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Community Opioid Prevention Health Fair

September 12, 2022

Speakers and Presenters

**Melina Afzal, LICSW** is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW), with twenty-two years of experience that includes front-line clinical practice, as well as management and leadership positions. She has worked extensively with clients in the areas of substance use (Co-occurring), mental health, crisis intervention, HIV/AIDS, and renal disease (dialysis).  Professor Afzal administers a clinical supervision practice for LGSW and clinical professionals who seek to sharpen their skill sets. Her approach is holistic, valuing self-determination - 'meet people where they are', and realizing that ‘one size’ does not fit all.

**Mr. Charles A. Dark, II** (Certified Prevention Specialist) serves as the Director of the Wards 5 & 6 DC Prevention Center as a member of the Sasha Bruce Youthwork staff. During my 13-year tenure, I have worked in conjunction with the Addiction Prevention Recovery Administration (APRA), the Substance Use Disorders Services (SUDS), Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to use a public health risk and protective factor approach as the guiding framework for the ongoing development of a Wards 5 & 6 DC Prevention Center. The targeted population for this initiative are youth and young adults ages 8 to 24 and those in the community that influence their decision-making (peers, families, caregivers, and key community stakeholders). With my leadership the plan has been to address three District wide substance abuse outcomes, (Community Education, Community Leadership, Community Changes), and priority risk factors that have been documented as contributing to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use (ATOD) among children, youth, and young adults in the District of Columbia.

**Ebony L. Davis, LCSW-C** is an accomplished organizational development consultant possessing a wide range of experiences including pioneering research and best practices surrounding equity and cannabis legalization for Advocates for Human Potential’s National Cannabis Summit. She has also served as the Deputy Project Director for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Women, Children and Families contract.  She has a particular expertise in creating programs which builds pathways for disenfranchised populations to obtain economic, social and political equity. Her experience has been further enriched by performing community outreach and implementing evidence-based programs for low-income families, at-risk youth, and gender-responsive behavioral health training programs. During her free time, she served as the Chair for the City of Rockville’s Human Rights Commission focusing on civic engagement and diversity and inclusion issues.  She enjoys traveling and spending time with her 1 year- old son and extended family. She received her Master of Social Work and Master of Public Administration from the University of Southern California and her Bachelor’s of Arts – Psychology from the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

**Dr. Peter Delany** joined the faculty of the National Catholic School of Social Service at the Catholic University of America in 2019 after retiring from the U.S. Public Health Service at the rank of Rear Admiral Upper Half. During his career he served in a number of senior research, management, and policy positions in the federal government including serving as the first Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and as a Senior Advisor for Data Policy in the Office of National Drug Control Policy at the White House. He has more than 38 years of experience as a clinician, researcher, and policy maker and is a subject-matter expert in the areas of health services research and the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders. He has authored or co-authored more than twenty peer reviewed articles and scholarly publications, numerous federal publications, and has presented nationally and internationally.

**Corey Howell** is a public health practitioner and Certified Health Education Specialist® with more than 10 years of experience across the grassroots, non-profit, academic, and corporate sectors. He is a Certified Community Health Worker in Maryland with experience in HIV/STI testing and conducting psychosocial support groups for Black men living with HIV. In 2009, he was appointed by Governor Tim Kaine to the Board of Trustees for the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth, the statewide agency charged with reducing youth tobacco use and childhood obesity. In his current role as Capacity Building Assistance Manager at HealthHIV, he oversees the coordination and delivery of capacity building and technical assistance to health services organizations providing HIV, STI, and harm reduction services. Corey has a BA in Public Health from American University.

**Elder Joseph H. Johnson** was called to ministry in March 2011 and that was the start of his purpose journey in Christ. He sees this as why we Christians are placed in this earth realm, to fulfill our GOD given design purpose for this life. The Good Success Christian Baptist Church has been his launching ground, under the leadership of Dr. William H. Bennett II, Senior Pastor, and Founder. The path that he was predetermined to follow has been guided by his vision and teaching. Over the years, through ministerial teaching and Godly guidance, his elevation to the position of Elder in GOD’S Church is a privilege that “[I] honor and the work that we do for the people we serve is a blessing.” During his journey I have helped to develop a number of programs that are ongoing today, including the FOOD HARVEST PROGRAM which provides groceries for residents twice a week as well as the senior grocery box program which allows seniors or special needs individuals for small donation to receive a delivered box weekly. Since the implementation, this program for over six (6) years ago, it has served over thirty (30) thousand people across our service area. Our Church also has a clothing bin that serves our community. I currently serve as Director of Community Outreach and Services for the Good Success Christian Baptist Church which has responsibility for providing information, services, and opportunities to direct outreach involvement with issues of personal and social consequence to individuals and families. Our community outreach initiatives in the areas of substance use disorders, mental health, and family unity have allowed this ministry to address issues that others have not approached in their community service agenda. We see this not as an attack on other approaches, but boldness to affect change in our community. Our belief is meet them where they are and help them on the spot.

**Rev. Reginald “Reggie” Whren** currently is employed in Washington, District of Columbia as Assistant Program Director of Partners In Drug Abuse and Rehabilitation Counseling (PIDARC), a center of the Foundation for Contemporary Mental Health (June 1, 2004 to present), where he oversees daily operations of the Level I Medication Assistance Treatment program to include policies and procedures, staff development, and outpatient services. PIDARC, provides a variety of treatment approaches to the Opioid dependent persons along with interventions, and referrals to assist them in dissolving barriers and dispelling myths that make an addictive disorder difficult to manage. He is responsible for a program with a populated census of over 600 patients. Before his promotion he served the foundation as Substance Abuse Counselor. Rev. Whren majored in Social Work at Catholic University’s National School of Social Services and is a graduate of The Washington Baptist Theological Seminary. He is currently is studying at Howard University School of Divinity’s MDiv program. He is a licensed and an ordained Minister in the District of Columbia and vicinity. He currently serves on the Community Action Group’s Board of Trustees and is an active member of Community Action Group’s Alumni Association. He has received recognitions for his volunteerism and commitment to communities from The District of Columbia Superior Court Pre-Trial Services agencies for his contributions to the DC Superior Court Drug Intervention Program.

**Nicki Sanders** is the Founder and CEO of Nicki Sanders Leadership Consulting where leadership development and organizational consulting are central. As a senior manager, Nicki has hired, trained, and supervised direct service staff, interns, and volunteers for over a decade. Nicki has over 20 years of direct service experience in program planning, community engagement, and group facilitation. She has managed program expansion, led curriculum development, and served as the main point of contact for service collaborations, partnerships, and programming requests, and provided direct support to children and adolescents in several agencies in the Washington metropolitan area. Additionally, Nicki is an adjunct professor at Trinity Washington University, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology. Nicki earned her Master of Social Work from the University of Maryland, Baltimore, School of Social Work with a concentration in Management and Community Organization and a specialization in Social Action and Community Development.

**Yvonne L Stroman.** For more than 25 years, Yvonne has worked in the field of social services providing leadership, direction, support, education, advocacy, training and empowerment to individuals, families, and communities. She has served in various capacities, including executive director of a non-profit as well as senior management. Her current position includes working as an administrator for the county drug and alcohol agency where she works with local organizations to assure that quality drug and alcohol services and providing community education and awareness, support and referrals to individuals seeking assistance for a drug and alcohol problems and collaborating with community organizations and agencies to advocate and promote recovery from addiction. Ms. Stroman also collaborates with individuals and social agencies to promote environmental strategies and educates the public about the dangers and consequences associated with youth’s use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and other social issues affecting youth and the community. She services on local boards including, Reading, PA School Board, Reading Police Diversity Board, Berks County Children and Youth Advisory Board, Berks County Suicide Prevention Task Force, and the Pennsylvania Statewide Disproportionate Minority Contact Sub-Committee – an advisory committee under the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. She is a national consultant for the Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America (CADCA) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs providing training to youth and adults on issues and initiatives that promote cultural diversity and awareness and create community level change. She is also an Adjunct Professor at Alvernia University in Reading, Pennsylvania. She holds a master’s degree in Human Services Counseling for Addictions and Recovery and is a Certified Recovery Specialist.