Proceedings of the First Annual Conference on Haitian Mental Health & Art Exhibition

Trauma and Mental Illness in the Haitian Community: Cultural Considerations for Developing a Broad Clinical and Research Agenda

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Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology
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Trauma and Mental Illness in the Haitian Community:
Cultural Considerations for Developing a Broad Clinical and Research Agenda

May 5, 2012

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Welcoming Remarks

Gemima St. Louis, Ph.D.
President, Haitian Mental Health Network

Welcome to the Conference on Trauma and Mental Illness in the Haitian Community. The primary goal of this year’s Conference, which is organized by the Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network and the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology (MSPP), is to help raise awareness about mental illness and mental health issues in the Haitian community.

Massachusetts has the third largest Haitian community in the United States, with an estimated 75,000 Haitian residents. Haitians have been settling in the state since the 1960s and now represent the second largest immigrant group in Boston. As a growing and vibrant community in the state, Haitians have remained relatively invisible to mainstream society. However, the earthquake of January 12, 2010 seemed to have ignited a renewed interest in Haiti and, for our purpose, has brought to the forefront the need for culturally-competent and trauma-focused mental health services for Haitians locally, nationally and internationally. Yet, well before the devastating earthquake that struck the island on that fateful day, Haitian individuals have endured numerous traumatic experiences—political unrest, violence, and countless natural disasters—that have had a profound impact on their psychological, social and emotional well-being.

This Conference brings together health care experts, researchers, educators, clinicians and community advocates whose current work can inform the development of a comprehensive agenda for Haitian mental health in Massachusetts and beyond. It is intended as a forum where participants can actively engage in community-level discussions about the mental health needs of Haitians; and exchange knowledge, information, data and culturally-based practices in an atmosphere of collaboration that can lead to successful clinical, research and policy development initiatives.

It is befitting that the Conference is taking place in May because it is symbolic for two reasons. First, May is Mental Health Month in the United States—a movement that began in 1949 to raise awareness of mental health conditions and mental wellness for all. Coincidentally, one of this year’s themes is Healing Trauma’s Invisible Wounds, which focuses on the impact of traumatic events on individuals, families and communities; and reminds us that while “trauma can happen to anyone, healing is possible for everyone” (Mental Health America, 2012).

The second reason why May is meaningful to today’s event is that May is also Haitian Heritage Month. Since 1999, we have commemorated as a community the rich Haitian history, culture, traditions and pride; and have celebrated Haitian achievements and contributions across the globe. This month-long celebration includes a series of local activities such as parades, flag
raising ceremonies, and exhibits organized by several Haitian organizations throughout the country. But as we celebrate what is unique and beautiful about the Haitian culture, we must not forget that Haiti is a nation with a chronic history of trauma—from natural disasters to political unrest, community violence, abuse, and other man-made tragedies and sufferings. Moreover, historically, mental illness has been highly stigmatized in our country. Thus, it is critical that we maintain the focus on addressing the mental health needs of the Haitian community well beyond today’s event.

This Conference was borne out of a partnership between the HMH Network and MSPP. There are many individuals that must be acknowledged for their vision and contributions to making this event a reality. First, our deepest gratitude goes to the faculty and staff at MSPP, most notably, Dr. Nicholas Covino, President; Dr. Frances Mervyn, Dean of Students; Dr. Jill Bloom, Core Faculty; Gretchen Nash, Director of Multicultural Affairs; and Dean Abby, Director of Continuing and Community Education. Our heartfelt thanks also go to the Keynote and Invited Speakers, Dr. Guerda Nicolas and Dr. Ronald Jean Jacques who have traveled from Miami and Haiti, respectively, to join hands with us.

We would also like to thank all the members of the Planning Committee at the Haitian Mental Health Network; our volunteers who donated so generously of their time, talents, efforts and energy; and our colleagues and members of the general community who continue to support the HMH Network through their participation in our forums, memorial events, and other community-based activities.

Lastly, we are grateful to our sponsors for their generous support of the Conference. They include the SPARK Center at Boston Medical Center, The Griffin Foundation, The Haiti Fund at the Boston Foundation, Partners In Health, Children’s Services of Roxbury, the National Haitian American Health Alliance, the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, and Wheelock College.

On behalf of the Haitian Mental Health Network and the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology, we thank you for your participation. We have prepared a comprehensive program with some of the most prominent researchers, educators and clinicians in the field. We are hopefully that you will walk away from today’s event with new knowledge about the Haitian community and useful strategies for responding to its unique mental health needs. Thank you and welcome!
“Meeting the Need . . . Making a Difference”:
The Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology

Frances V. Mervyn, Ph.D., Dean of Students

The Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology (MSPP) educates students for careers that meet the growing demand for access to quality, culturally competent psychological services for individuals, groups, communities and organizations both locally and around the globe. MSPP offers 12 degree programs, with a focus on serving vulnerable populations, including children of adversity, Latinos and veterans, as well as organizations and leaders on the forefront of creating long-lasting social change.

MSPP’s commitment to meeting the needs of underserved populations, providing psychological services and training culturally sensitive clinicians can be seen in our Dr. Cynthia Lucero Latino Mental Health Training Program, Masters in Global Mental Health Program, doctoral clinical concentration in Children and Families of Adversity and Resilience and our community partnerships with the Haitian Mental Health Network, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and over 350 field placement sites.

The Freedman Center for Child and Family Development, MSPP Interface Referral Service, and our Brenner Center for Psychological Testing also support our training and service mission. These programs, partnerships, field placement sites and areas of training focus on meaningful classroom discussion on diversity, individual differences and our common humanity as it relates to mental health.

By promoting open dialogue about these crucial issues, MSPP strives to attract a student body that reflects and/or engages with the communities we serve. The core of MSPP’s approach is to provide students with hands-on experience and the clinical skills they need to be effective, pragmatic and compassionate professionals providing high quality services to their clients and solving complex problems in an increasingly diverse world.
AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

During the conference, several awards were presented to individuals and organizations in recognition of their support for the people of Haiti, commitment to raising awareness about mental health and mental illness in the Haitian community, and scholarly contributions to the field of Haitian mental health. The recipients were as follows:

**The Griffin Foundation & the SPARK Center at Boston Medical Center**
Dr. Martha Vibbert, Director of the SPARK Center, accepted two awards on behalf of the SPARK Center and the Griffin Foundation for their commitment to promoting culturally-competent mental health services for ethnically-diverse children, families and communities both locally and internationally.

**The Haiti Fund at the Boston Foundation**
The Haiti Fund at the Boston Foundation received an award in recognition of its commitment to promote human rights and reconstruction efforts in Haiti, and its on-going support of the Greater Boston Haitian-American community.

**Dr. Ronald Jean Jacques, President, Association of Haitian Psychology**
Dr. Jean Jacques was presented with an award for his visionary leadership, dedicated services to the people of Haiti, and efforts to facilitate collaborations between the Association of Haitian Psychology and international partners.

**Dr. Guerda Nicolas, Associate Professor and Chairperson, Educational and Psychological Studies Department, University of Miami**
Dr. Nicolas was the recipient of the Haitian Mental Health Network’s first **Pioneer Award in Haitian Mental Health**, which recognizes individuals who are dedicated to combating stigma and raising awareness about mental health and mental illness among Haitians, and improving access to culturally- and linguistically-appropriate mental health services for Haitian individuals in Haiti and in the Diaspora.

**Dr. Nicole Prudent, MD, MPH, Pediatrician & Clinical Assistant Professor, Boston Medical Center; Executive Director, Youth & Family Enrichment Services**
Dr. Prudent received an award in recognition of her commitment to improve the physical health and psychosocial well-being of Haitian children and families in Massachusetts as well as her continued efforts to promote mental health awareness in the Haitian community.
“When Our Brushes Shook”:
An Art Exhibition in Memory of Haiti’s Earthquake Victims

Myrtise Kretsedemas, MPH, LCSW, Treasurer
Haitian Mental Health Network

Background
In the aftermath of the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the city of Jacmel, known for its vibrant visual art, was in ruins. Several months following the earthquake, Charlot Lucien visited Jacmel and found its artists isolated—their artwork was completely destroyed and they had no art supplies to practice their craft. He returned to Boston and began collaborating with his colleagues, artists and poets of the Haitian Artists’ Assembly of Massachusetts (HAAM) and founded the Jacmel Art Revitalization Project whose primary mission is to raise funds and collect donated art supplies for the Jacmel artists.

From January to June 2011, HAAM and several partner organizations coordinated an art exhibition, “When Our Brushes Shook”, a six-month long touring art show in Massachusetts, which featured paintings by artists from Jacmel and Haitian artists in Massachusetts. The objectives of the exhibit were to:

- Commemorate the memory of the earthquake victims.
- Provide financial support to participating artists in Jacmel.
- Support a cooperative art movement in Jacmel by providing art supplies.
- Stimulate a market for Haitian art in the New England area and beyond.

“When Our Brushes Shook” is a collaboration between HAAM, the Greater Brockton Society for Poetry and the Arts (GBSPA) and the Jacmel Artists Network. Since 2010 there have been several exhibits at Boston City Hall, Lesley University, Brockton City Hall and Brockton Public Library.

Exhibit on Trauma
In 2012, HAAM was invited by the Haitian Mental Health Network and the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology (MSPP) to coordinate an exhibit that would coincide with the theme of the conference on Trauma and Mental Illness in the Haitian Community. The MSPP art exhibit was a continuation of “When Our Brushes Shook” and featured artwork by artists from Jacmel and local Haitian artists. While there were paintings on the theme of trauma, such as those depicting the 2010 earthquake, there were
also paintings on daily life, landscapes and portraits that captured the breadth of Haitian art. The event took place in April-May 2012, and featured over 100 pieces of art. The exhibit at MSPP included Jacmel artists Renold Laurent, Didier Civil, Vady Confident, Macène Laurent, Veneret Patrick, Norestant Lamour, Wilbert Laurent, Michel Lamour, and Pierre Paul Ancion. New England artists included Fritz Ducheine, Charlot Lucien, Valentin Iviquel, Joseph Chéry, and Nixon Léger.

The opening and closing receptions were well attended by MSPP administrators, faculty, staff, students, as well as art enthusiasts and supporters from the community. The exhibit generated over six thousand dollars in sales in a relative short period of time, making it one of HAAM’s most successful events to date since launching the Jacmel Art Revitalization Project. Seventy-five percent of the proceeds went directly to the artists in Jacmel and the remaining 25 percent went to an art center created by the project that allows Jacmel artists to display their work and mentor younger Haitian artists.
Community Mental Health Capacity Building: A Framework
Guerda Nicolas, PhD, Chairperson, University of Miami

There is evidence to suggest that poverty is associated with the prevalence of mental disorders, specifically with low levels of education, poor housing, and low-income levels (Lund, et al., 2010; Patel, 2007; Patel & Kleinman, 2003). Whether nationally or internationally, it is well understood that more is needed to address the mental health needs of individuals in various communities. However, it is imperative that we approach such challenges with culturally-informed models that are sustainable. The focus of this presentation was on describing a community-based, mental health capacity building framework that has been used extensively both nationally and in Haiti. Dr. Nicolas provided examples from multiple initiatives to demonstrate some of the key principles that have guided the successful implementation of this framework in the United States and in Haiti. The presentation also highlighted the need for interventions that are culturally competent, and properly integrating the belief systems of ethnic and immigrant groups. Addressing cultural issues was emphasized to be of utmost importance in order to make all interventions socially impactful, personally effective, and intellectually enriching.

Mental Health in Haiti after the Earthquake
Dr. Ronald Jean Jacques, President, Association of Haitian Psychology

In the aftermath of the January 12, 2010, faced with multiple traumatic and unpredictable consequences of the disaster on the life, consciousness and the psyche of the Haitian people, Haitian mental health professionals were called upon to respond to the growing emotional and psychological needs of the community. Dr. Jean Jacques discussed the first efforts of the few mental health professionals who were present on the ground and the complex challenges that they faced. First efforts included multi-level interventions within the camps and the establishment of support groups for trauma victims. Psychological services were provided through many methods, which included participation with various NGO teams as well as the establishment of various networks and special interest groups. Collaborative efforts were strengthened through the establishment of a Psychological Association, validation of a Code of Ethics, and other measures. The presenter also addressed ways to bring together collective energies, means and resources to assist in the psychic and mental reconstruction of Haiti.
Workshops and Panel Presentations

What is the Quality of Mental Health Treatment for Haitian Youth in the Greater Boston Area?
Nicholas Carson, MD, FRCPC, Instructor in Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School; Research Associate, Center for Multicultural Mental Health Research

There has been little research done to describe the quality of mental health treatment for Haitian families living in the United States. Dr. Carson discussed two recent studies of mental health service use by Haitian youth living in Cambridge, Massachusetts and surrounding communities. The two studies used retrospective medical record data both from paper charts and from the electronic medical record. The first study revealed that episodes of mental health treatment for Haitian youth were usually quite brief (approximately four visits). This presents a challenge for treatment quality of common behavioral and emotional disorders among Haitian youth. The second study considered the impact of social determinants on treatment adequacy, emergency room use, and early termination of care. Inadequate treatment and early termination were more likely among Haitian youth from areas with greater poverty and with more female-headed households. The relative impact of poverty on adequate care was higher for Haitians than Whites. There were also fewer medication visits among Haitian and African American youth. Haitians living in poverty in the United States may therefore face greater barriers to mental health services relative to other racial/ethnic groups. The presenter discussed the implications of these findings for culturally-competent care of Haitian youth, including relevant interventions. Solutions such as wrap-around services and evening hours for outpatient were offered as possible considerations in removing barriers to care for youth with Medicaid and single parent households. Implications for a research agenda were discussed, which included examining the reasons for lower rates of medication use among Haitian families as well as measuring the impact of Haitian Creole interpreter use.

School-Based Community Outreach: A Resource-Focused Approach
Fanya Jabouin-Monnay, LMFT & Anne Rambo, Ph.D., Nova Southeastern University

The purpose of this presentation was to share practical strategies for developing a partnership with local public schools to meet the mental health and crisis intervention needs of the Haitian community in a non-threatening and resource-focused manner. In this presentation participants learned: (1) strategies for working effectively through the public schools to provide culturally congruent mental health services to immigrant families from Haiti; (2) resource-focused trauma treatment and cultural play therapy techniques with children and their parents; and (3) best practices and lessons learned in implementing a school-based community outreach with schools. The use of Solution-Focused intervention, which emphasizes fostering resiliency in the case of traumatic events, has proven to be significantly effective, resulting in the expansion of interventions to six more schools. The advantages of basing services in schools were also presented, which included increased accessibility to care and ongoing relationships with youth, families and school personnel.
Since the early 1990s, the concept of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder has become a prominent diagnostic category that has shaped humanitarian and development interventions in Haiti in the aftermath of natural and human-authored catastrophes. Dr. James argued that, to some degree, “PTSD” has been imported by Haitian clinicians who have studied abroad and have adopted the DSM categories in their clinical work. PTSD has also been exported to Haiti from multiple international humanitarian relief efforts to treat Haitians in post-conflict and post-disaster settings. As the PTSD construct has traveled beyond borders, it has been influential in the development and sustainability of a “political economy of trauma.”

The multiple and sometimes competing international and national efforts to uncover and redress PTSD in Haiti have contributed to forms of govern mentality that recall colonial struggles to claim and cultivate particular components of Haitian territory. Findings from fieldwork conducted between 1996 and 2000 in various trauma treatment programs suggest that the adoption of the PTSD construct has created new forms of subjectivity for Haiti’s “victims”—one that emphasizes individual rather than collective experience of “trauma” and that articulates and coexists with conceptions of distress arising from Haitian traditional understandings of personhood and embodiment. While some Haitians manifest emotional distress in response to traumatic events in ways that align with biomedical conceptions of “PTSD,” these “symptoms” are understood and interpreted through multiple meaning systems employed to categorize the perils of social life, including discourses of evangelism, Voodoo, feminism, and human rights.

Clinical Interventions to Address Haitian Clients’ Mental Health Needs

The panelists described the Haitian Mental Health Team at the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA), which, over the past 25 years, has continued to strive to create a clinical environment that is safe, confidential and welcoming of the clients served. This has been particularly imperative over the last years since the earthquake of 2010 left indelible marks on Haiti as a country and on its people. Haitian individuals, both directly and indirectly affected by the devastation of the earthquake, have faced multifaceted challenges that have included psychological trauma, medical complexities, and unimaginable loss of family, friends and personal possessions. This presentation offered an overview of medical, mental health and immigration services offered to Haitian clients at CHA. For a community where preventive measures through primary care and mental health services may be fairly new concepts, CHA strives to create an accessible, supportive, culturally sensitive and relevant space for Haitian clients. Within the context of open access and integration with Primary Care at CHA, the Haitian Mental Health Clinic engages individuals and families through a systems approach to treatment. The first segment of the presentation identified various strategies that clinicians have used to better serve and engage first-generation Haitian immigrants in mental health treatment, especially those referred through primary care. The presenters also addressed the unique needs and engagement process in clinical treatments for
second-generation Haitian-American clients. They discussed the integration of therapeutic needs, along with psychopharmacological interventions. Through the treatment process, clients are encouraged to consider new and/or alternative ways of viewing health care, family life, assimilation and acculturation concerns.

**Using Therapeutic Workbooks for Healing After the Haitian Earthquake: My Own Story about the Earthquake in Haiti (Histwa Pa M Sou Tranblemanntè Ayiti A)**

*Jodie Kliman, Ph.D., Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology & Dorothie Ferdinand, Psy.D., Wediko Children’s Services*

This presentation introduced participants to the therapeutic, preventive, and educational uses of activity workbooks to help children and teens who lived through the 2010 earthquake in Haiti and Haitian-American children who were indirectly affected by the earthquake to cope. The Haitian version is bilingual, with text in Haitian Creole and French. The workbook helps children tell their own stories about the earthquake and those they have heard, with help from caring adults. It combines therapeutic, educational, and creative activities, using writing or dictating and drawing in a flexible format. It helps children master frightening and sad experiences and to feel hope for the future for themselves, their families, and Haiti by helping them remember good times before the disaster and times when people helped each other and survived together afterwards. Children are encouraged to think about how they can live safe and meaningful lives in the future, including ways they can contribute to their society. They are helped to grieve their losses without being overwhelmed by that grief because the grief work takes place in a framework of hope, resilience, and adult support. The adults helping children and teens with the book are encouraged to let them work at their own pace, so that they do not get overwhelmed.

**Understanding Trauma and Resilience in Haitian Women**

*Castagna Lacet, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Social Work, Wheelock College*

The experience of immigrating to the U.S. creates many potential risk factors. Immigrants and refugees are leaving familiar ground, social networks and cultural ties. Relocation adds another layer of stress as they seek to find basic necessities such as housing, health care, and other social services. Whatever risks or traumas they may have faced in the homeland could be unresolved and now become complicated by the need to resettle in a foreign place. Dr. Lacet focused on a social work framework for understanding and working with Haitian immigrants. Special attention was paid to the recent wave of immigrants following the January 2010 Haiti earthquake. Poverty, political and social unrest, and natural disasters in the form of powerful hurricanes have already inflicted layers of trauma to individual Haitians and to the collective sense of being. In addressing the needs of those affected by natural disasters, social workers need to understand both micro and macro issues. Even those who may lack linguistic capacity to work one-on-one with Haitian clients will need to gain competency in how to work in partnership and collaboration to meet the complex needs of these clients.
Healing through the Arts: How Haitian Artists Use the Arts to Journey through Grief and Help Other Survivors Regain Control of their Shattered Lives
Charlot Lucien & Joseph M. Chéry, Haitian Artists’ Assembly of Massachusetts

The January 2010 earthquake severely damaged the coastal town of Jacmel, known as the art hub of Haiti. The artist community was deeply affected by the tragedy. They lost family members and colleagues in the earthquake. Their artworks, their properties and their primary market were destroyed. Their lives were shattered. The presenters examined how, with help from the Haitian Artists’ Assembly of Massachusetts, the Jacmel artists are using their art to heal and piece their community back together, being back at work and contributing to rebuilding efforts. The artists are also reaching out to youth and training them, and they are feeling more empowered as a result of on-going efforts that have shown them through action they are not alone in the rebuilding of their community and country.

Mental Health Literacy amongst Haitians Post-Earthquake
Linda G. Marc, ScD, MPH, MS, Division of Policy Translation Leadership and Development and Department of Biostatistics, Harvard School of Public Health

Following the Haiti earthquake of 2010, Dr. Marc conducted a study amongst persons of Haitian ancestry to examine their “mental health literacy” in the context of emergency situations. Mental health literacy is defined as knowledge and beliefs about mental disorders, which aid in the recognition, management or prevention of mental illness. Recognizing the diversity in the Haitian Diaspora, three groups of Haitians were recruited into this study: (1) recent arrivals living in the U.S. 12-months or less; (2) immigrants living in the U.S. 5 to 10 years; and (3) American born citizens of Haitian ancestry or Haitian immigrants living in the U.S. a minimum of 30 years. Using a cross-sectional design and mixed methods, the study recruited persons of Haitian ancestry from Boston, Miami and New York City. Nine focus group sessions (N=84 participants) were conducted using an interview guide, which covered themes specific to mental health literacy. A structured demographic interview was also administered. Focus group sessions and quantitative instruments were in Haitian-Creole and English. Qualitative study results show that the majority of focus group participants believe there is a social stigma associated with mental illness, and that seeking professional mental health care is inconsistent with Haitian culture. Participants did not see a need to seek information about mental health post emergencies. Dr. Marc concluded that a mental health literacy campaign dispelling myths about mental illness is needed for the Haitian community.

The Haiti SERG Initiative
Michelle E. Michel, MA, MPH, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Two years after the January 12, 2010 earthquake that ravaged the nation of Haiti, its impact is still felt on the lives of Haitians living in Massachusetts, which has the 3rd largest Haitian population in the United States. As part of the state’s continuing response, the Department of Mental Health became the recipient of a SAMHSA Emergency Response Grant (SERG) and contracted with the Department of Public Health (DPH) and Boston University’s Center for Multicultural Training in Psychology. The presenters indicated that the nine community health centers in the Greater Boston area subcontracted by DPH provided...
over 1,000 individual services, and conducted almost 300 group sessions. Identified risk categories underscored the loss, with 57% of program participants having been in Haiti at the time of the earthquake, 48% with dead or missing friends, 34% with dead or missing family members, and 21% having traveled back to Haiti since the earthquake. Most frequently reported current reactions included sadness (70%), despair (30%) and feeling anxious or fearful (20%). Service modules implemented by the centers included partnering with schools, churches and community-based organizations to provide art therapy, support groups, and Psychological First Aid. Key lessons learned include: 1) poetry and music are powerful outlets for clients to verbalize their most intense feelings and learn ways to heal; 2) group sessions are more accepting by this constituency to feel comfortable to share their feelings; and 3) self-care is very important for the caregivers. Overall, clients seen ranged from childhood to adulthood to elderly years, and demonstrated improvements even over a short period of time.

**Depression among Haitians**  
*Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D., Chairperson, University of Miami*

Although national studies conducted demonstrate the lack of attention that has been paid to the mental health of ethnic minority populations, research seems to have established that Black immigrants have higher rates of mental health problems than nonimmigrant populations. For example, Haitian women have a high number of health problems, including mental health, as a result of challenges they have faced in history. Dr. Nicolas noted that, among Haitian women, depression can take many forms and that current Western ways of assessing it lack cultural sensitivity and awareness. Three forms of depression have been identified: Douleur de Corps (pain in the body), Soulagement par Dieu, (relief through God), and Lutte sans Victoire (fighting a winless battle) (Nicolas, et al., 2008). In light of this finding, it is important to consider the type of depression that client presents in order to administer the appropriate assessment that will capture this experience. This presentation provided (1) a summary of the manifestation of depression among Haitians, especially Haitian women; (2) some guidelines for how to assess depression among Haitian clients; and (3) strategies for engaging and retaining Haitian clients in mental health treatments.

**The Boston Medical Center's Training Program for the Haiti SERG (SAMHSA Emergency Response Grant) Providers’ Network**  
*Regina Pierre, Ph.D. & Shamaila Khan, Ph.D., Center for Multicultural Training in Psychology, Boston Medical Center*

In January 2010, the earthquake in Haiti had devastating consequences reaching beyond Haiti to Massachusetts. The Commonwealth mobilized a response that focused on post-disaster mental health and trauma recovery services for the Haitian-American community. To assist health centers, community agencies and churches with providing short-term behavioral health services, the Center for Multicultural Training in Psychology (CMTP) at Boston Medical offered trainings for the Haiti SERG network. The trainings were designed to strengthen the skills of the staff at the contracted community health centers, their partners, and those directly impacted by the earthquake. Drs. Pierre and Khan discussed the overall training experience, which included a discussion about the topics covered, feedback received from the participants, and strengths and challenges associated with such an initiative. Participants enjoyed the interactive nature of the presentations which consisted of role-plays. This also allowed them to gain culturally appropriate knowledge to help individuals affected by the earthquake more effectively.
Can Metaphors that are Inherent in the Haitian Story-telling Tradition Serve as a Useful Context for Engaging U.S. Haitians in Clinical Practice?

Guitele Rahill, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of South Florida School of Social Work, College of Behavioral and Community Sciences

Haitians as a nation have experienced trauma for centuries, but the 2010 earthquake and its consequences have accentuated the need for mental health interventions with Haitians at home and abroad. Dr. Rahill argued that the dearth of relevant and efficient strategies that address mental health, child and family concerns for these clients remain a challenge to U.S. practitioners, and a lack of effective engagement strategies on the part of practitioners may be associated with underutilization of mental health and social services in U.S. Haitian communities. The development of cultural-specific practice strategies to engage U.S. Haitians requires that practitioners consider relevant linguistic and cultural elements and understand the context of their ecological culture. The use of metaphors in cultural language was used as part of a strategy to engage a Haitian immigrant with symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder. In that context, the use of storytelling and metaphors empowered the client’s ability to verbalize his experiences, feelings and hopes in a safe environment and provided him with tools to share his progress with the clinician. Four practice guidelines were offered as a first step in the development of intervention strategies with other Haitians who share similar cultural contexts. Metaphors, as a viable approach to practice, enable practitioners to attend to problems beyond the scope of race and language, to consider the needs and goals of Haitian families within their cultural context, and to incorporate skills and methods of problem solving that are familiar to Haitians. The need to test this approach for effectiveness in larger samples within the Haitian population at home and in the Diaspora was recommended.

Mental Health Response in Haiti in the Aftermath of the 2010 Earthquake: A Case Study for Building Long-Term Solutions

Guisepppe Raviola, MD, Instructor in Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School

Scaling up mental health services that are safe, effective, and culturally sound presents significant challenges in a situation of dramatic human loss, ongoing poverty, and multiple competing needs as exists in Haiti today, two years after the devastating 2010 earthquake. Zanmi Lasante (ZL) and Partners In Health (PIH) have sought to expand, strengthen and integrate mental health service delivery in Haiti’s Central Plateau and Lower Artibonite catchment area of 1.2 million people. Historically, the problem with such acute responses is that they tend to be carried out with insufficient attention to key components necessary for sustainable delivery of care in low-resource settings. Dr. Raviola indicated that ZL and PIH have sought to promote the building of consensus among various actors, both within and across organizations, as to the planning of initiatives beyond the initial emergency response. Given that significant challenges have been documented in the functioning of humanitarian mechanisms in Haiti both before and since the 2010 earthquake, clarity of intent and transparency in planning is, for various reasons, an essential step in moving forward effectively. This presentation considered key components necessary for long-term planning for the integration of mental health services, and for the sustainable delivery of care in Haiti.
Appendix A: 
Biographies of Presenters

Nicholas Carson, MD, FRCPC, is an Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and a Research Associate at the Center for Multicultural Mental Health Research. He is also a staff child and adolescent psychiatrist at the Cambridge Health Alliance where he teaches clinical scholarship and psychopharmacology. He is currently the project director of the Right Question Project-Mental Health (DECIDE) Intervention.

Joseph M. Chéry is a Community Relations Specialist, Community Peace Activist, and Artist. He is co-founder of the Boston-based Louis D. Brown Peace Institute and creator of the acclaimed Louis D. Brown Peace Curriculum for High Schools. After the Haiti earthquake of 2010, he joined several community-based organizations that worked with the City of Boston and the State of Massachusetts to address the trauma experienced by Haitian-Americans in New England.

Dorothie Ferdinand, Psy.D., is a graduate of the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology’s doctoral program in clinical psychology and a clinician at Wediko Children’s Services in Boston. She has experience working in academic and hospital settings as well as with children, adolescents, and adults. Her interests include stress management, depression, anxiety and neuropsychological testing.

Fanya Jabouin, LMFT, DMFT (Cand.) is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Family Therapy at Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, and is completing her doctoral program and interns as a school-based supervisor in the Systemic Change in Schools program. She is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice and specializes in Brief Therapy with immigrant families. She is also a certified Grief Specialist and has a certificate in Medical Family Therapy.

Erica Caple James, Ph.D., is a medical and psychiatric anthropologist who received an A.B. from Princeton University, an M.T.S. from Harvard Divinity School, and a Ph.D. from Harvard University. Her research interests focus on violence and trauma; humanitarianism, human rights, democratization, and post-conflict transition processes; race, gender, and culture; and religion and healing.

Carline Jean-Baptiste, Ph.D., is a Clinical/Community Psychologist who has been working in the Haitian community for many years. She is currently a Clinical Instructor at Harvard Medical School, working within the outpatient psychiatry clinic at Cambridge Health Alliance. Dr. Jean-Baptiste has also been involved in training and consultation around psychological and cultural values and beliefs of the Haitian population served at the Cambridge Health Alliance.

Ronald Jean Jacques holds a license in Psychology from the University of the State of Haiti, a DESS in psychology and a DEA in psycho pedagogy from the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium. Since 1994, he has served as a Professor-researcher at the State University of Haiti. He is a Psychologist in private practice and has served in numerous roles as a Psychologist/Consultant to UNFPA, UNICEF, IDB and the EU. Dr. Jean Jacques is the current President of the Association of Haitian Psychology in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Shamaila Khan, Ph.D., is a Clinical Psychologist with clinical and research experience and expertise in the domain of trauma. She is the Director of the Haiti SERG (SAMHSA Emergency Response Grant) and has trained a team of clinicians and staff at community health centers in providing numerous Disaster Behavioral Health Services, including Psychological First Aid and Skills for Psychological Recovery Trainings.

Jodie Kliman, Ph.D., teaches Introduction to Family and Systems Theory, Supervision, Narrative Therapy, and Working with Refugees at the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. She is a founding member of the Boston Institute for Culturally Accountable Practices and The Council on Contemporary Families. Dr. Kliman has a private practice in Brookline, MA.
Castagna Lacet, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at Wheelock College in Boston, MA. Her teaching areas include Research, Family Violence and Trauma, and Social Work Practice. Her clinical and administrative social work experience includes work in family violence, school-based interventions, and research consultation.

Charlot Lucien is the Coordinator for the National Technical Assistance Center for Refugee Health and Mental Health at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. He is also the Founder and Director of the Haitian Artists’ Assembly of Massachusetts and works with several artists and cultural groups in New England and Haiti to support artists affected by the January 2010 Earthquake in Jacmel, Haiti.

Linda Marc, ScD, MPH, MS, is the Education and Curriculum Development Director within the Preparedness and Emergency Response Learning Center (PERLC) at the Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Marc has completed a Doctor of Science Degree in Social Determinants of Health at the Harvard School of Public Health, and an MPH in Psychosocial Epidemiology at the Yale School of Public Health. Due to her knowledge and research on Haitians, in 2007 she was selected to serve on the Race and Ethnicity Advisory Committee for the U.S. Census Bureau and presides as Vice-Chair of the African-American Committee. She concurrently holds an appointment as a Lecturer in Public Health Practice at the Yale School of Public Health.

Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D., is the Chairperson of the Educational and Psychological Studies Department and Associate Professor at the University of Miami. Her current research focus is the integration of race and culture and well-being for ethnically diverse and immigrant communities. Dr. Nicolas also conducts research on social support networks of Caribbean populations with a specific focus on Haitians.

Regina Pierre, Ph.D., is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Boston Medical Center. Her fellowship roles include serving as a Clinical Consultant on the SERG Initiative and as a Clinician in the Outpatient Department at Children’s Services of Roxbury. Her clinical work has focused on traumatized children, adolescents, and families.

Guitele Rahill, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at the University of South Florida. In addition, she is currently serving as a consultant for a National Institute of Health funded Florida International University research, which examined emotional labor of first responders following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. Dr. Rahill is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the State of Florida and a Trauma and Loss Consultant.

Anne Rambo, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Therapy at Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. She played a role in starting programs such as the Child Fit and Students United with Parents and Educators to Resolve Bullying (SUPERB). Presently, she coordinates Systemic Change in Schools, a program through which family therapy interns provide services in at risk low-income schools. Dr. Rambo is an AAMFT Clinical Member and Approved Supervisor.

Giuseppe J. Raviola, MD, a board-certified adult and child/adolescent psychiatrist, is an instructor in psychiatry and in global health and social medicine at Harvard Medical School (HMS) and the medical director of the Psychiatry Quality Program in the Department of Psychiatry at Children’s Hospital Boston (CHB). He is also the director of the Program in Global Mental Health and Social Change (PGMHSC) in the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at HMS.

Mel Schmid, LICSW, has an MSW degree from Boston University. He was born in Haiti and lived there for 16 years. He has worked as a clinician with The Haitian Mental Health Team at Cambridge Health Alliance since 1985.

Gemima St. Louis, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine and the Director of Mental Health Training and Research at the SPARK Center at Boston Medical Center. Dr. St. Louis is the current President of the Boston-based Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network. She currently oversees a school-based initiative supported by the City of Boston Mayor’s Office to provide trauma-focused mental health services to immigrant Haitian students in the Boston Public Schools.
Appendix B: Acknowledgements

The 2012 Conference on Haitian Mental Health was organized by the Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network, in collaboration with the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology (MSPP). We would like to acknowledge the following faculty and staff members at MSPP: Dr. Nicholas Covino, President; Dr. Frances V. Mervyn, Dean of Students; Dr. Jill Bloom, Core Faculty; Gretchen Nash, Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs/Community Service; and Dean R. Abby, Director of the Department of Continuing and Community Education. Additionally, we would like to thank the Keynote and Invited Speakers, Dr. Guerda Nicolas and Dr. Ronald Jean Jacques. We are also grateful to our generous sponsors; the community-based organizations and partner agencies that have supported the HMH Network; and the volunteers as well as members of the Steering and Conference Planning Committees.

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Appendix C: Sponsors

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Haitian Mental Health Network

Paintings from the post-earthquake collection of the Jacmel Art Revitalization Project. 
*Courtesy of the Haitian Artists’ Assembly of Massachusetts.*

For all inquiries pertaining to the *Haitian Mental Health Network* or to obtain copies of the *Conference Proceedings*, please contact the Network at [HMHnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:HMHnetwork@gmail.com) or visit [www.HMHnetwork.org](http://www.HMHnetwork.org).