



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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L.A. COUNTY SUICIDE PREVENTION NETWORK & LACDMH HOST ANNUAL SUMMIT & AWARDS CEREMONY TO RAISE AWARENESS & PREVENT SUICIDE

Annual awards and summit engage mental health professionals and community to share resources and promote healing during Suicide Prevention Month

LOS ANGELES, CA — The Los Angeles County Suicide Prevention Network (LASPN) and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) recently hosted their annual summit and awards ceremony as part of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. This year's theme, "Power in Community: The Strength We Share," reflects that suicide prevention is a shared responsibility among communities, professionals and individuals.

"There is power and strength in coming together with community to prevent suicide. It is what makes the LASPN and our team at LACDMH exceptional partners with a shared mission," said LACDMH Director Lisa H. Wong, Psy.D. "We all have an important role to play when it comes to looking out for one another and guiding each other through our darkest days and most trying times with care and compassion."

LACDMH and its partners work to provide hope to people in crisis. In Fiscal Year 2025-26, L.A. County's 988 Suicide Prevention Center received 101,309 calls, chats and texts, and the Didi Hirsch Teen Line answered more than 10,000 calls, emails and texts. Additionally, LACDMH's own 24/7 Help Line responded to more than 171,087 crisis calls.

This year's summit took place over two days at the California Endowment (Sept. 8) and Pasadena City College (Sept. 18). The first event at the California Endowment was mainly for clinicians, and featured **Amanda Rowan**, Founder and CEO of Therapist Development Center; **Michael Vinton**, President and Co-founder of Survivors of Murder-Suicide; and others. The second day focused on community education and featured **Barak Bomani**, Co-creator and Executive Director of Unearth & Empower Communities; and **Laura Tully**, Ph.D., Vice President of Partnerships & Integrations at Kooth Digital Health, amongst other presenters.

On Sept. 2, LASPN recognized dedicated community members and professionals in the field of suicide prevention at the annual awards ceremony. The event featured a performance from Rhythm & Truth and remarks from **Curley L. Bonds**, M.D., LACDMH's Chief Medical Officer; **Charmaine Dorsey**, Program Implementation Manager, Los Angeles County Department of Health Services; and **Melissa Rivers**, television host and actress.

This year's award recipients are:

- **Didi Hirsch Mental Health Center Wildfire Recovery Program** — *Dr. Sam Chan and Dr. James Cunningham Award for Outstanding Leadership.*
- **Bridget McCarthy**, Advocacy Chair, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention — *Sam and Lois Bloom Hero Award for Outstanding Advocacy* to honor those who have advocated for a specific group or community, including attempt or loss survivors, youth, communities of color, LGBTQI groups, the disabled community or others with diverse and unique needs.
- **Mina Longo**, Teen Line volunteer/advisor — *Dr. Elaine Leader Hero Award for Outstanding Youth* to recognize a young person, council or youth organization that is advocating, providing outreach and/or facilitating educational opportunities to enhance suicide prevention efforts.
- **A Fighting Chance** — *LASPN Innovation Award* to acknowledge an individual who has implemented new and innovative prevention strategies that are technology-driven, target inequities in communities, address emerging issues, foster previously unused methods of communication and more.
- **South Central Wellness Collaborative** — *LASPN Collaboration Award* to honor an individual or organization that prioritizes effective relationships and collaborations across disciplines to tackle difficult issues related to mental health and suicide prevention.

For more information about LASPN's programs and resources, visit lasuicidepreventionnetwork.org.

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About the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH)

As the nation's largest public mental health department, we ensure access to care and treatment for our most vulnerable residents in a region nearing 10 million people. With an annual budget exceeding \$4.5 billion and over 7,800 budgeted positions, LACDMH is dedicated to hope, recovery, and wellbeing for everyone across Los Angeles County.

For more information, visit dmh.lacounty.gov or follow @LACDMH on [Facebook](#), [X](#) (formerly [Twitter](#)), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).