



8th Annual

Healing the Hurt

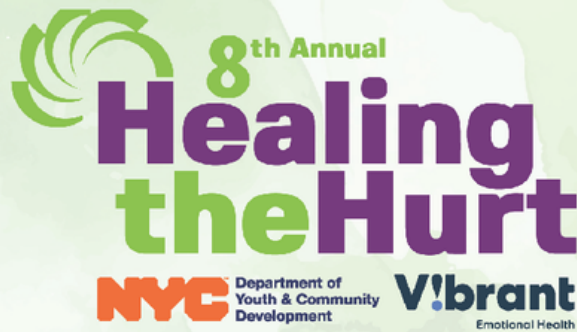
Connecting Hope to Action



Conference Guide

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CONNECTING HOPE TO ACTION

The NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) in partnership with Vibrant Emotional Health invites you to join our **8th Annual Healing the Hurt Conference**

Friday, May 19, 2023
UJA Federation of New York
130 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

This year's theme, **Connecting Hope to Action**, will focus on how we can enhance our collective impact toward healing our communities.

Kosher breakfast, lunch, and refreshments will be provided for all in-person attendees.
Please note that no outside food is permitted.

Upon registering, please indicate if you plan to attend in-person or virtually.
Space for in-person attendees must be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.

Conference highlights will include remarks from dynamic keynote and guest speakers, interactive workshops on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Best Practices, Self-Care and Managing Stress, Supervisor Learning Labs, surprise giveaways, and much more.

[TO VISIT THE CONFERENCE WEBSITE, CLICK HERE](#)

[Click Here: In-Person Registration](#)

[Click Here: Virtual Registration](#)

We look forward to having you join us!

8th Annual
**Healing
theHurt**
CONNECTING HOPE TO ACTION

Friday, May 19, 2023
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Conference Agenda

**8:30 AM - Breakfast and Networking
9:00 AM**

**9:00 AM - Conference Introduction
9:15 AM**

**9:15 AM - Welcome Address
9:30 AM**

**9:30 AM - Keynote Address
10:25 AM**

**10:25 AM - Refreshment Break
10:40 AM**

**10:40 AM - Breakout Workshops
11:40 AM**

**11:40 AM - Lunch and Networking
1:15 PM**

**1:15 PM - Breakout Workshops
2:15 PM**

**2:15 PM - Refreshment Break
2:30 PM**

**2:30 PM - Closing Remarks and Q&A
2:45 PM**

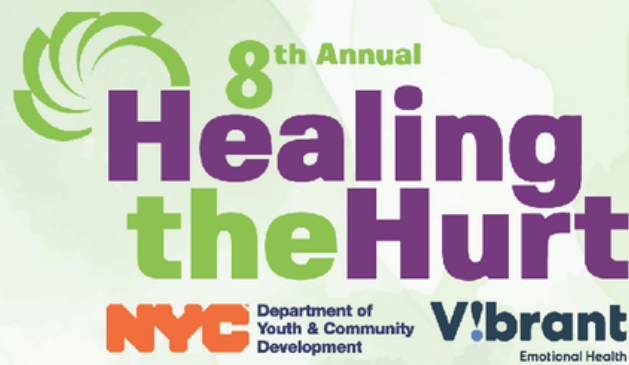
**2:45 PM - Conference Concludes
3:00 PM**



**Keynote Speaker:
Jeffrey Gardere, Ph.D., ABPP**

**We need your feedback!
Submit your general
evaluation after scanning
the QR code below**





Conference Agenda

8:30 a.m. – Pre-Conference Breakfast and Networking

9:00 a.m. – Conference Introduction - Denice Williams, Dep. Commissioner PPIC (MC for In-Person)
Miguel Bonilla, Senior Director of Capacity Building (MC for Virtual)

9:15 a.m. – Welcome and Opening Remarks

9:30 a.m. Keith S. Howard, Commissioner, NYC Dept. of Youth and Community Development and
Lisa Furst, Chief Program Officer, Vibrant Emotional Health

9:35 a.m. – Keynote Address - Mike Bobbitt, Dep. Commissioner, CD, NYC DYCD will introduce

10:25 a.m. Keynote Speaker Dr. Jeffrey Gardere, Ph.D., ABPP

10:25 a.m. – Transition & Refreshments Break

10:40 a.m.

10:40 a.m. – Breakout Workshops

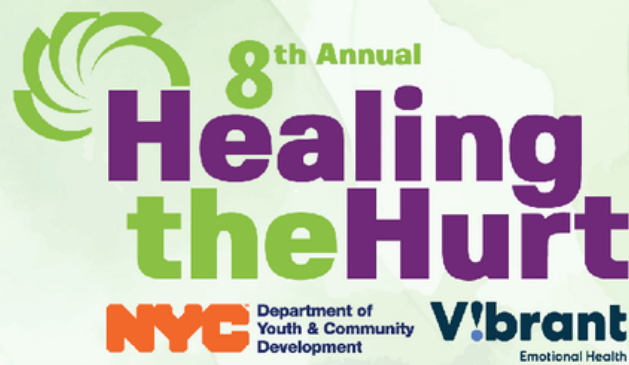
11:40 a.m. In-Person:

- **Engaging Young Men of Color in Mental Health Services.**
facilitator: Damon Watson
- **Intersection of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities**
facilitator: Sarah Blas
- **Self-Care and Managing Stress: Qigong** *facilitator: Michelle Quiba*
- **Centering Intersectionality and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in the Workplace** *facilitators: Elizabeth Speck and Melissa D. Elliot*

Virtual:

- **Engaging Young Men of Color in Mental Health Services.**
facilitator: Hilda Marie
- **Addressing Mental Health and Trauma Needs of the Influx of New Immigrant Populations** *facilitator: Adela Rodriguez*
- **Stress and Trauma Resilience** *facilitator: Bidyut K. Bose*
- **Centering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in the Workplace**
facilitator: Lisa White





11:40 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Lunch and Networking Break**

1:00 p.m. – **Transition & Refreshments Break**

1:15 p.m. – **Breakout Workshops**

2:15 p.m.

In-Person:

- **Engaging Young Men of Color in Mental Health Services**
facilitator: Damon Watson
- **Intersection of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities**
facilitator: Sarah Blas
- **Self-Care and Managing Stress: Qigong**
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- **Centering Intersectionality and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in the Workplace** *facilitators: Elizabeth Speck and Melissa D. Elliot*

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- **Centering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in the Workplace**
facilitator: Lisa White

2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. **Transition & Refreshments Break**

2:30 p.m. – **Closing Remarks and Q&A**

2:45 p.m.

Susan Haskell, Deputy Commissioner of Youth Services, NYC Dept. of Youth and Community Development

2:45 p.m. – **Conference Wrap-Up**

3:00 p.m.



Keith S. Howard

*Commissioner
NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)*



Keith Howard was appointed Commissioner of the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) by Mayor Eric Adams in June 2022. Commissioner Howard formerly served as NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) Associate Deputy Commissioner of the Sidewalk Inspection Management Division. He also was an Adjunct Professor at Queens College and the Joseph S. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies. Commissioner Howard has dedicated 30 years of his professional career to public service and held various senior level positions in New York City government. Commissioner Howard is married and the father of two young adults. He is a proud alumnus of John Jay College, where he was awarded a bachelor's degree as well as a master's degree in public administration.

To read Commissioner Howard's full bio, [click this link](#).

Lisa Furst

*Chief Program Officer
Vibrant Emotional Health*



Lisa Furst, LMSW, MPH has more than 20 years of experience in the mental health service sector. In her current role, Ms. Furst provides direction and support to Vibrant's community programs, the H2H Contact Center and the Center for Policy, Advocacy and Education. Her expertise includes program development and implementation, training and technical assistance, quality improvement, fundraising and advocacy. She is an author of and contributor to several books on mental health, with particular expertise on older adult mental health. She also has published articles in Behavioral Health News, Geriatric Medicine, the Journal of Care Management, and others, as well as interviewed by national news outlets, such as The New York Times and CNN. Ms. Furst holds a master of social work degree from the Hunter College School of Social Work and a masters of public health degree from the CUNY School of Public Health & Health Policy.

Denice Williams

*Deputy Commissioner, Planning, Program Integration and Evaluation
NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)*



Denice is a native New Yorker dedicated to leveling the playing field of New Yorkers whose humanity has not always been recognized and continue to suffer from inequitable opportunities to live their best lives, particularly those of African descent. She prides herself on being a disrupter of things – thoughts, policies, practices that are harmful and contrary to the advancement of people of color. Denice has dedicated her professional life in service to others in nonprofit and government settings. Currently, she serves as founding Deputy Commissioner for the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development overseeing the Bureau of Planning, Program Integration and Evaluation (PPIE). PPIE's mandate is to maximize DYCD investments and improve the customer experience and outcomes through streamlined, coordinated service delivery. In this role she also leads the agency's equity agenda and its goal to become a proactive anti-racist agency. She is a graduate of Pace University and NYU's Wagner School of Public Service.



Susan Haskell

*Deputy Commissioner, Youth Services
NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)*

As Deputy Commissioner, Youth Services, Susan Haskell supports DYCD's after school programs, community centers, and services for Runaway and Homeless Youth. Susan works to strengthen social-emotional development and infuse mental health strategies, within the workplace and into the experiences of program participants.



Mike Bobbitt

*Deputy Commissioner, Community Development
NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)*

Mike Bobbitt is the Deputy Commissioner of Community Development at DYCD. This Division includes the Discretionary, Literacy and Immigrant Services, Neighborhood Development Areas Initiative, Fatherhood Initiative, and Neighborhood Advisory Board Liaison Units. Mike strives to promote integration and strengthen referral relationships with other City agencies that assist New Yorkers with low-incomes. Mike represents DYCD as a Board Member of the NYS Community Action Association. Prior to joining DYCD, Mike's focus was in the field of criminal justice, having served in various capacities at the JEHT Foundation and the Vera Institute of Justice. Mike is a 2018 graduate of the City's New York Leadership Institute. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Urban Studies from Harvard University and was a Ford Foundation Research grant recipient.

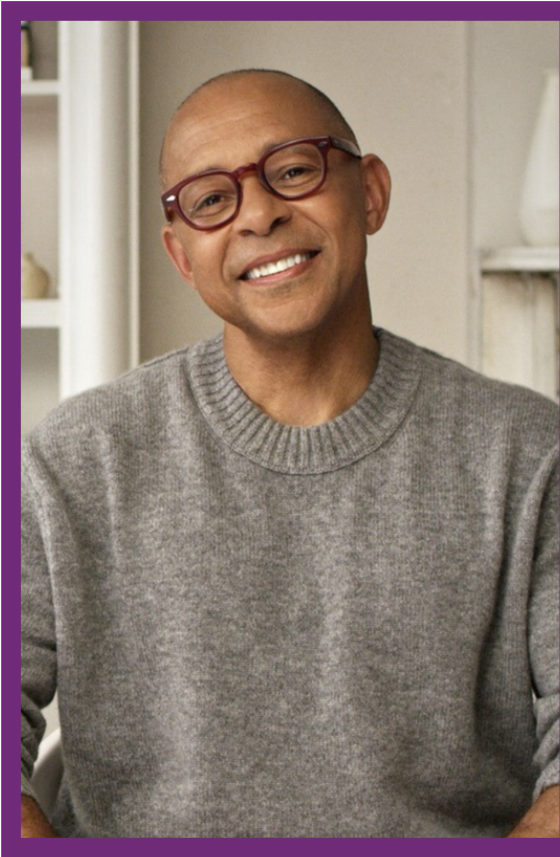


Miguel Bonilla

*Senior Director, Capacity Building
NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)*

Miguel Bonilla, has been working in the public sector for over 30 years and is currently Senior Director of Capacity Building for the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). He is also an Adjunct Professor for Alfred University's Masters in Public Administration program, earned his M.S. in Urban Policy from the New School for Social Research, and M.A. in Organizational Development from Antioch University Los Angeles. He was Vice President of the Organization Development Network of New York and has published several articles on Organization Development in journals such as the OD Practitioner and the Journal of Nonprofit Management.

Introducing Our Keynote Speaker



Jeffrey Gardere, Ph.D., ABPP

Dr. Jeff Gardere, known to TV audiences as “America’s Psychologist,” is a Haitian-American born in Manhattan and raised in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. Dr. Jeff attended Brooklyn Technical High School, earned a BA at the University of Rochester, a master’s degree from Columbia University, a master’s and PhD in philosophy and clinical psychology from George Washington University and a D.Min. from The New Seminary (New York). He is the author of *Smart Parenting for African Americans* (Kensington, 1999 & 2002); *Love Prescription, Ending the War Between Black Men and Women* (Kensington, 2002); *Practical Parenting* (co-written with Montel Williams) (Hay House, 2001); and a contributing author to several other books including *The Causes of Autism*.

Dr. Jeff is a Board Certified Clinical Psychologist, an Associate Professor and Course Director of Behavioral Medicine, Cultural Competence and Behavior, and Public Health, at the Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine in New York City. He is also a Clinical Associate Director of Training and Associate Professor for the Touro University Doctor of Psychology Program in NYC. He has a successful private practice in which he works with families, couples and individuals. He also treats and serves as a life coach to celebrities and professional athletes alike. He provides evaluations for IVF donors and also screenings of ministerial candidates for ordination. In addition, he is a top psychological and forensic evaluator and expert witness who has worked on police brutality, malpractice, wrongful death and other civil cases, including some of the highest profile cases in the New York tristate area.

Dr. Jeff has been a contributor to FOX-TV, the Today Show, MSNBC, and CNN. He was the host of VH1’s *Dad Camp* and recently the psychologist on *The Housewives of Atlanta* and *Potomac*. He is the principle psychologist on: *For My Man* on TV one, and *Celebrity Damage Control* and *They Got Away With It* on the Reelz Channel. He is also the aftercare coordinator and psychologist for Lauren Lake’s *Paternity Court* and *Couples Court*. He is also a regular guest on: *The NBC Today Show*, *CNN*, *MSNBC*, *HLN*, *The Maury Povich Show*, *The CBS Early Morning Show*, *FOX News*, and *NewsMax*.

Workshop Presenter Highlights

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Elizabeth Speck, Ph.D., LCAT

Dr. Elizabeth Speck has been working across NYC human services for about three decades. With roots in community-based theater and a Licensed Creative Arts Therapist, she gravitated to program management in an effort to build healthy internal organizational cultures while advocating for systems change, which led to pursuing a doctoral degree in Organizational Development. Elizabeth channeled her passions into founding MindOpen Learning Strategies in 2017, which, in collaboration with dynamic co-conspirators, has delivered customized trauma-informed, anti-racist professional development and capacity building for thousands of employees in a wide range of specialties including workforce development, legal advocacy, public safety, civic engagement, criminal legal system reform, K-12 and higher education– and, of course, many wonderful DYCD community-based contract agencies.



Melissa D. Elliot, LCSW-R, SIFI, CPC

Melissa Elliot combined all of her experiences as a Christian, Black, Woman, Wife, Mother, Bi-cultural, American-born, Barbadian heritage, and Nigerian (Yoruba roots) coupled with her professional training, skills, and expertise and formed AGAPE Family Therapy & Coaching a Group Private Practice, Minority, Women Business Enterprise with the city of New York, whose vision is to provide services with unconditional love. She is known as a mentor, a servant leader, a cheerleader, and a barrier breaker. Entrepreneur Non-for-Profit Leader Adjunct Professor/Faculty Advisor Clinical Supervisor Consultant Psychotherapist Executive and Life Coach.



Damon Watson, LPC, MPH

Damon Watson, LPC, MPH (he/him), is a planner and healer who currently works as the Program Director for The Fellowship Initiative. He has been developing person-centered programs with mental health nonprofits for 15 years with education-based work ranging from counseling in the public school system to implementing and running a private school dedicated to the emotional and academic well-being of adolescents and young adults. In his current role, he collaborates with national and local community programs to provide holistic support to the black and brown young men that they serve through local TFI programs. Damon leads a fantastic team of advocates and healers across the country to provide TFI fellows with resources to support their continued psychological growth. Damon's commitment to his work honors the power of our individual identities, especially our subjugated identities, as a means to envision a world in which we intentionally disrupt and dismantle cultures of white supremacy that continue to cause harm.

Workshop Presenter Highlights

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Sarah Blas

Sarah Blas is a NYC native, mother of six children, public speaker and non profit professional with a background in social sciences. As a social justice champion, she has used her career to dismantle identity-based oppression within vulnerable communities, with a specialty in advocacy for BIPOC and disabled families. She uses her expertise in developing DEI-A infused professional development curriculum and community advocacy to transform both mental models and policies for over 2 decades across NYC. She has served as the Executive Director of Staten Island Therapeutic Gardens, fighting for food sovereignty, Director of Health and Wellness for House of Community, Baitul Jamaat and the Director of Diversity. She currently serves as an elected member of the Community Education Council for District 31, chairing both the Special Education and Diversity and Inclusion Committees. Sarah is the founder of Community Impact Strategies, a minority women-owned business working alongside non profits across NYC.



Michelle Quiba

I found woven through the ups, downs, and in-betweens of my life were gifts of experience to humble me, surprise me, and refine me. I am a survivor of abuse. I am a survivor of injury. I was led to teachers and mentors who showed me ways to manage my pain. I was introduced to Pilates, Yoga, Tai Chi, and Qigong, and learned how my physical body was deeply tied to my emotional one. 10 years ago I became a Personal Trainer and Group Instructor to help others the way others have helped me, to find healing through movement.



Adela Rodriguez, LMSW

Adela M. Rodriguez is the Mental Hygiene Response Chief and Field Response Coordinator for the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) where she manages mental health and field response activities in the aftermath of local crises, disasters, and public health emergencies. Ms. Rodriguez is a seasoned emergency manager with over 15 years of experience serving in a wide range of disaster operations including the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, fatal fires, building collapses, vaccination efforts, and weather-related emergencies such as Hurricanes Sandy, Maria, and Ida (NYC, Puerto Rico), and earthquakes (Puerto Rico). Most recently Ms. Rodriguez led a mental health team in the Mayoral Subway Safety initiative, and she coordinates on-site mental health services at the Resource Navigation Center serving newly arriving asylum seekers.

Ms. Rodriguez is the recipient of DOHMH distinguished service awards "Making It Happen" (2013) and "Professional Excellence" (2021); and was awarded the Emerald Gem Award for 15 years of Excellency by National Association of Social Workers (2022).



Lisa C. White, LCSW-R

Lisa C. White, LCSW-R's career spans 20 years devoted to the well-being of vulnerable children and their families in New York. As a licensed psychotherapist, she provides therapeutic and coaching services to a diverse clientele focusing on trauma and navigating the workplace. Lisa also offers consulting services to public and private organizations in early childhood, home-visiting, mental health, talent development, and employee engagement. In former capacities, Lisa was Director of the Medical and Mental Health Divisions for various agencies, where she has overseen medical, mental health, and care management services. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Clinical Social Work at the Institute of Clinical Social Work in Chicago.



Hilda Marie, MA

Hilda Marie is a master's level mental health professional, interfaith minister, and alternative healing practitioner. Throughout her 35-year career, Hilda has supported individuals and families on their journey to healing from trauma. Her practice incorporates multiple healing modalities that honor mind, body and spirit. Hilda is a training consultant at Vibrant Emotional Health, and formerly served as program director for The Fellowship Initiative (TFI), a JP Morgan Chase program that provides emotional wellness support to young men of color. Hilda is committed to the welfare of animals and has rescued and rehomed dozens of abandoned animals from Puerto Rico. She currently travels to Ecuador to study the role of herbal and plant medicine in healing trauma and addiction.



Bidyut K. Bose, Ph.D.

Bidyut Bose, PhD, is the Founder and Executive Director of Niroga Institute, the Center for Mindful Stress Resilience. Niroga is an 18-year-old non-profit that has brought trauma-informed Dynamic Mindfulness (DMind) programs directly to hundreds of thousands of children and youth, and trained tens of thousands of adults around them – parents and teachers, health professionals and violence prevention officials. Bidyut conducts DMind trainings nationally and internationally and is committed to developing stress-resilient individuals and families, equitable organizations and communities.

Breakout Workshop Descriptions

In-Person Sessions

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1 Centering Intersectionality and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in the Workplace

Facilitators: Elizabeth Speck and Melissa D. Elliot

Recent research shows what nonprofit staff have long known: it's not a pipeline issue, it's a systemic issue that leadership in too many nonprofit human service organizations is not reflective of the community members served. Today's emerging leaders have a valuable role to play in creating representative, inclusive, equitable organizations to sustain a future of healing and resilience. Key to this is naming and working with power dynamics within supervisory relationships. This workshop facilitates a brave space to reflect on the intersections of social identity, trauma, and the supervisory relationship, center the experiences of members of marginalized groups that have been systemically undervalued and unsupported in the human service professions, and activate your professional mission and sphere of influence in marathon of social justice

2 Engaging Young Men of Color in Mental Health Services

Facilitator: Damon Watson

There is a mental health emergency happening with children of color. This workshop will discuss how this emergency impacts young black and brown boys. Engaging in conversations around anti-black racism, stigma, and culturally responsive care will help increase our ability to support young black and brown boys. Learn skills for working with black and brown boys in crisis and holistic approaches to improve mental health access/resources and reduce barriers to address their mental health needs using culturally responsive approaches. Participants will be able to describe how young black and brown boys' mental health is challenged by racism, understand how negative perceptions are barriers to appropriate treatment, and describe successful treatment types for young black and brown boys, both traditional and innovative.

3 The Intersection Between Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

Facilitator: Sarah Blas

This workshop will provide an overview of common mental health and developmental disabilities many youth face. Utilizing a trauma-informed lens participants will examine case studies, relevant resources and strategies to better service youth and enhance accessibility and inclusion. Participants will be able to examine developmental disabilities and its potential impact on youth and young adults, identify common mental health concerns and its potential impact of youth and young adults, and co-create strategies to increase accessibility and inclusion during services.

4 Self-Care and Managing Stress: Qigong – The Eight Brocades

Facilitator: Michelle Quiba

Cultivate strength, harmony, and health through slow, silken movement. This workshop teaches you a traditional qigong sequence – The Eight Brocades – alongside essential qigong philosophy. For centuries, practitioners have used these eight silken forms to balance vital energy, align with the natural world, support the body's organs and meridian systems, and live grounded, centered, healthy lives. Participants will learn the five elements/phases of qigong, practice the five movement principles in qigong, and identify the five qualities of breathing in qigong.

Breakout Workshop Descriptions

Virtual Sessions

14

1 Addressing the Mental Health and Trauma Needs of the Influx of New Immigrant Populations

Facilitator: Adela Rodriguez

With many new immigrant populations currently seeking asylum in New York City, it is important to recognize the impact that this may have on the youth, individuals and families that we serve. This interactive workshop will increase awareness about the mental health impact on asylum seekers, discuss five common traumatic stress reactions, share strategies to help you support our newest community members cope with traumatic stress reactions, and share resources and tools to help you put best practices into action.

2 Centering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in the Workplace

Facilitator: Lisa White

Nonprofit agencies often aim to create positive change in the world, but in order to do so, they must first ensure that their own workplaces are equitable, inclusive, and welcoming to people of all backgrounds. This condensed workshop will provide an introduction to key concepts and strategies for centering diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) in the nonprofit workplace. At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to define key DEIB concepts and articulate their importance in the nonprofit workplace, identify common DEIB challenges and barriers in their own agency, and identify strategies for promoting DEIB in the workplace.

3 Engaging Young Men of Color in Mental Health Services

Facilitator: Hilda Marie

Engaging Young Men of Color (YMOC) in Mental Health Services will support helping professionals to enhance their understanding of the unique emotional wellness needs of YMOC and the barriers and inequities that prevent them from seeking mental health care. The workshop will highlight the roles that brotherhood, positive masculinity, mentoring and community-building can play in supporting YMOC. During the 45-minute workshop, participants will identify and address YMOC's unique barriers to seeking mental health services, learn strengths-based strategies to build trust, engage YMOC and create new narratives that highlight positive masculinity, and learn how to create safe spaces for YMOC to explore the impact of violence and trauma.

4 Stress and Trauma Resilience: Strategies for Self-Care and Equitable Community Health

Facilitator: Bidyut K. Bose

This workshop explores root causes and upstream solutions for developing resilient individuals, families and communities. Stress and trauma are ubiquitous, and disproportionately greater in underserved communities; equity and social justice efforts require bringing these solutions with disproportionately greater intensity to those who need it the most. In this workshop, we will discuss the latest research in neuroscience and trauma, and participants will get a taste of a powerful practice-based solution. Participants will learn about the impact of stress and trauma on brain and behavior, connect stress and trauma resilience to equity and social justice, and experience practices that provide upstream solutions personally and professionally.

Special Thanks to the Healing The Hurt 2023 Planning Committee



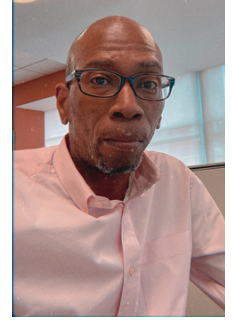
**David
Aglialoro**



**Miguel
Bonilla**



**Paula
Calby**



**Reginald
Gibson**



**Rhodesia
Humphrey**



**Eduardo
Laboy**



**Andrea
Pereda**



**Denise
Ramirez**



**Shameela
Ramprasad**



**Hetheru
Shango**



**Jasmine
Sheppard**



**Mahalia
Sutherland-
Ugarte**



**Allyna
Steinberg**



**Celinda
Wu**



**Shontel
Ward**