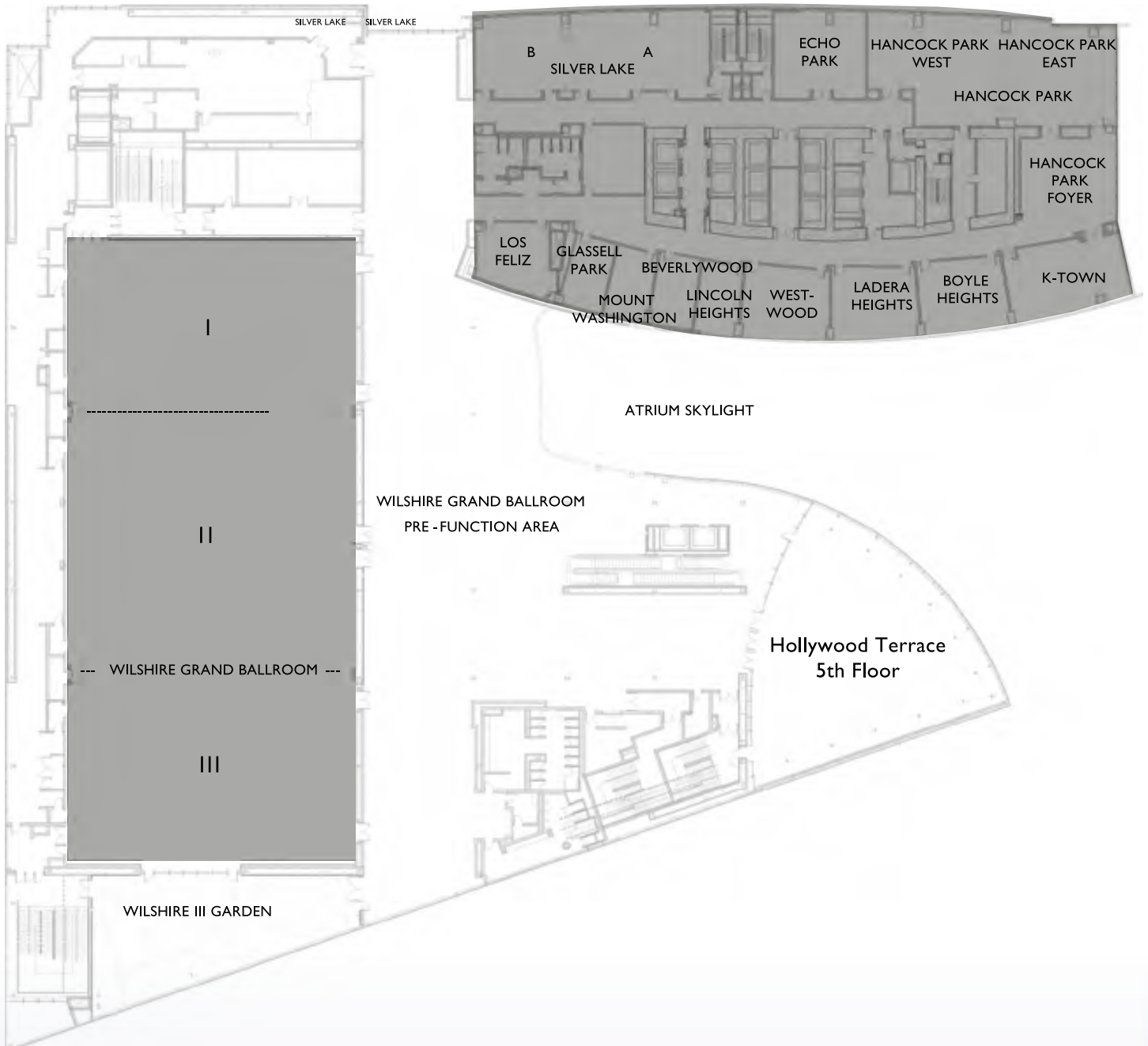
AFTERNOON**B****DAY 2****ROOSEVELT ROOM 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

The First-30: A Culturally Responsive Hybrid Model Bringing MH Access to Diverse Communities Through Traditional & Non-Traditional Methods

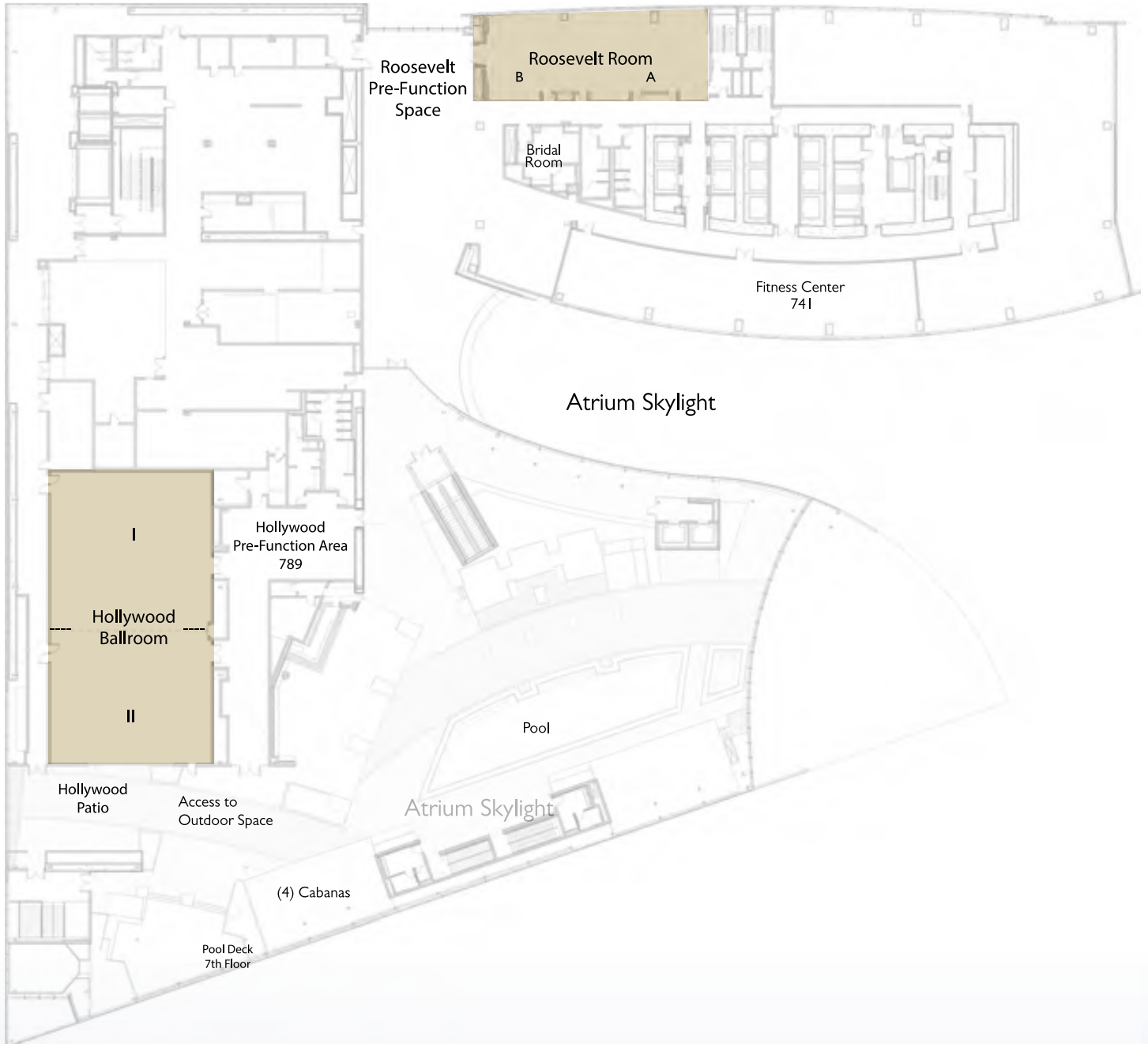
Margie Wilson, MPA

Introduces The First-30, a 30-day hybrid recovery stabilization model designed to close mental health access gaps across cultures by combining traditional group counseling with non-traditional digital delivery, including automated daily lessons, videos, journal prompts, and Google-based self-assessment tools. The First-30 approach meets participants exactly where they are—online, in person, and across cultural contexts—using simple mobile-friendly technology that eliminates literacy, transportation, scheduling, and stigma-related barriers. Participants will explore how early recovery needs differ across cultural communities, and how the First-30 integrates culturally respectful practices: storytelling, guided reflection, personal pacing, and supportive relational coaching. The session will highlight case examples from African American, Latino, API, and multi-ethnic communities, showing how consistent daily micro-interventions strengthen resilience, reduce crisis episodes, and improve treatment retention. This session equips providers with practical tools to incorporate the First-30 into multicultural behavioral health settings.

Map - 5th Floor



Map - 7th Floor



Special Thanks to ARISE Multicultural Conference Committee

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Notes

Notes

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