



**MULTICULTURAL  
ACTION CENTER  
NEWSLETTER**

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**APA-NAMI Collaborative to  
End Disparities in Depression**

The American Psychiatric Association and NAMI were recently awarded a grant to focus on depression care in communities of color. The grant was awarded by the Initiative for Decreasing Disparities in Depression (I3D) which supports educational activities addressing disparities in treatment of depression for racial/ethnic minorities.

Depression is a common health condition affecting nearly 20 million Americans. Over 6 percent of the U.S. population—Caucasian and racial/ethnic minorities alike—will experience an episode of depression in their lifetime. While overall care for those with depression has need for improvement, the quality of care received by racial/ethnic minorities is particularly lacking.

The U.S. medical community must address the undeniable disparities in access and quality of care for ethnic/racial minorities. To overcome cultural biases, health providers will have to more than simply memorize facts about cultural differences among groups. Decreasing disparities in depression and improving patient outcomes will require knowledge and use of available best practices. For many health care clients, if they receive treatment for depression at all, it is most likely to occur in the primary care setting. Statistics from the National Institutes of Mental Health indicate that over 50 percent of the time, primary care physicians may miss or misdiagnose depression. For this reason, the APA-NAMI intervention will focus on this group of physicians.

Working together, NAMI and the APA will develop and evaluate a CME curriculum addressing disparities in depression faced by communities of color in primary care settings. The intervention's goal is to equip these physicians with the knowledge and tools to identify and provide appropriate treatment to medically underserved ethnic and racial groups.

Building relationships among care providers and their patients based on mutual respect and trust, doctors and clients will move forward as partners in treatment. Using an intervention format with small group settings, facilitators will model effective provider-client interaction.

The project goals are to create an awareness of the manifestation of depression in a cultural context, model successful communication and partnership between providers and clients of different cultures, and promote a desire for continued education in this area. To reach these goals, APA and NAMI will host a structured dialogue session to gain expertise from providers, consumers, and family members. The curriculum and intervention materials will be largely based on the information received from this session. The CME intervention will then be piloted with primary care physicians in three regions around the country, including the Midwest, South East and West Coast, using a train-the-trainer model with trained physicians and consumers and family members as facilitators.

**For more information on the APA-NAMI collaborative, contact [macenter@nami.org](mailto:macenter@nami.org)**

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*NAMI celebrates  
Hispanic Heritage  
Month September 15–  
October 15*

*In this issue, we  
focus on Latinos and  
the recent activities in  
mental health  
services affecting this  
community.*

*For more information on  
mental health in the  
Latino community, visit  
[www.nami.org/multicultural](http://www.nami.org/multicultural)*

## Hispanic Heritage Month: General facts and figures

In September of 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson proclaimed National Hispanic Heritage Week, which was subsequently expanded in 1988 into a month-long celebration from September 15 to October 15. In this month, the United States celebrates the culture and traditions of individuals who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico, and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

*Population:* Hispanics/Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic minority group in the United States, with a population projected to rise to 102.6 million in July of 2050. Currently, this population is the largest ethnic minority group in 19 states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington.

*Language:* Thirty-one million U.S. household residents over the age of five speak Spanish at home, constituting a more than 1:10 ratio of all U.S. household residents. Out of those speaking Spanish at home, over half say they speak English "very well."

*Income, Poverty, and Insurance:* The median income of Hispanic households in 2004 was \$34,241. In that same year, the poverty rate among Hispanics was 21.9 percent. Those lacking health insurance in 2004 included 32.7 percent of the Hispanic population.

*Education:* In 2004, 58 percent of Hispanics age 25 and older had at least a high school education, while 12 percent of those held a bachelor's degree or higher. Of Hispanics age 18 and older, 2.7 million held at least a bachelor's degree and 714,000 ages 25 and older held advanced degrees (masters, professional, or doctorate) in 2004.

*Workforce:* The U.S. civilian labor force of 2004 included 68% of the Hispanic population, age 16 and older. Of those, 18% were in managerial, professional and related occupations, 24% in service occupations, 22% in sales and office jobs, 15% in construction, extraction and maintenance jobs, and 19% in production, transportation and material moving occupations.

\*All data from the U.S. Census Bureau Newsroom, "Facts for Features," July 6, 2006.

## Hon. Grace Flores Napolitano (D-CA) To Chair Mental Health Summit



The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to assisting the next generation of Latino leaders. CHCI offers many educational programs, services and information to provide Latino youth with tools and resources supportive to the pursuit of a higher education and becoming effective leaders.

This year's CHCI 2006 Hispanic Heritage Month events kick off with the CHCI 2006 Public Policy Conference to be held October 2-3 at the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. For the first time, a Mental Health Summit will be a part of this conference. The Summit, entitled *Nuestra Salud Begins with our Mental Health*, is chaired by the Honorable Grace Napolitano and will feature a panel of expert presenters. Panelists will address mental health needs in Hispanic communities, cultural competency in service delivery, evidence-based practices, community education and outreach, and consumer/family driven resources. One of the panelists will be Majose Carrasco, NAMI's Multicultural Action Center Director, who will highlight NAMI's work to improve mental health in the Latino community. Other panelists include Dr. Sergio Aguilar Gaxiola, NMHA's Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Dr. Pablo Hernandez, President, NLBHA.

Since 1980, the CHCI Public Policy Conference has served as a forum for Latinos from across the U.S. to collectively impact public policy and empower Latinos. Participants of the conference will have the opportunity to interact with both the expert panelists and Hispanic Members of Congress. Through this conference, CHCI aims to increase Latino awareness and activism in policy-making and provide an opportunity for Latinos to network and share concerns about issues affecting their communities.

**For more information about the 2006 Public Policy Conference, including the agenda, visit [www.chci.org](http://www.chci.org)**

## Un tributo a uno de nuestros grandes lideres

*There are several champions on multicultural mental health: leaders who share their knowledge, passion, and hard work with people from across the country in order to provide quality mental health services for diverse communities. In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, NAMI honors one such leader. Ambrose Rodriguez has dedicated his life to advancing multicultural mental health issues.*

Ambrose Rodriguez remembers that in his multi-ethnic neighborhood, his father was the one that everyone turned to for advice and counseling on any subject. This left a big impression on him and fostered his desire to help people of all ethnic/racial backgrounds. In his extensive career, Ambrose has carried out this goal and continues to make an incredible impact on culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health treatment for communities of color.



Ambrose's career expands across several decades. He started his career in the mental health field as an orderly in the psychiatric ward of the state hospital in Colorado. Over the years, positions he held include psychiatric technician, psychiatric nurse, director and administrator. As psychiatric technician, Ambrose started a Spanish speaking program at the state hospital. He also encouraged recognition of Latino cultural aspects including holidays special to this community.

His first effort exclusively for Latinos was in 1975 when Ambrose took over a training center for social workers in East Los Angeles and turned it into El Centro, a bilingual mental health agency. The center, which started with three employees, grew into the largest Latino mental health center in the country with a diverse staff of 150. El Centro applied the Latino cultural value of hard work into its treatment model, encouraging more employable skills and, in turn, improving self-esteem. In reflecting on his career, Ambrose cites the development of El Centro as one of his biggest accomplishments.

In 1986 Ambrose returned to Colorado and helped organize a Latino conference with the aim of facilitating cultural education. The conference emphasized learning the importance of culture and language in treatment, and underscored the importance of understanding the consumers' views of the world stemming from their culture, home, neighborhood, and community experiences. Concurrently, Ambrose opened a county-run, Spanish-speaking clinic. His state-level work in Colorado emphasized consideration of all ethnic/racial groups.

Later, interviews conducted with both service providers and the migrant population of California's San Joaquin Valley showed Ambrose the incredible discrepancy between the groups on ideas regarding mental health, availability and accessibility of services. Particularly alarming was the total lack of knowledge among the migrant community that mental health services existed and what those services could provide. This lack of knowledge of mental health services and of the nature of mental illness in general has become Ambrose's primary concern.

After retiring this year from his position at the LA County Department of Mental Health, Ambrose is now devoting his efforts as the CEO of the Latino Behavioral Health Institute (LBHI). In 1996, Ambrose founded LBHI with the mission of improving the skills of mental health service providers and eliminating stigma for those in need of mental health services. The Institute's main event is its annual conference which started in 1995. Since then, the LBHI annual conference, which draws approximately 1,200 people, has addressed workforce issues by offering training opportunities for mental health service providers and emphasizing cultural competence as a best practice. The conference has become an important source of knowledge for mental health professionals from around the country. Ambrose acknowledges the many people it takes to have such a successful conference and notes the importance of collaboration.

Throughout his extensive career, Ambrose has witnessed many advances in the mental health system, though many areas still need improvement: stigma and discrimination burden those experiencing mental illness and these problems call for community education. Ambrose has seen the mental health system from yesterday's hopelessness to today's community integration. To future advocates in Latino mental health, he notes the progress he has witnessed in the mental health system over the years is evidence that there is benefit in making efforts to advance the mental health agenda.

*The Multicultural Action Center salutes Ambrose Rodriguez, one of the most outstanding Latino mental health leaders.*

## Spanish-Language Self-Help Group Celebrates 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary

Recovery Inc. is one of the oldest self-help mental health programs in the United States. Since 1937 this non-profit, non-sectarian and member-managed organization has hosted self-help group meetings and has grown into hundreds of groups in the United States, Canada, Ireland, Puerto Rico, Spain, Israel and the United Kingdom. Based on the practical method, *Mental Health Through Will Training*, developed by founder Abraham A. Low, M.D., members use cognitive/behavioral techniques to manage their daily life activities. The intention of the program is to be utilized in combination with professional mental health services.

During weekly meetings members who experience a variety of mental illnesses, including mood, psychotic, anxiety, and personality disorders, review a part of Dr. Low's curriculum and discuss their practical use of the self-help method. Recovery Inc. has functioned as a transition for clients of mental health clinics such as Harbor UCLA in reducing the amount of care needed.

One year ago, Harbor-UCLA's Recovery Inc. began offering a weekly meeting for Spanish speakers. The inclusion of this Spanish session was made possible through the collaboration between Elizabeth Gonzalez-Jaskulak, LCSW, of Harbor-UCLA and Lupe Ayala, MSW, of the Latino Access Program.



*The Spanish-speaking self-help group has been successfully meeting since last summer.*



*Group gathers to celebrate its first anniversary*

This past summer, Harbor-UCLA's Recovery Inc. celebrated the one-year anniversary of their self-help group *en español* in a style befitting for the Latino culture. Spanish-speaking clients, Harbor-UCLA and Latino Access Program staff shared a potluck lunch while group leader, Luis Marroquin, provided entertainment with a solo vocal and guitar performance. The celebration closed as the group sang "Las Mañanitas," a traditional Spanish happy birthday song.

For a year now, the Spanish-speaking members have benefited from Recovery Inc.'s "Mental Health Fitness" program, offering community members an opportunity to gain the information and tools necessary to regain and/or maintain health emotional functioning. With the belief that there are no hopeless cases, the free program uses specific strategies for coping with everyday stressors.

The program caters to the individual needs of members, in that members voluntarily attend and participate in weekly meetings as the nature and severity of their disorder requires. The goal is for members to attend until they are able to use the coping skills independently, a milestone determined by the client. Recovery Inc. offers a safe place to talk about challenges in living with mental illness and receive support from peers.

**For more information on Recovery Inc. or to locate a group, visit [www.recovery-inc.org](http://www.recovery-inc.org). For more information about the Harbor-UCLA Recovery Inc. groups, contact Elizabeth Gonzalez-Jaskulak, LCSW, at 310-222-3331.**

## Exciting News about NAMI's "In Our Own Voice" Living with Mental Illness Public Education Program

In Our Own Voice (IOOV), one of NAMI's premier education programs, will be available in Spanish by the end of 2007. An introductory video/DVD including personal testimonies of recovery by Spanish speakers will be created to meet the interests and needs of the Latino community. Training manuals and all other materials will be available translated in Spanish and presenters will speak Spanish.

*More about "In Our Own Voice," Living with Mental Illness:*

IOOV is a powerful outreach program developed by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). It offers insight into the recovery now possible for people with severe mental illness. In the program's presentation, two people with mental illness give personal testimonies about their journey through dark days: acceptance, treatment, coping skills, and successes, hopes, and dreams. In Our Own Voice shows how people with serious mental illnesses cope with the realities of their disorders while recovering and reclaiming productive lives with meaning and dignity. Additionally, the program provides a safe way for consumers to share the ups and downs of their recovery and learn from others.

*Results:*

The results speak for themselves. A consumer named Tom credits empowerment gained through being an IOOV speaker with giving him the needed boost to secure part-time employment, reconnecting with and subsequently marrying an old friend, and being accepted into graduate school. According to one psychologist, after seeing an IOOV presentation, several of his mental health staff stated that, for the first time, they saw recovery as a real option. A family member said, "It helped me to understand what my family member is experiencing and how I can help and encourage her."

*Research:*

Studies have shown that contact between consumers and the general public is the most effective way to reduce the discrimination and stigma associated with mental illnesses (Corrigan & Penn, 1999). A recent article published in the peer-review "Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal" concludes that: "There is strong evidence that NAMI's 'In Our Own Voice' consumer education presentation is effective as a strategy for increasing audience knowledge about mental illness and improving attitudes towards those who experience psychiatric disorders."

***For more information on "In Our Own Voice," Living with Mental Illness, visit [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).***

## Alternatives 2006 National Mental Health Conference

The Consumer Organization & Networking Technical Assistance Center of the West Virginia Mental Health Consumers' Association announces *Alternatives 2006*, the national mental health conference organized by and for mental health consumers and survivors taking place October 25-29 at the Marriott Hotel in Portland, Oregon. The theme for this year's conference is "Blazing the Trail to Recovery Through Transformation." The Alternatives Conferences is a place for people to share their ideas and celebrate their successful innovations and programs, and is a forum for networking and peer discussion of important issues.

Find more information and to register, please visit [www.Alternatives2006.org](http://www.Alternatives2006.org). Registration deadline is October 1. Direct any registration questions to 800-776-1286 or [psasser@horizonmeetings.com](mailto:psasser@horizonmeetings.com).

## **Newsletter Available from the Center for Capacity-Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research**

The Center for Capacity-Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research, funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, aims to increase the capacity of community-based organizations serving minorities with disabilities and state vocational rehabilitation agencies to involve consumers in identifying service needs and developing organizational improvement strategies through evaluation research. The Center is conducting participatory research and demonstration projects, engaging in active dissemination efforts, and providing state-of-the-art evaluation and cultural competence training and technical assistance to professionals and researchers in the field.

*The Capacity Builder*--the Center's newsletter--is published biannually in April and September. Hard copies as well as electronic copies are available. To receive a copy, contact Tina Taylor-Ritzler, Ph.D., at [tritzler@uic.edu](mailto:tritzler@uic.edu) or 312-413-4149.

***For more information on the center, visit [www.uic.edu/orgs/empower](http://www.uic.edu/orgs/empower).***

## **13<sup>th</sup> Annual Rural Minority and Multicultural Health Conference**

The Rural Minority and Multicultural Health Committee of the National Rural Health Association will hold the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Rural Minority and Multicultural Health conference, "*Effective Traditional Health Customs and Practices: In Our Own Words*," May 14-15, 2007, at the William A Egan Civic & Convention Center in Anchorage, Alaska. The conference will provide a forum where diverse racial, ethnic and underserved populations can come together to examine issues of common need; to develop and share strategies, models and tools for providing solutions within their respective communities; to create effective partnerships, and outreach efforts to deliver care in rural and frontier communities; and to access the resources needed to create programs that will benefit all rural populations.

***For more information, visit [www.NRHArural.org](http://www.NRHArural.org) or call 816-756-3140.***

## **Building Sustainable Behavioral Health Initiatives in the Latino Community**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Latino Behavioral Health Summit, "Building Sustainable Behavioral Health Initiatives in the Latino Community," will be held November 9-10, 2006, at Pokagon State Park in Angola, Indiana. Sponsored by Northeastern Center, Inc., the Summit aims to increase knowledge and understanding of culturally appropriate health services for Latinos and increase linkages among the Latino Community and area agencies in order to decrease barriers to service delivery. Keynote speakers include: Dr. Lorraine Gutierrez, Ph.D., University of Michigan, School of Social Work; Dr. Ernest Marquez, Ph.D., National Institute of Mental Health; Cathy Boggs, Director of the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (Indiana); and Cynthia Roat, MPH, Consultant and Trainer. Conference attendees will be eligible to receive five CEU's.

***For more information, contact Northeastern Center at 1-800-229-5510 or visit [www.nec.org](http://www.nec.org).***