It Takes a Village: Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Haitian Children, Adolescents, and Families

Saturday, May 2, 2015

William James College
1 Wells Avenue
Newton, Massachusetts
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 4th Annual Conference on Haitian Mental Health was organized by the Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network and William James College (WJC).

We would like to thank:

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- Members of the HMH Network’s Steering Committee, Volunteers, and Conference Planning Committee Members, including the following: Marline Amedee, Olivia Apollon, Gina Dessources, Myrte Kretsedemas, Castagna Lacet, Joel Piton, Vanessa Prosper, and Suze Prudent
- Charlot Lucien and Joseph M. Chéry, Co-Founders, Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts
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- Dean Abby, Director, Continuing & Community Education, WJC
- Kevin Costello, Facilities Manager, WJC
- The presenters and conference attendees for their continued support of the HMH Network and its collaborators.

Catering Service

Luncheon Catered by:
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6 Maple Street
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(617) 364-2772
(617) 361-1888
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INTRODUCTION

The 4th Annual Conference on Haitian Mental Health was held on Saturday, May 2, 2015 at William James College (WJC). The event was co-sponsored by the Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network and WJC. The Annual Conference on Haitian Mental Health brings together practitioners, researchers, educators, public health officials, faith-based and spiritual leaders, community advocates, and policymakers whose current work can inform the development of a comprehensive, community-based, and culturally-oriented mental health agenda for Haitians in the Diaspora.

The primary aim of the Annual Conference is to provide an intellectually stimulating forum where attendees can engage in a meaningful discourse on the mental health needs of the Haitian community; learn from leading scholars in the field; network with other professionals with a strong interest in, passion for, and commitment to promoting the health and well-being of Haitian immigrants; and exchange knowledge, information, and data on culturally-oriented theoretical inquiries, clinical practices, treatment interventions, research, and policy-based initiatives. In addition to offering cutting-edge plenary sessions, panel presentations, and networking opportunities, the Annual Conference is intended to commemorate Haitian Heritage Month through a series of cultural events and an annual art exhibition that celebrate the rich history, values, and traditions of Haitian culture.

To learn more about the HMH Network and its local and international activities, please visit www.HMHnetwork.org or contact the Network via email at HMHnetwork@gmail.com.
The Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network is a Boston-based organization comprised of psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, mental health counselors, psychiatric nurses, pastoral counselors, and students. Members of the HMH Network work collaboratively with community-based agencies as well as local, national, and international institutions to improve access for Haitians to mental health services that are comprehensive, integrated, culturally sensitive, and developmentally appropriate. The HMH Network’s vision is to reduce stigmas and raise awareness about mental illness; and promote access to quality, culturally-oriented, and evidence-informed mental health services for members of the Haitian community locally, nationally, and internationally.

**INITIATIVES IN BOSTON AND HAITI**

In the Boston area, the HMH Network offers the following services and programs:
- **Clinical consultation and training** on a range of topics relevant to the health and mental health of Haitian immigrants and Haitian Americans, including the historical context and impact of migration to the U.S.; stigma and mental illness in the Haitian community; and culturally-oriented mental health interventions with Haitian children, adolescents, and families.
- **Conferences, community forums**, and other professional development events.
- **School-based mental health services** and psychoeducational programs on trauma.
- **Facilitation of consumers’ access to mental health** and social services in the Haitian community.
- **A Directory** of local Haitian Mental Health Providers and Agencies.
- **Community-based research** on the mental health needs of the Haitian community.

In Haiti, the work of the HMH Network has focused on the following:
- Conducting **trauma-informed training** and workshops for medical providers and students on the mental health needs of vulnerable groups such as children, adolescents, and the elderly.
- Collaborating with the Haitian Association of Psychology and other organizations to **build the local workforce capacity** by offering psychoeducational training to Haitian teachers, administrators, and community leaders to better support Haitian individuals and families.
- Facilitating **knowledge exchange and knowledge transfer** between providers in the U.S. and Haiti through cultural immersion and service learning opportunities.

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

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<tr>
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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Email: HMHnetwork@gmail.com
William James College (WJC) 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. WJC offers 15 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.

WJC’s commitment to meeting the needs of underserved populations, providing psychological services, and training culturally sensitive clinicians can be seen in its Dr. Cynthia Lucero Latino Mental Health Training Program, Master’s Program in Global Mental Health, doctoral clinical concentration in Children and Families of Adversity and Resilience, and 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, WJC Interface Referral Service, and the Brenner Center for Psychological Testing also support its 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, WJC strives to attract a student body that reflects and/or engages with the communities we serve. The core of WJC’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.
To provide mental health services to Haitian families, it is important to understand their historical, social and psychological acculturation patterns in the U.S. In her Keynote Address, Dr. Désir provided a review of research and lessons learned from 15 years of work as a school psychologist serving Haitian children and families. She remarked that there are few empirical studies that focus on the needs of Haitian families. Her presentation included preliminary findings from a six-year longitudinal study of Haitian families and their children. Psychological well-being, personality traits, and parent-adolescent communication data were collected from nearly 100 Haitian parents whose children participated in a Haitian literacy summer program in Miami, FL. The research findings were used to provide a critical and affirming lens of Haitian parents. Dr. Désir argued that in order to fully respect and assist Haitian families, they must be understood in a sensitive cultural context.

In this Invited Address, Dr. DeGraff considered two important implications of his research agenda for linguistics and policies related to education writ large, including education toward better mental health for all in Haiti, especially those who speak Kreyòl only (i.e., the vast majority of Haitians). Firstly, Kreyòl is comparable to European and other languages in terms of its development, structures and expressive capacity. Secondly, Kreyòl is an essential tool for the education, socio-economic progress and human rights of Haitians and their communities, especially these communities that have long been impoverished through exclusion and injustice. These processes of exclusion and impoverishment started four centuries ago, when Haiti was a French colony—then the “richest” colony in the Americas—and continues today. In Dr. DeGraff’s view,
it is through the innovative, strategic and systematic use of Kreyòl, coupled with technology, that Haitian students can optimally develop their capacity for acquiring and building additional knowledge in STEM, in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and in second languages such as French, English, Spanish, etc. He observed that it is through Kreyòl as language of instruction and as the language of discourse in every social context that all Haitians can realize their full potential toward joyful and dignified citizenship – and leave behind the trauma of linguistic apartheid that has characterized the history of Haiti since its creation in 1804. The MIT-Haiti Initiative’s strategic use of Kreyòl in state-of-the-art educational technology, along with other academic resources at the high-school and university levels, is a major breakthrough in the history of education in Haiti. Dr. DeGraff noted that Haiti now stands poised to become an example of the use of local languages as a key factor for improving access and quality in “Education For All” projects throughout the world – with “all” taken in its most inclusive sense.

**Panel Presentations & Concurrent Sessions**

Lekòl ak Lakay: How U.S. Schools and Haitian Families Can Work Together to Transform the Educational Lives and Social-Emotional Health of Haitian Students

Vanessa Prosper, Ph.D., Psychologist, Children’s Hospital Boston; & Chairmain Jackman, Ph.D.,
Director of Health & Wellness, Boston Arts Academy

Dr. Prosper remarked that in the Haitian village, education plays a central role whether informally such as passing on history through storytelling or formally through schools. When families migrate, the focus on obtaining a good education remains strong. However, school personnel’s expectations of parents and families vary significantly between Haiti and the U.S. For example, in Haiti, parents have a peripheral role that is limited to paying school fees, ensuring attendance, and supporting homework completion; while teachers are expected to provide a good education and to handle any problems that arise at school, with limited parental input. In contrast, in the U.S., families are expected to be actively involved, to challenge teachers, and to partake in their children’s education. As a result, misinterpretation and miscommunication often occur among school staff and Haitian families. For instance, Haitian families may be seen as passive, uninvolved, or unresponsive by educators in the U.S. while American teachers and schools may be perceived by Haitian parents as demanding, judgmental, critical, or too permissive in their management of students’ behaviors.
During this panel presentation, Dr. Prosper and Dr. Jackman used their collective experiences to examine Haitian student mental health needs through a school-based lens. They explored how common barriers (e.g., acculturation, language, low cultural proficiency of school staff, and stigma of mental illness) interfere with the ability of Haitian families and school staff to work collaboratively toward supporting the educational needs of Haitian students, particularly when mental health concerns arise. Taking a developmental approach, the panelists shared best practices for informing Haitian families about their children’s mental health needs at the elementary, middle, high school and college levels. Additionally, they demonstrated how effective school-family collaborations could support the healthy social-emotional functioning of Haitian students. With the use of case studies and other interactive activities to engage the audience, the presenters illustrated best practices in enhancing communication, care coordination, advocacy, and access to culturally relevant community resources.

**Bringing Voice to Silence: Exploring Tools to Promote Racial Justice and Health Equity in Trauma-Informed Training and Capacity Building with Youth Workers**

*Victor Jose Santana, M.A., Training Manager, Defending Childhood Initiative; & Bronwen White, MPH, Training Coordinator, Boston Public Health Commission*

Childhood exposure to violence and trauma is increasingly recognized as impacting lifetime health and well-being, and youth serving organizations represent a critical resource for promoting resilience in youth and families. However, given that youth of color—including Haitian children and adolescents—endure particular challenges when it comes to exposure to violence and opportunity gaps, trauma-informed training and capacity building efforts with youth serving organizations are limited when they remain “race silent” and ignore or minimize the intersecting social, cultural, historical, and linguistic context of children and families. In response, the Boston Public Health Commission’s Defending Childhood Initiative incorporated a racial justice/health equity lens into their trauma-informed training and capacity building efforts. The focus of this presentation was on the *Trauma Awareness and Resilience Training Institute*, which was implemented in 2014 and trained over 100 youth workers representing diverse communities.
across Boston, including over half who reported working with Haitian children and adolescents. Panelists examined and shared the tools and activities that were developed for the Training Institute to increase the capacity of youth workers to promote resilience in young people exposed to trauma and violence, particularly examining the special context of Haitian youth and families. Presenters engaged participants in providing feedback and insights as to how these activities and tools could be used in their own work, and be specifically tailored to the needs and strengths of the Haitian community.

**Process of Developing Community-Based Psychosocial Programming for Children, Youth, and Families in Fonfrede, Haiti**

*Cidna Valentin, Ph.D., Myrtho Gardiner, LCSW, & Jean Pierre-Louis, MPH, CapraCare*

Founded in 2009, CapraCare, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to develop sustainable community health programs assisting school-aged children and youth and their families living in Fonfrede, Haiti. CapraCare provides a host of community-based services ranging from increasing access to healthcare and social services to facilitating educational programs at its headquarters and at six local schools. The organization has focused on building a network of national and international partners to amplify the impact of its programs. Public health, mental health, and medical health professionals from abroad have joined the team of 20 community health workers in Haiti to assist in rendering services and providing technical support on program assessments and operations. The organization’s core programs include the Computer and English Language Training Center, School Health Education Program, and the Youth Leadership Development and Recreational Program. CapraCare provides supportive services to students in six schools (elementary, middle and high school) in Fonfrede Haiti.
Fonfrede’s population of 20,000 was affected by the 2010 earthquake and since that time, the organization has been actively engaged in increasing its capacity to provide mental health services for its local constituents. The need for more training and programming at CapraCare has become increasingly urgent, as more community members present to the organization for care. During this presentation, co-leaders of the U.S.-based mental health team as well as CapraCare’s Founder and CEO discussed the ongoing process of developing culturally-informed, community-based, and community-led interventions in Fonfrede. The successes and challenges of managing communication across teams in the U.S. and Haiti, implementing programs with limited resources, and gathering data from community members to inform interventions were also presented. The panelist facilitated an interactive discussion on the latter, while eliciting feedback and recommendations from conference attendees.

Engaging Haitian Parents and Families in Care: Challenges and Opportunities

Marie Andrée Pierre-Victor, LICSW, Codman Square Health Center; Carline Jean-Baptiste, Ph.D., Cambridge Health Alliance, Harvard Medical School; & Myrtise Kretsedemas, MSW/MPH, LCSW, MK Consulting

Research has shown that, compared to other ethnic minority groups, Haitian youth underutilize mental health services, and the retention rate of Haitian families in care is quite low (Fawzi et al., 2009; Carson et al., 2010). This panel focused on challenges encountered in delivering mental health services to Haitian parents and families, and culturally-oriented clinical strategies that are effective at engaging and retaining Haitian families in care. The panelists offered diverse perspectives as clinicians working with Haitian caregivers in a hospital, community health center, and in-home therapy settings.

Changing the Mental Health and Disability Poverty Paradigm

Henry and Evelyne Milorin

The purpose of this presentation was to share with providers from the mental health and disability spectrum strategies that can help them challenge policies, which affect the lives of individuals who are living with disabilities and their family members. The discussion included a review of models that can be beneficial to persons with mental illnesses and disabilities to advance self-sufficiency, and promote choice and active community participation.
Culture shapes how individuals function in everyday life and thus influences their behavior. The pursuit of health care is determined not only by the need, but also by the accessibility and acceptance of treatment. Mental health care is one aspect of health care that is affected by cultural attitudes both in and out of Haiti. Preoccupation with meeting basic needs, accessing or trusting mental health professionals, and general non-receptivity of therapy have been shown to be barriers for Haitians to engage in treatment. Understanding how cultural factors may influence help-seeking behaviors among Haitians is particularly important for several reasons. First, Massachusetts has the third largest Haitian population in the country. Thus, many mental health providers will encounter Haitian clients in their clinical practice. Second, it is essential that we, as psychologists in training, understand and appreciate the implications of working with Haitian individuals and families. This panel included a presentation and discussion-based activities. Panelists summarized their experience participating in WJC’s Haiti Service Learning and Summer Immersion Program, and discussed the implications of the program, what they learned and ways in which these various components translate into practice within the U.S. Presenters provided an overview of the Haiti-based organizations with which they worked during the summer immersion experience. The importance of acknowledging the roles of cultural factors in providing competent mental health care when working with individuals from diverse backgrounds was also discussed, with a particular focus on accessibility of mental health care for Haitian individuals and families.
Celebrating Haitian Heritage Month

Making a Difference: The Annual Haitian Art Exhibition

William James College and the Haitian Mental Health Network hosted from May 2 to June 30, 2015 the 4th Annual Haitian Art Exhibition ("Eyes of Innocence"), featuring artworks from young artists in Jacmel, Haiti, and Haitian artists from the New England region. This art exhibition was the result of a partnership between the Haitian Mental Health Network, William James College and the Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts (HAAM) and its cultural partner Brockton Arts, which started one year after the Haiti earthquake of 2010.

In addition to sales proceeds that have been donated to the artists over the past four years, other unexpected outcomes have been reported along the way: many older artists have now become cultural mentors to younger children in Jacmel, and art supplies are being sent to the Réseau des Artistes de Jacmel (Jacmel Artists Network) to support group workshops for Haitian children and adolescents. More recently, HAAM has started to ship some art supplies to students on the Southern island of Ile-à-Vache, Haiti, where close to 70 youth have participated in art workshops under the supervision of local art teachers.

WJC and the HMH Network have supported this effort by hosting and promoting the Haitian Art Exhibition to staff and the larger community. In addition, conference attendees have purchased artworks during and after the Art Exhibition. Proceeds from the Annual Conference on Haitian Mental Health have also been donated to the Jacmel Artists Network to make available art programming for Haitian youth. Below is a sample of the artwork that was produced by young Haitian artists who participated in the group workshops.
A Sample of Artwork from the Jacmel Workshops
Appendix A: 
BIOGRAPHIES OF PRESENTERS

ELIZABETH ABBATE, M.A.
Ms. Abbate is a 4th year Clinical Psychology doctoral student at the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology and a member of the Children and Families of Adversity and Resilience concentration, which focuses on training students to work with underserved children and families with mental health needs. She is currently an intern at the Wetzel Center in Worcester, Massachusetts, a community-based acute treatment (CBAT) facility for children and adolescents. Next year, she will continue her training at Morrison Child & Family Services in Portland, Oregon as an intern in their APA-accredited internship program. Ms. Abbate is conducting her doctoral research on burnout in residential childcare workers.

MICHEL DEGRAFF, PH.D.
Dr. DeGraff is Professor of Linguistics at MIT. Born in Haiti, his linguistic work mostly concerns the development and structures of Creole languages, with a focus on his native Haitian Creole (also known as “Kreyòl” in Haiti). One major thread in his research demonstrates the fundamental ways in which Creole languages are structurally and developmentally on a par with non-Creole (“international”) languages such as French, English, Spanish, etc. In a related vein, Dr. DeGraff’s research suggests that linguists and non-linguists alike, including educators, policy makers and government leaders, have for much too long misunderstood or misrepresented the history and structures of Creole languages and their crucial importance for the wellbeing, the human rights and the future of Creole speakers. For example, Dr. DeGraff documents how the erroneous, yet popular, belief that Kreyòl is “broken French” negatively affects education and research in, and about, Haiti, and socio-economic opportunities for Haitians. His research agenda is coupled with a social vision for the incorporation of Kreyòl and technology as two essential ingredients in research and education toward sustainable development, equal opportunity and dignified citizenship for all in Haiti. One of his current projects is the MIT-Haiti Initiative (http://haiti.mit.edu), which aims toward improving Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) education in high school and university. In collaboration with Haitian universities and the Ministry of National Education, this Initiative is exploring the strategic use of digital tools in Kreyòl to improve Haitian students’ active learning of STEM, across social classes and beyond any linguistic barrier. The success of this Initiative to date suggests that Kreyòl is indeed a full-fledged language with unlimited capacity to express any level of complex thought as in STEM. One key item in Dr. DeGraff’s agenda is to make high-quality education accessible to the greatest numbers of students throughout Haiti, while strengthening the foundations of Haiti’s linguistic and cultural identity and while promoting respect of the human rights of all Haitians. He believes that these linguistic, cultural, academic and human-rights foundations are necessary conditions for Haiti to become a truly “emergent country” with a joyful and creative population of students and professionals in STEM and other professions. These beliefs are central to Dr. DeGraff’s work as a founding member of Haiti’s Haitian Creole Academy and as a member of the Ministry of Education’s National Commission for Curricular Reform. Contact Information: For more details on Dr. DeGraff’s biography and research, see http://mit.edu/degraff and http://haiti.mit.edu.


**CHARLENE DÉSIR, ED.D.**

Dr. Désir received her doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She is a research professor at the Abraham S. Fischler School of Education at Nova Southeastern University. Dr. Désir’s academic interest is in the social and psychological adjustment of immigrant students in public schools, specifically school’s social curriculum, social trauma occurring in schools, and how social issues affect learning. Dr. Désir has presented various papers on the topic of immigrant students and their adjustment to the U.S. She has also published on the topic of immigrant identity and becoming a reflective researcher. In addition, she co-founded T.E.N. global, an empowerment network for Haitian women and children, was the 2012 president of the Haitian Studies Association, and was also appointed by Governor Rick Scott to serve on the Children’s Services Council in Broward County, FL. Dr. Désir has worked as a school psychologist, K-12 school counselor, school administrator in Massachusetts district schools and as an academic advisor and professor.

**WILLIAM FITZGERALD, M.A.**

Mr. Fitzgerald is a 4th year student in the Clinical Psychology Program at MSPP. He is currently completing an APA-accredited internship at Rhode Island College, and will be a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard Vanguard in the fall. His clinical interests include major mental illness, substance abuse, adults with early childhood trauma, cross-cultural treatment, and treatment of LGBT concerns. His research interests include how language impacts clinical situations and overall attitudes, and stigma towards people with major mental illnesses. His doctoral thesis focuses on *The Effects of Psychiatric Labels on Psychotherapist Attitudes Towards Potential Clients with Major Mental Illness*.

**MYRTHO GARDINER, LCSW**

Mr. Gardiner is a psychotherapist and social worker who was raised, currently lives, and practices in New York City. He serves as the Co-chair for the CapraCare mental health planning committee, and is very active in the development of the CapraCare mental health program. He travels frequently to Haiti to work with the local CapraCare staff to conduct focus groups, trainings, and assessments in order to assist in the development of the mental program. Mr. Gardiner is of Haitian descent and speaks Haitian Creole. He holds a Bachelor’s degree from Loyola University and a Master’s degree in clinical social work from Smith College. He has experience working with youth and adults in various settings including, but not limited to, outpatient psychotherapy, group therapy, and substance abuse treatment. Aside from volunteering with CapraCare, he works as a social worker for The Veterans Administration where he assesses justice involved veterans in local jails and community settings, and advocates in court for alternatives to incarceration. He practices psychotherapy at an outpatient clinic, and chairs the Community Action Committee for the Association for Black Social Workers, NYC Chapter.

**AMY HARMON, B.A.**

Ms. Harmon is a 2nd year Clinical Psychology student with a concentration in Health Psychology at MSPP. She is currently completing her practicum training at New Life Counseling & Wellness Center in Randolph. She will be completing her third and fourth internship years at Joseph M. Smith Community Health Care
Center. In addition to her focus on the integration of mental health and medical health care, her other main interests are in multicultural psychology, disease prevention, and mental health care access in developing countries or low-resource populations.

**Charmain F. Jackman, Ph.D.**
Dr. Jackman is a Licensed Psychologist with specialties in Clinical-Child/Adolescent Psychology and Forensic Psychology. She holds a doctorate in Counseling Psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi-Hattiesburg; and completed a clinical internship at Children’s Hospital Boston and a post-doctoral fellowship in Forensic Psychology at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Additionally, she served as an Instructor at Harvard Medical School for over 10 years. Dr. Jackman is currently the Director of Health & Wellness at Boston Arts Academy. Dr. Jackman’s expertise is in working with diverse children/adolescents and families in schools, courts, hospitals, and community settings. She has worked as a school-based clinician in the Boston Public Schools for the past 10 years providing clinical and consultations services to students, families, and school staff. She has presented on the topics of cross-cultural competence, parenting, and forensic psychology for teachers, mental health professionals, attorneys, and trainees. Currently, Dr. Jackman is focused on increasing her cultural proficiency with the Haitian community. She has a basic understanding of Haitian Kreyòl and recently traveled to Haiti for a service learning immersion experience. She is also the proud mother of two Haitian-Barbadian children.

**Carlaine Jean-Baptiste, Ph.D.**
Dr. Jean-Baptiste is a Clinical/Community Psychologist working in community mental health for many years. She is a Senior Instructor at Cambridge College teaching Masters level students in the mental health field. Dr. Jean-Baptiste is also a Clinical Instructor at Harvard Medical School, working within the Outpatient Psychiatry Department at Cambridge Health Alliance. She has clinical experience in both inpatient and outpatient settings with children, adolescents and adults. This has included work within the Haitian community as well as the broader psychiatry population. Dr. Jean-Baptiste currently provides direct clinical assessment and treatment of mental disorders with a particular focus on addressing mental/emotional health concerns within the community that entails the use of a multidisciplinary, inter-agency and community resources approach in providing effective service delivery. Dr. Jean-Baptiste also provides training and consultation around psychological, cultural values and beliefs systems within the Haitian population.

**Myrtise Kretsedemases, MSW/MPH, LCSW**
Ms. Kretsedemases is Principal Consultant of MK Consulting, a consulting firm that integrates facets of public health and social work to address social health problems. Ms. Kretsedemases is a licensed social worker and public health professional specializing in resource development, program planning and evaluation as well as quality assessment and improvement. She has directed numerous health and social service programs in the areas of mental health, primary healthcare, chronic and infectious diseases and research in U.S., Canada and Haiti. As a clinician, Ms. Kretsedemases has worked in public schools and most recently in a community mental health clinic as part of the In-Home Therapy team.
EVELYNE MILORIN, MPA

Mrs. Milorin migrated to the U.S. from Haiti in 1971, and currently resides in Medford with her family. She is the parent of two young adults: her son, 43 years old, who has autism; and her daughter, 41 years old. She is the grand-mother of two little girls. Mrs. Milorin is actively involved in several parents’ grass-roots organizations on State and National levels. She is past member of the Massachusetts Developmental Disability Council, Statewide Family Support Council, the National Institute for Urban School Improvement, and the Autism Society of America. She was awarded the Barbara Wilensky Gopen fellowship and the Joseph P. Kennedy Public Policy Fellowship. She lived in Washington for one year working with Congress regarding the Reauthorization of Special Education in 2003. She is currently appointed as a member of the Governor’s Commission on Intellectual Disabilities, and the Governor’s New Autism Commission. She has a Master in Public Administration from Suffolk University, and is currently employed with the Department of the Brookline Public Health, working with the Commission on Disability, Diversity Inclusion, and Community Relations. She has gained great knowledge and the confidence to continue her mission to advocate for people, and to motivate other parents with similar calling.

HENRY MILORIN

Mr. Milorin has over 30 years of experience advocating for people with disabilities and their family members on the local, state and national levels. He has worked on Family Support initiatives to help individuals to achieve inclusion and other important goals. He established one of the first support groups in Boston for fathers of children with disabilities. He is a devoted Haitian-American citizen fully committed for a consumer driven community supporting better quality of life and living conditions for individuals of Haitian origin. He is constantly focusing on improving employment outcomes for underserved individuals in the state of Massachusetts and around the country. He provides voluntary technical assistance to community based organization to promote inclusion, civic education, and democratic participation. He is a community builder, an advocate for Haitian cause and the disability community. He has been instrumental in building disability knowledge and capacity in the Haitian community in Boston and throughout the State. He is the proud father of Reginald, an autistic man who lives independently in the community. Additionally, he has advocated and lobbied legislators on Beacon Hill and in Washington, D.C. on many issues. Over the last two decades, he has served as a volunteer and on the board of numerous organizations, including the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council, U.S. Army and Massachusetts Army National Guard, Sergeant First Class (retired-2001), City of Medford Commission for Person with disabilities, Massachusetts Autism Coalition & AFAM Representative - Steering Committee, National Disability Institute, National Association for the Advancement of Colored people, and the U.S. Presidential Committee on Mental Retardation. Mr. Milorin is the recipient of numerous prestigious awards, including the http://www.belradio.com/milorin/images/reggie_mir_henry.jpgUnited States Army Achievement Medal (1987, 1988, 1993), Massachusetts Meritorious Service Medal (2000), Arc of Massachusetts Distinguished Citizen Award (2006), and East Middlesex Arc of Massachusetts Lucie Cripps Award (2007).
JEAN PIERRE-LOUIS, MPH
Mr. Jean Pierre-Louis is the Founder and Executive Director of CapraCare, Inc. He obtained both his B.A in Public Health and M.P.H in Health Administration and Policy at the City University of New York, Brooklyn College. Mr. Pierre-Louis, who is Haitian born, founded CapraCare in April 2009 in response to the gross inadequacies of medical and preventive health services in Haiti. CapraCare is a primarily Haitian-led, non-governmental organization that supports a community-based school health program located in the southern province of Fonfrède, Haiti. After the September 11, 2001 tragedy, Mr. Pierre-Louis worked on the Lower Manhattan Partnership and Development Project, which provided health assistance and services to the lower Manhattan community as they recovered from the disastrous terrorist attack. There, he attended City Council meetings and briefings, state assembly hearings, and worked closely with his director, where he learned firsthand the importance of collaborative work during disasters and how to bring immediate relief as well as long-term stability and recovery to a community in need. A firm believer in promoting positive health change through individual acts of courage, Mr. Pierre-Louis has spearheaded and mobilized an ever-growing number of volunteers, public health and medical professionals in distributing health education, mental health, and pediatric care services to Haiti’s underserved Les Cayes and Fonfrède communities.

MARIE ANDRÉE PIERRE-VICTOR, LICSW
Ms. Pierre-Victor is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker who holds a BA and MSW degrees from Boston College. She is the Clinical Director of Behavioral Health at Codman Square Health Center. Her training includes certification in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing levels I and II (EMDR), Tapas Acupressure Technique, Advanced Certification in the Treatment of Psychological Trauma, and a certificate in Cognitive Behavior Therapy. She works mostly with individuals diagnosed with complex PTSD, anxiety disorders, dissociative disorders, and mood disorders. Ms. Pierre-Victor has a private practice in Canton and is an active member of the Haitian Mental Health Network of Boston.

VANESSA PROSPER, PH.D.
Dr. Prosper is a staff psychologist at the Boston Children’s Hospital Neighborhood Partnerships Program where she divides her time between doing school-based clinical work and adolescent depression and suicide awareness trainings and workshops within the Swensrud Depression Prevention Initiative. She also has a private practice in the Back Bay area of Boston and is an adjunct professor at Boston College and Lesley University. Dr. Prosper graduated from Boston College’s doctoral program in counseling psychology. She completed her pre-doctoral internship at the Boston University Medical Center/Center for Multicultural Training in Psychology. Dr. Prosper is a licensed psychologist with over 10 years of experience working with racially and ethnically diverse children, adolescents, and young adults as well as Haitian immigrants, youth with pervasive developmental disorders, and youth who are HIV positive.

VICTOR JOSE SANTANA, M.A.
Mr. Santana is an educator, facilitator, peacemaker and youth development specialist. He has consulted and worked with organizations nationally on youth development, trauma, racism and the peacemaking circle process. As the Training Manager for the Defending Childhood Initiative at the Boston Public Health
Commission, he has been developing trainings and curricula on trauma awareness and resilience for youth workers across the City of Boston. Mr. Santana has a Bachelor in Science Communication and a music degree from Salem State University and holds a Master of Arts degree with a specialization in Restorative Justice through Youth Leadership Development and Trauma Awareness from Lesley University. Mr. Santana is bilingual, and a natural and dynamic facilitator who has extensive experience working with court, street and gang involved young people. He teaches innovative ways of communication that support effective trust building and education.

**Gemima St. Louis, Ph.D.**

Dr. St. Louis is a Core Faculty in the Department of Clinical Psychology and the Concentration on Children and Families of Adversity and Resilience (CFAR), and the Co-Director of the Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health at the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. Her primary clinical and research focus is on ethnically-diverse children, adolescents, and families with histories of trauma, chronic diseases, and behavioral and emotional challenges. Dr. St. Louis has developed culturally-sensitive psychoeducational programs for youth and women, and conducted research on trauma and HIV disease among ethnic minority and immigrant groups. Currently, she directs the PATHWAYS Program, a school-based initiative that provides trauma-focused, evidence-informed mental health services to youth who are at risk for truancy and suspension in the Boston Public Schools. Additionally, Dr. St. Louis is actively engaged in implementing mental health capacity-building programs in Haiti, and serves as the President of the Boston-based Haitian Mental Health Network.

**Cidna Valentin, Ph.D.**

Dr. Valentin is a clinical psychologist and postdoctoral fellow at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), where she primarily works for the university’s initiative in Haiti. Her activities with the initiative have included co-developing and implementing a community health seminar for health professionals and community health workers in Les Cayes, Haiti and coordinating a scholarship program for students at four of the ten Haitian regional public universities (UPRs). In 2012, she conducted a dissertation research examining healthcare provider-patient relationships at multiple medical sites in Haiti. Dr. Valentin is active in the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Division 39 (Psychoanalytic Psychology), serving on the Multicultural Concerns and the International Relations Committees, and Division 52 (International Psychology), as co-chair of the Early Career Professional (ECP) membership sub-committee. Dr. Valentin has had the honor of holding a fellowship at the Colin Powell Center for Policy Studies at the City College of New York (CCNY) and an internship with the APA Committee at the United Nations.

**Bronwen White, MPH**

Ms. White is the Training Coordinator for the Boston Family Justice Center, a program of the Boston Public Health Commission, where she collaborates with agency partners to design and implement trainings related to preventing and addressing violence and trauma. She received her Master of Public Health from the University of Illinois at Chicago in Community Health Sciences, with a focus on Health Education and Health Promotion. Prior to obtaining her MPH she worked in direct services with individuals and families in the areas of homelessness, sexual health, and school-based family support services. Her interests include
comprehensive sexual violence prevention strategies, trauma-informed systems related to childhood exposure to violence, and approaches to ensuring health equity and racial justice in anti-violence work.

**Samantha Zaid, M.A.**

Ms. Zaid is a 4th year doctoral candidate in the Clinical Psychology Program at the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. As a student in the Children and Families of Adversity and Resilience (CFAR) Concentration, she has committed her work to addressing the needs of high risk youth and their families. She is currently a psychology trainee at Manville School (at Judge Baker Children’s Center), a therapeutic day school for children and adolescents with complex emotional, behavioral, neurological, and/or learning difficulties. She will soon begin her APA pre-doctoral internship at Long Island Jewish, Zucker Hillside Hospital in New York. Ms. Zaid is conducting her doctoral research on clinician’s moral orientation and the subsequent likelihood of clinicians to report suspected child maltreatment. Her passion for global mental health, international advocacy, and public policy inspired her participation in MSPP’s Haiti Summer Immersion Program as well as other advanced training opportunities in global mental health practices.
JOSEPH M. CHÉRY

Joseph M. Chéry is a Community Relations Specialist, Community Peace Activist, and Artist. He is the co-founder of the Boston-based Louis D. Brown Peace Institute and creator of the acclaimed Louis D. Brown Peace Curriculum for High Schools. He co-authored, with Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, “PeaceZone: A Program for Teaching Social Literacy”, published by Research Press in 2003. The PeaceZone is held by 61 libraries worldwide. The shooting death of his 15-year old son on the streets of Dorchester in December 1993 shattered Joseph M. Chéry’s life and that of his family. To find the strength to go on and continue to care for his two younger children, Joseph relied on the arts to journey through his grief and put the pieces back together. After the Haiti earthquake of 2010, he joined several community organizations that worked with the City of Boston and the State of Massachusetts to address the trauma experienced by Haitian-Americans in New England. In that capacity, he worked with his colleagues on the Haitian American Earthquake Task Force and the Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts to raise funds and provide financial support and art supplies to artists in the coastal town of Jacmel, Haiti. He also helped curate several art shows that illustrate the artists’ individual and collective journey through loss, survival and hope.

CHARLOT LUCIEN

Charlot Lucien is a Haitian storyteller, poet and visual art artist who resides in Norwood, MA. He is also the founder and director of the Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts, and has been active in the cultural arena in New-England, both in the Haitian and American communities. As a storyteller, he has released 4 storytelling CDs in Haitian Creole and French, in the tradition of Haitian storytellers such as Maurice Sixto, that have been well received by established critics: “Ti Oma,” “Ti Cyprien,” “Grann Dédé” and “San Bri, San Kont.” As a poet, his work has been released in various publications and newspapers and his recent book of poetry “La tentation de l’autre rive” was published in October 2013 by Trilingual Press of Cambridge MA. As a painter, an illustrator and a caricaturist, his works draw from a variety of sources, including Haitian history, culture, society and politics. They have been used to illustrate various publications—books, calendars and newspapers. Charlot Lucien frequently offers readings and conferences on Haiti in academic and cultural venues in the U.S. (e.g., New England, Florida, New York), Canada, Haiti, Guadeloupe and France. His creative work and cultural activism have been featured in several newspapers in Haiti and abroad, and he is the recipient of multiple awards and citations from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the City of Boston and various civic and cultural organizations for his cultural activism.
JOEL K. PITON – KEYBOARD
Joel K. Piton is 12 years old. He is in the 7th grade at South Shore Christian Academy in Weymouth, MA. He started to play the piano when he was 6 years old. Currently, he plays every Sunday for the children service at Mount Olives Evangelical Baptist Church. He also plays the drums as a student at Young Achievers for Christ Music Academy. In his spare time, he enjoys drawing cartoons and reading comic books.

KERBY-LOUIS ROBERSON – VIOLIN
Kerby-Louis Roberson is 15 years old. He is currently in the 8th Grade at Belmont Hill School, and is a student at Project Step, a classical music program sponsored by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the New England Conservatory.

MICHAEL ROBERSON – CELLO
Michael Roberson is 11 years old. He is in the 5th grade at the Tucker School. He is also a student at Project Step.

REBECCA NOELLE ZAMA – VOCALS
Rebecca Noelle Zama was born in Washington D.C. but has been living in Boston since the age of one. Growing up, she found her passion in music and writing. She has performed at numerous events throughout Massachusetts, including galas, and political and community fundraisers. She began singing at the age of 3 in the populated Haitian community in Boston and branched out. She is proud of her Haitian-American heritage and speaks English, Haitian Creole and French. Being a dedicated musician, she looked for opportunities wherever she could find them. She has been in plays at Stoneham Theatre and Children’s Theatre Workshop. In the
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In the movie “Against the Jab”, she plays the character “Jacky”. Rebecca has also done extra work in movies like “The Game Plan”, “The Zookeeper”, “That’s my Boys”, “Here comes the Boom”, and “RIPD”. She has also been in commercials for Hood Milk and Friendly’s Restaurant. Last winter, Rebecca released her first book of poetry entitled “Optimum Me”. The book was inspired by the earthquake, which devastated major parts of Haiti in January 2010 and is sold to raise money to help Haiti where she has taken seven humanitarian trips. Rebecca specializes in jazz, R&B, blues and pop but sings a bit of everything. Her inspirations include old time legends like Etta James, Ella Fitzgerald and Whitney Houston, and new sensations like Beyoncé, Rihanna, Christina Aguilera and Emeli Sandé. She had no formal training until 2011, where she started taking voice lessons to perfect her techniques. Rebecca just released her album Brighter Than the Sun where a few of her original tracks like “take it slow” and “can’t get to me” are featured. She’s currently in high school at the International School of Boston, and is in hopes of furthering her career as a full-time musician.
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*Crouching Girl*
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For more information, please contact:

Charlot Lucien
Founder and Director,
Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts (HAAM)
Email: Charlotlucien@yahoo.com