

THE 10TH ANNUAL
**INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON STIGMA**

**YOUTH POWER UP
FOR A STIGMA
FREE FUTURE**

by Douggy Charant "Dew the Artist", 2018 Art winner

November 22, 2019


Howard University Cramton Auditorium
Register for the event and Donate to Howard University
Stigma Project at: **www.whocanyoutell.org**



DC **HEALTH**



2019 Conference Summary Report



**"I liked the combination
of scientific research
and personal stories,
because the former
provided evidence to
change policy while the
latter was the human
element that changes
hearts"**

- Conference Attendee

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

The 10th annual International Conference on Stigma was successfully held at Howard University's Cramton Auditorium on November 22nd, 2019 from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

- Six CEU social work hours were offered.
- 3 raffles were held throughout the day
- Vendors included: AIDS Healthcare, Promising Futures, NOBCO, Nova Salud, Howard Pediatrics, Howard University School of Social Work, Howard University Routine HIV Screening Program, National Medical Association CDC- PACT Initiative, Until There's a Cure, The Women's Collective, Helping Hands for Relief from Disaster, Health Care Advocates
- A live webcast was streamed on the Stigma Conference website: whocanyoutell.org

Conference learning objectives were:

1. Describe the impact of stigma on the well-being of affected individuals and health outcomes for HIV, with an emphasis on the impact of stigma on youth 13-29 years.
2. Discuss innovative research methods and tools to monitor and measure stigma and improve outcomes, especially those used to combat stigma against youth.
3. Improve capacities for affected individuals, youth, and junior minority researchers to engage in collaborative projects with senior researchers and community stakeholders.
4. Continue and expand working groups to mentor minority faculty, and link PLHIV with researchers for collaboration, and create a separate new work group to link youth with research/advocacy mentors.

EVENT OUTLINE

Morning Session

Research Leading the Way: Becoming Youth Centered to Reduce Stigma for an HIV Free Future

Moderator: Warren L. Miller, Jr, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, SAP, BCD., Assistant Professor, BSW Program Rhode Island College, School of Social Work (he/him/his)

Panelists:

Laura Nyblade, Ph.D., Senior Research Health Policy Analyst, RTI International, Washington, DC.

Murray Penner, Executive Director of Prevention Access Campaign, North America.

Derek Dangerfield, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing.



Research Updates

Blaine Smith, BA *Youth Perceptions of Stigma: Towards an LGBTQ+ Youth Wellness Model*

Struther Van Horn, Ph.D. *The Influence of Structural Stigma on Mental Illness: State Level Structural Stigma and Quality of Life and Attitudes toward Treatment Seeking.*





Keynote

Speaker: Kahlib Barton-Garçon, Washington, DC
Senior Program Officer, True Colors United (she /he /they)

Workshops Session

1. How Youth can Stop Stigma
2. The Mandala Art as a technique to identify and work with stressful information due to stigma and adverse life events
3. Bodemé Workshop Project: Sexual Health in Black Gay Men
4. PrEP School Attendance

Afternoon Session

Youth Power Up for a Stigma Free Future

(Youth Panel)

Moderator: Daniel Driffin, Co-Founder THRIVE Support Services, Atlanta, GA

Panelists:

Richard Hutchinson, Executive Director and Co-founder and Project Director of He Is Valuable, Inc., Atlanta, GA. (Open To All Things Fem and Masc)

Tranisha Darlene Arzah, HIV STI Tester, Gay City: Seattle's LGBTQ Center (she/they)

M. Gregory Green, Advocate, Columbia, SC

Michael "Miss Mikey" Lamb, Project RED Paint Inc., Atlanta, GA, (he/him/his)

Richard Adkins, Community Advocate



ATTENDANCE AND PROCEEDS

250 in-person attendees

188 webcast attendees

Live stream:

Attendees viewed the conference from the United States, Indonesia, the UK, Uganda, Cameroon, Kenya, Canada, Netherlands, United Arab Emirates, & Argentina

\$74,186

in grants and donations
and registrations

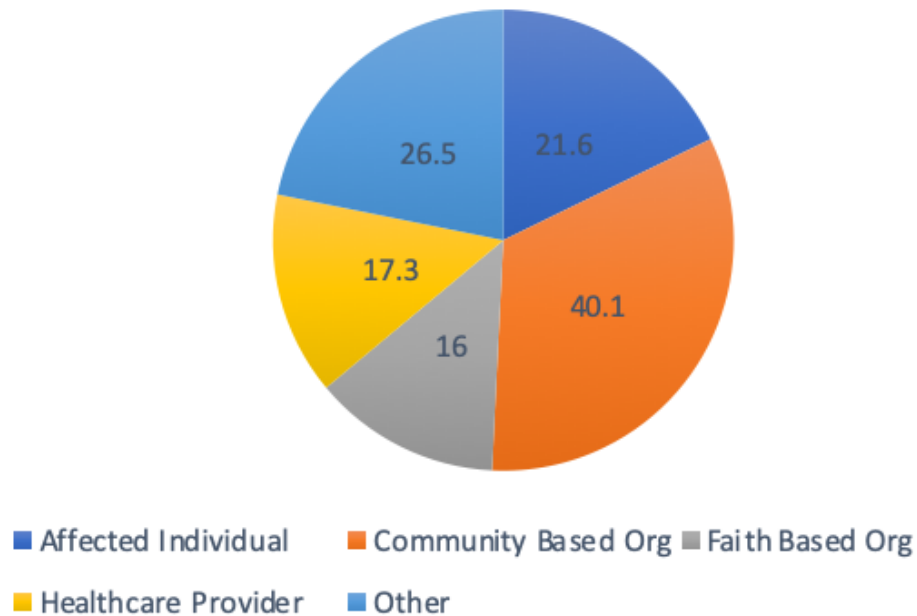
16 out of town
scholarships

awarded. Plus many
local scholarships



"Young panelists were fierce for being open, honest, and well informed"

Who Attended?



- 59% of attendees were female
- More males this year (37%). An increase from 25%.
- All age groups from 13 to <55 were well represented, with ages >55 having the greatest attendance (30.1%).
- 18% of participants were youth.
- Latino attendance was up from 8% in 2018 to 17%.

203 of the attendees
were minorities

**SURVEY
STATISTICS**

FEEDBACK

"Glorious passion around stigma reduction"

"There is some denial concerning progress in educating the public about stigma. This conference is proof of progress"

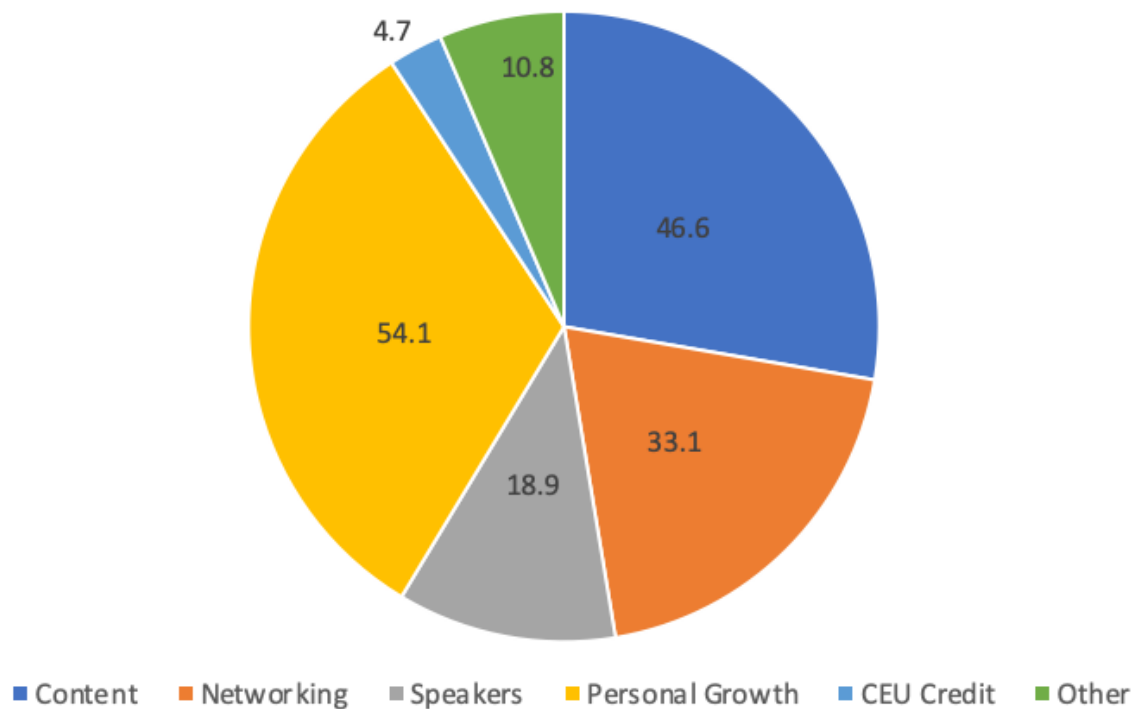
"Performances helped me see that I'm the way I am and will not let others put me down because of it"

"It gets better every year"



Common areas of improvement noted on surveys included: need higher attendance; screen and presentations were not big enough; all ages, communities, etc were not represented; experienced speakers should coach newer ones in advance; and poor volunteer coordination.

Why Did You Attend?



- 96% of attendees gained knowledge of strategies to reduce stigma through these presentations.
- 91% of attendees agreed that the morning session allowed them to gain a better understanding of the effect of stigma on health outcomes.
- 54% of attendees attended for personal growth and development.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Emcee - Lisa Fager

Opening Session

- **Dr. Sohail Rana** opened the event with a brief talk. He invited Ewurakua Winful up on stage to read a story by Santiaji Syafaat.
- **Michael Kharfen**, Senior Deputy Director of HAHSTA, DC Department of health, **Gail Nunlee-Bland, MD**, Interim Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, and **Anthony Wutoh, Ph.D. R. Ph.** Provost, Howard University all brought greetings.



Morning Session

Research Leading the Way: Becoming Youth Centered to Reduce Stigma for an HIV Free Future

Moderator: Warren L. Miller, Jr, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, SAP, BCD.

Panelists: Laura Nyblade, Ph.D.; Murray Penner; Derek Dangerfield, Ph.D.

The panelists gave individual presentations on their community work and research in combating stigma.

Dr. Nyblade presented on: Reducing HIV and Adolescent-related Stigma and Discrimination.

Mr. Penner presented on: Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U) and Tackling HIV Stigma.

Dr. Dangerfield presented on: A Life Course Exploration of Developmental Pathways to Sexual Risk among Black Sexual Minority Men.

Presentations were followed by a lively question and answer and discussion session with the audience.

Research Update

Blaine Smith, BA, *Youth Perceptions of Stigma: Towards an LGBTQ+ Youth Wellness Model*. His research consisted of 44 LGBTQ youth participants between the ages of 16-24. The purpose of the study was to find out what wellness means to youth and how the adults in their life enhance that wellness. In order to enhance their wellness, youth requested the willingness to listen; sympathy and an understanding from the adults in their life who might not agree with their sexuality; and education for parents on emotional literacy. From providers, youth requested cultural humility and confidentiality.

Struther Van Horn, Ph.D., *The Influence of Structural Stigma on Mental Illness: State Level Structural Stigma and Quality of Life and Attitudes toward Treatment Seeking*. In 2018, 47.6 million adult Americans lived with some sort of mental illness.

Dr. Van Horn discussed her research surrounding ways to expand areas to target stigma reduction. Structural stigma consisting of institutional policies and societal conditions. remains understudied.

Individuals residing in states with higher levels of structural stigma self-reported a lower quality of life. Individuals residing in states with higher restrictions on their civil rights, self-reported well-being. Higher levels of structural stigma were associated with negative attitudes towards the mentally ill in communities. Dr. Van Horn explained that this shows how structural factors can impact individual outcomes.

Keynote

Kahlib Barton-Garçon told the audience his story about battling stigma in relation to HIV.

"Equity is a necessary thing, but equity is not the goal, darlings. Equity is the vehicle that gets us to the road of liberation."



CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Lunch Session

Promising Futures Youth Performance with Dr. Maranda Ward kicked off the lunch session with their annual creative performance including skits, dance, and music.

Dr. Lennard Jack performed on the steel pan and **Barrie Singers**, students from the Barrie School in Silver Spring, sang several songs.

Following Dr. Jack, an original spoken word piece , "*What Happened? Stigma*" was performed by **Michael Lamb**, Prevention Specialist, CAN Community Health Sarasota, FL

The final performance was a jazz performance by **Brian Lenair**, a saxophonist.

Concurrent to and following these performances box lunches were served and there was a poster session and networking opportunities for attendees. In addition, there were displays of art from the Artwork contest and numerous interactive exhibit tables, and opportunities to post to social media.

Recognition

Outstanding Stigma Warriors

The following individuals were recognized for their efforts in fighting stigma through the years: Bryan Jones, Catherine Hanssens, Patricia Nalls, and Khadijah Abdullah Lardas.

Outstanding Stigma Champions

The following Stigma Champions were recognized: Myrna Asia Betancourt, Clive Callender, Michael Dickerson, Goulda Downer, Marcia Ellis, Thomas Evans, Alan Greenberg, Latica Hayden, Felicia Hughes, Saher Iqbal, Loretta Jay, Cynthia Livingston, William Preston, Caroline Reed, Inez Reeves, Rajiv Rimal, Cortney Hughes Rinker, Juan Salomon-Andonie, Casey Tesfaye, JuliaThompson, Khadijah Tribble, Rebecca Vargas-Jackson, Maranda Ward, and Michal Young.



Recognition of 10th Year and Candlelight Ceremony

Conference Director, **Sohail Rana, M.D.**, Professor of Pediatrics and Child Health at Howard University, **Michelle Jackson Rollins**, and **Tracy L. Johnson Jr.** teamed up with a recognition of the conference's 10th year and a moving candlelight ceremony.



Workshop Sessions

TRACK 1: *How Youth Can Stop Stigma*

Coordinator: **Maranda Ward, Ed.D.**, Assistant Professor of Clinical Research and Leadership, George Washington University.

Panelists: Students of Promising Futures

In this panel, the students of Promising Futures discussed the difference between stereotypes and stigma. They discussed various ways in which stereotypes can be stigmatizing. They engaged the audience with discussions, games, and activities of ways to combat stigma.

TRACK 2: *The Mandala Art as a technique to identify and work with stressful information due to stigma and adverse life events*

Coordinator: **Luz E Rivera, Psy. D.**

Moderator: **Rodrigo Chavez, M.H.A.**

In this workshop session, participants created Mandala art. It is a technique used to deal with stressful information due to stigma and adverse life events.

TRACK 3: *Bodemé Workshop Project, Sexual Health in Black Gay Men*

Coordinator: Ron Simmons, Ph.D., Ron Simmons Consulting, LLC

Moderator: Ron Simmons, Ph.D., Ron Simmons Consulting, LLC

Panelist: Demetrius Smith, Health Impact Specialist, DC Department of Health

The Bodemé Workshop Project was a group-level behavioral intervention for black gay men, ages 18 and older. The goal of the workshop was to increase the self-empowerment and resilience of black gay men, attitudes necessary for HIV prevention, and resistance to stigma.

TRACK 4: *PrEP School Attendance, Mid-Atlantic AIDS Education and Training Center Sponsored Workshop with Nursing Contact Hour*

Coordinator: Latica Hayden

Speaker: Ronald Wilcox, MD, Professor and Chief of Infectious Diseases, Howard University

In this workshop session, data pertaining to HIV was presented. The presenter presented data pertaining to the race, gender, and age disparities in HIV.

Research on PrEP was discussed. Different studies about PrEP, its barriers, disparities, and effects were shared with the audience.

Afternoon Session

Youth Power Up for a Stigma Free Future

Moderator: Daniel Driffin

Panelists: Richard Hutchinson, Tranisha Darlene Arzah, M Gregory Green, Michael "Miss Mikey" Lamb, Richard Adkins

In this panel, the panelists discuss the meaning of stigma, the affect stigma has had on their personal lives, and the work they are doing to combat stigma. They addressed topics such as: the power of language. They engaged in conversation with the audience about seeking ways to combat stigma and create a better and safer environment overall.



WINNING ARTWORK



1st *Thoughts* by Mireim Alibrahim



3rd *Double Mission* by Gafar Q. Oluwabori



2nd *The Debt* by Doudgy Charmant "Dew the Artist"

WINNING ABSTRACT

Youth Perceptions of Stigma: Towards an LGBTQ+ Youth Wellness

Model, Jennafer Kwait, PhD and Blaine Smith, BA, *Whitman-Walker Health*

In 2015, five focus groups were conducted with SGM youth aged 16-24 (n = 44) in Washington, DC to explore LGBTQ+ youth understandings of their own health and wellness, with one section focused on the intersection of stigma and wellness. Many youth expressed a sophisticated understanding of stigma, reflecting on the ways that stigma a) inhibits their access to services and information that enhances wellness b) prevents LGBTQ+ youth from self-advocating, and c) negatively impacts self-esteem through the projection of negative assumptions and derogatory treatment by others. Repetitive stigmatizing interactions with family and others left youth more apprehensive to ask providers for certain services like sexual and mental health care, noting a general stigmatizing effect with providers who youth describe as often didactic. Participants also expressed a disconnect between the risk reduction model for youth sexual health and actual self-definitions of wellness, which were rooted in destigmatization, support, acceptance, and agency to live authentically. These focus groups provided valuable insight on LGBTQ+ self-definitions of wellness and stigma, and interpersonal, medical, and programmatic guidance on how to enhance LGBTQ+ youth wellness. Specifically, youth expressed the need for increased social support and acceptance, queer inclusive sexual health education, queer community space, and access to culturally competent mental health care.

Special Thanks To . . .

Conference Director: Sohail Rana, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics and Child Health, Howard University

Assistant Directors: Patricia Houston, MS and Edwin Powell, DA, Ed.

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Sponsors



COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS

George Mason University; Howard University leadership, faculty, nurses, staff and students; Patricia McDougal Photos; Promising Futures; RAHMA; The Women's Collective, bstigma free.

Additional Partners and Sponsors: DC DOH- HAHSTA; Digital Conventions;

Food by Sodexo; Sohail and Gila Rana.



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STIGMA

Faces of Stigma

Save the date!

11th Annual Conference

November 19-20, 2020

www.whocanyoutell.org