“Poto Mitan”:
Change Agents that Promote Well-Being in the Haitian Community

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

Saturday, May 5, 2018

William James College
1 Wells Avenue, Newton, MA
www.williamjames.edu/cmgh
Mass DMH
Department of Mental Health

Proud Sponsor of the 2018 Haitian Mental Health Conference!

The Department of Mental Health is increasing our outreach to communities of color and greatly appreciates the opportunity to partner with the Haitian Mental Health Network.

Our Mission: The Department of Mental Health, as the State Mental Health Authority, assures and provides access to services and supports to meet the mental health needs of individuals of all ages; enabling them to live, work and participate in their communities.

Our Values: Person-Centered, Trauma-Informed, and Recovery-Focused

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Children’s Services of Roxbury

*Congratulates and supports the Haitian Mental Health Network*

CSR is a community-based, social service agency with offices and programs throughout the state. We strive to provide high quality services to economically disadvantaged children, youth, families and individuals, thereby promoting and strengthening family life and individual growth.

Children’s Services of Roxbury is a Community Service Agency (CSA) specializing in serving Black families. Other CSR programs include family stabilization and support services, parent mentoring, foster care, permanency planning, post-adoption services, center based and family-based early care and education, emergency shelter and services for homeless families, emergency shelter and transition housing for adults, and youth programs (*Youth and Police in Partnership, and the Speak Out Team*).

For more information on our programs and services, visit our website at www.csrox.org

*Serving the beloved community with dignity, respect, compassion, humility, integrity, patience, and excellence.*

Children’s Services of Roxbury, Inc.
520 Dudley Street
Roxbury, MA 02119
617-445-6655
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. 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.

William James College is committed to meeting the needs of underserved populations, providing psychological services, and training culturally sensitive clinicians. WJC’s Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health (CMGMH) aims to be a preeminent academic, clinical training and research center in promoting social justice and addressing mental health disparities among disenfranchised populations in the U.S. and abroad. CMGMH is comprised of three academic programs that focus on historically marginalized groups and underserved communities: The African and Caribbean Mental Health Program, the Global Mental Health Program and the Latino Mental Health Program. The primary mission of the Multicultural Center is to recruit, train, educate, and prepare a cadre of professionals to serve culturally diverse individuals and communities locally and around the globe.

WJC’s doctoral clinical concentration in Children and Families of Adversity and Resilience, community partnerships with the Haitian Mental Health Network and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the PATHWAYS Program, the Freedman Center for Child and Family Development, Interface Referral Service, and the Brenner Center for Psychological Testing also support WJC’s training and service mission. These programs and partnerships 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 engages with the communities it serves. 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.
Codman Square Health Center is a community-based outpatient health care and multi-service center in the heart of Dorchester. We opened our doors in 1979 with a dream: To build the best urban community in America. As part of this dream, we recognized that though health care begins by alleviating sickness, the journey to a true “culture of health” is achieved through the health of the whole person and the whole community.

For more information, please visit [www.codman.org](http://www.codman.org)

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For 40 years, Vinfen has been dedicated to transforming lives. We are a leading provider of community-based services to people with psychiatric conditions, intellectual and developmental disabilities, brain injuries, and behavioral health challenges. Our dedicated staff uses the latest in science-based interventions to support the people we serve in achieving their goals and leading more independent, productive, and valued lives as members of their community.

Vinfen is one of the most dynamic and innovative health and human services organizations in the country. With over 200 locations in Massachusetts and Connecticut, we are a premier provider of comprehensive services for adolescents and adults with disabilities or life challenges. We provide a wide range of evidence-based programs in recovery, supported living, education, employment, clinical, and peer support to the populations we serve.

With over 2,700 dedicated employees, Vinfen is one of the largest nonprofit employers in Massachusetts. Our staff members are caring and dedicated people who have become experienced, highly-trained professionals in the field of health and human services.

Vinfen’s commitment to excellence is evident in our employees across the company, who are all dedicated to supporting and empowering the people we serve. At Vinfen, we are all about transforming lives together. To learn more, visit https://www.vinfen.org/
The Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network is a Boston-based organization comprised of psychologists, social workers, psychology and social work students, and other mental health providers. Members of the HMH Network work collaboratively with community-based organizations 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 raise awareness about mental illness and promote access to quality, culturally-oriented and evidence-based 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 an array of services, including the following:

- **Clinical consultation and training** on culturally-oriented, trauma-informed mental health interventions with Haitian Americans and Haitian immigrants.
- **Conferences, community forums** and other professional events.
- **Facilitation of consumers’ access to mental health** and social services in the Haitian community.
- **A Directory** of local Haitian Mental Health Providers.

In Haiti, the work of the HMH Network has focused on:

- Providing **trauma-informed training** to health care providers, educators, and community leaders.
- Collaborating with Haiti-based agencies on **capacity-building initiatives** to address the mental health needs of Haitian children, adolescents, and families.
- Facilitating **knowledge exchange and knowledge transfer** between providers in Haiti and in the U.S. through annual service learning and cultural immersion experiences.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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<tr>
<td>Marie Pierre-Victor, LICSW, President</td>
<td>Olivia Apollon, LICSW</td>
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<td>Gina Dessources, LICSW, Vice-President</td>
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<td>Myrtise Kretsedemas, LICSW, MPH, Treasurer</td>
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CONTACT INFORMATION

To join or learn more about the HMH Network:

Website: www.HMHnetwork.org
Email: HMHnetwork@gmail.com
In the Haitian community, the term “Poto Mitan” refers to individuals, agencies, and institutions that serve as pillars of the community. A “Poto Mitan” is vital to the livelihood, survival, and sustainability of the society at large. Too often, there is a tendency to focus on the economic, health, and psychosocial challenges that afflict the Haitian community with little, if any, attention paid to its numerous assets. While every community has complex needs that must be attended to, it is equally important to recognize and foster the internal resources that strengthen a community and enable it to thrive.

The primary aim of the conference was to identify assets that exist within the Haitian community, and recognize the many individuals and organizations that serve in the role of a “Poto Mitan” or as agents of social change in promoting the health, mental health, and overall well-being of Haitians living in Haiti and in the Diaspora. A particular focus of the conference was on acknowledging multi-disciplinary collaborations that (a) address gaps in access to and utilization of mental health care; (b) decrease fragmentation in health and social services; and (c) provide comprehensive, integrated, and systems-level programs to improve community wellness.
Bi-Annual Conference on Haitian Mental Health

PROGRAM

8:30 a.m.  REGISTRATION & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

8:45 a.m.  Video of the Haiti Service Learning Program

9:00 – 9:15 a.m.  WELCOMING REMARKS
Gemima St. Louis, Ph.D., Co-Director, Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health, William James College
Marie Pierre-Victor, LICSW, President, Haitian Mental Health Network

9:15 – 10:30 a.m.  KEYNOTE ADDRESS – Vallue: A Sustainable Community Model That Promotes the Well-Being of Its Citizens
Abner Septembre, M.A., Sociologist & Founding Member, Association des Paysans de Vallue (APV)

10:30 – 10:40 a.m.  MORNING BREAK

10:45 – 11:30 a.m.  The Haiti Service Learning Program: Addressing Global Mental Health Needs While Building Multicultural Competencies
Darryl Sweeper Jr., MA, & Adetutu Ajibose, MA

11:30 – 12:00 p.m.  Art Bearing Witness to Haitian Resiliency
Charlot Lucien, Founder & Director, Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts

12:00 – 1:25 p.m.  NETWORKING LUNCH & ART EXHIBITION OPENING CEREMONY
Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts (HAAM)

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.  INVITED ADDRESS: “All Health is Mental Health”: Towards Improving Service Delivery and Achieving Global Equity in Mental Health
W. “Didi” Bertrand, MA, DEA, DESS, Medical Anthropologist and Community Health Specialist

2:30 – 3:30 p.m.  PANEL #1 – Bicultural and Bilingual School Allies and Family Engagement: Inspiring Trust, Hope and Peace of Mind
Yolette Ibokelette, M.Ed., M.A., C.A.G.S.; Rose N. Dorgilus, BA, MA; & Kenelle Presume, RN
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.  **PANEL #2 – Community-Based Agencies as “Poto Mitan”:**
Serving Youth, Families, and Elders; and Promoting Social Justice and Advocacy
*Lionel Lucien, Youth & Family Enrichment Services*
*Joel Piton, MD, M.Ed., Sant Belvi Haitian Adult Day Health Care*
*Dieufort Fleurissaint, M.Div., Haitian-Americans United, Inc.*

4:30 –  **“POTO MITAN” AWARD RECIPIENTS**
*Nicole Prudent, MD, MPH; Abner Septembre, M.A.; & Marie St. Fleur, JD*

4:45 p.m.  **ADJOURNMENT**
Support the Ayiti Community Trust!

The Haitian Mental Health Network is spearheading a **fundraising campaign in support of the Ayiti Community Trust (ACT)**.

ACT is a 501(c)3 grant-making foundation that aims to build a permanent endowment to fund the best solutions to the numerous challenges currently faced by individuals and organizations in Haiti. Incorporated in Florida, the Ayiti Community Trust operates in partnership with The Miami Foundation. Its primary objective is to use proceeds from the endowment to fund high-impact and high-potential organizations that can deliver results and improve outcomes in **key focus areas** of the **environment**, **entrepreneurship**, and **civic engagement**.

Your tax-deductible contribution will make a significant impact on the lives of countless Haitian individuals and families, and strengthen our community.

To learn more about ACT and to make a donation, please go to:

- [http://www.ayiticommunitytrust.org/](http://www.ayiticommunitytrust.org/)

Be sure to indicate that your donation is made on behalf of the Haitian Mental Health Network (see “Special Instructions”). **We are counting on your support, and thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity!**
“ALL HEALTH IS MENTAL HEALTH”: TOWARDS IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY AND ACHIEVING GLOBAL EQUITY IN MENTAL HEALTH

W. Didi Bertrand, MA, DEA, DESS

Collaboration and innovation are critical to improving service delivery and achieving equity in mental health. In this Invited Address, Mrs. Bertrand presented an intervention of The Women and Girls Initiative, a movement that aims to empower adolescent girls and young women from post-disaster and conflict contexts—in Rwanda and Haiti, helping them to tackle associated trauma and stress. The initiative collaborates with Partners In Health and other local organizations serving 400 girls. The global burden of mental disorders is truly alarming. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one-third of the world’s population is affected by mental disorders such as anxiety, depression, addiction, schizophrenia and other neurological problems, accounting for about 13% of the global burden of disease. Over the past few years, mental health has become of major importance to the global health agenda. Despite greater advocacy for improved programming and policy reforms, the wealth gap in care, services and research persists. This gap remains high worldwide with great disparities between high and low resource communities and between high, low and middle-income countries. A broad range of risk factors contributes to the development of mental health problems and illnesses, e.g., structural barriers and inequalities (education, gender, living environment, access to resources, community, and culture) and other life adverse events (war and disaster). Several comprehensive solutions have been proposed, e.g., integrated care models, novel targeted interventions, and development programs accompanied by research that measures their impact. In all groups affected, mental health issues coexist and are informed by other medical and social matters. There is an urgent need for better engagement and collaboration between countries’ health sector and their other development sectors and communities, as well as among their health system’s programs and providers, to privilege the voice of the client as “The Team Captain”. The presentation highlighted some useful innovations in addressing psychosocial and socio-economic factors, forming part of a holistic package for the transformation of the mental healthcare experience in the target populations.
ART BEARING WITNESS TO HAITIAN RESILIENCY
Charlot Lucien, Founder & Director, Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts

Mr. Charlot Lucien discussed the role of art as a "Poto Mitan" in many Haitian communities and bearing witness to active Haitian resiliency, especially in the aftermath of disasters and how it has been used to heal and bring communities together. He also provided an overview of the partnership between New England Haitian artists and artists based in Jacmel, Haiti which has been supported by the Haitian Mental Health Network and William James College over the past five years. He presented the latest project of the group, the coffee table book "Migrating Colors: Haitian Art in New England,” which features 30 Haitian artists and their artworks and highlights their partnership with Jacmel, Haiti.
**Bicultural and Bilingual School Allies and Family Engagement: Inspiring Trust, Hope and Peace of Mind**

_Yolette Ibokette, M.Ed., M.A., C.A.G.S., Doctoral Candidate; Rose N. Dorgilus, BA, MA; & Kenelle Presume, RN_

Parents, school district leaders and states are holding schools accountable for ensuring that all students including English Language Learners are achieving at high academic levels. Research and practice have shown that parental engagement is essential to academic achievement. Indeed, schools that value meaningful parent engagement tend to experience higher levels of student achievement, better school attendance, higher graduation rates as well as improved rates of enrollment in higher education and positive attitudes about school. Specifically, the 2002 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation mandates that schools “ensure effective involvement of parents and support a partnership among the school, parents and the community to improve student academic achievement.” This is all well and good, but frustrated teachers and administrators are discovering that many immigrant families are rejecting these efforts and complaining that the mainstream model for family engagement is not relevant to their lives and cultures. Many immigrant families charge that they are being forced to adopt a mainstream model of family engagement that is foreign to them. Immigrant families resent that school staffs assume they do not care about their children’s academic success because they do not participate in school events or volunteer. Equating a lack of presence at school with a lack of interest in children’s education fails to consider that in most other countries around the world, parents are not expected to participate in school life—in fact, such involvement would be viewed as strange. These families contend that teachers and administrators do not respect their way of engaging in their children’s education. This is where bilingual and bicultural school allies play a crucial role. This panel presentation highlighted how these individuals are making a major difference in the lives of Haitian families and students by helping them overcome economic, cultural and linguistic barriers. These allies also provide emotional support, access to comprehensible information about the U.S. school system and help them create social networks.
COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCIES AS “POTO MITAN”: SERVING YOUTH, FAMILIES AND ELDERS; AND PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE & ADVOCACY
Lionel Lucien, Youth & Family Enrichment Services; Joel Piton, MD, M.Ed., Sant Belvi Haitian Adult Day Health Care; & Dieufort Fleurissaint, M.Div., Haitian-Americans United

The panelists described the work of three community-based agencies in Massachusetts whose primary mission is to (1) address the social-emotional needs of Haitian children, youth, and families (Youth & Family Enrichment Services); (2) promote the health and well-being of Haitian elders (Sant Belvi Haitian Adult Day Health Care); and (3) engage in social activism and social advocacy on behalf of the local Haitian community (Haitian-Americans United, Inc.).

THE HAITI SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM: ADDRESSING GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS WHILE BUILDING MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES
Darryl Sweeper Jr., MA & Adetutu Ajibose, MA

The World Health Organization (2011) estimates that there are approximately 450 million individuals who suffer from mental illnesses around the world. Yet, between 76% and 85% of people with a severe mental illness in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) do not receive mental health services. Inequalities in global mental health care have garnered the attention of health care providers over the past few decades. In response, many academic institutions have begun to offer international service learning programs (ISLPs) to build capacity in LMICs and provide psychoeducational trainings to enhance the local mental health workforce. ISLPs offer a myriad of benefits to students, faculty and host communities that allow them to develop leadership, communication, and teamwork skills; enhance their flexibility, maturity, values, and spiritual beliefs; and promote their ability to analyze and appreciate culturally-diverse contexts, traditions, customs and practices. This panel presentation highlighted the significance of ISLPs through the partnership that has developed between the Association des Paysans de Vallue, Haitian Mental Health Network, and William James College. The Haiti Service Learning Program focuses on increasing students’ sensitivity to diversity and difference, promoting learning and
sharing of cross-cultural experiences, and expanding the global perspectives of program participants. The panelists described their cultural immersion experiences and addressed how ISLPs can serve as a resource to graduate programs and community-based partners.

**VALLUE: A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY MODEL THAT PROMOTES THE WELL-BEING OF ITS CITIZENS**

*Abner Septembre, M.A.*

The Keynote Address focused on the Association des Paysans de Vallue (APV), a nonprofit organization that was established in 1987 to respond to the complex social, economic, educational, and health needs of its local citizens. Located in the rural town of Vallue in Petit-Goâve, Haiti, APV has grown into a well-respected organization comprising of 60 grassroots groups and more than 5,000 members. Its primary goal is to create opportunities for individuals and families to build sustainable wealth, allowing them to enhance their lifestyle, making good use of their environment, and becoming respected and responsible citizens in their country. During this presentation, Mr. Abner Septembre described the mission, vision, and Five Pillars of APV, which have been instrumental in guiding community-led actions in the domains of education, health, agriculture, environment, agro-business, organization, infrastructure, and tourism. He also discussed the successes and most important accomplishments of APV along with some systemic challenges and lessons learned.
THANKS TO OUR CO-SPONSORS!

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Perspectives Health Services, LLC is increasing people’s access to quality mental health care through the very technologies that have made it easier for us to connect with others in every other realm of our lives. PHS provides therapy through HIPPA-compliant interactive video conferencing and text messaging.

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MEET THE FOUNDER
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The founding principle that has guided the development of Awake IntuMind, Inc. (AIM) is the strong association between mental health disorders and poor physical health, financial difficulties, etc. AIM utilizes a holistic approach to the provision of mental health services that focuses on the person as a whole and their need to attain and maintain good physical, mental/emotional, environmental and financial health. Our clinicians and wellness providers promote mental, physical, social, environmental and financial health and well-being for our clients through individual and group treatment, motivational engagement strategies, community referrals and educational activities. To learn more, visit www.awakeintumind.com.
W. DIDI BERTRAND MA, DEA, DESS
Mrs. Didi Bertrand is a medical anthropologist and community health specialist who has worked in Haiti, France and Rwanda. Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Mrs. Bertrand studied social science, community health, and health systems management in Haiti and in France. For the last 15 years, she served as community organizer, program developer and implementer, activist for women and girls’ rights, and researcher. She worked as the Director of the Community Health Program and then headed the Biosocial Research and Social Development Programs for Partners In Health Rwanda Inshuti Mu Buzima from 2005 to 2015 supporting the Rwandan Ministry of Health. She has been principal investigator on studies focusing on community health, reproductive health, traditional healing and health system strengthening evaluation in rural Rwanda. Mrs. Bertrand also chaired the Haiti-Rwanda Commission, initiated after the 2010 earthquake to promote South-South cooperation and exchange between the two countries. She currently serves as Senior Adviser on Community Health for Partners In Health and leads a Women and Girls Initiative founded in 2009, with programs targeting marginalized adolescent girls both in Rwanda and Haiti. She is also the mother of three wonderful children.

ABNER SEPTEMBRE, M.A.
Abner Septembre is a Sociologist and Founding Member of the Association des Paysans de Vallue. He is also the CEO of Hotel Villa Ban-Yen, in Vallue, Petit-Goâve. He received a Master’s Degree in Sociology from the University of Ottawa, and a Graduate Degree in African, Afro-American and Caribbean Studies from the State University of Haiti. For more than 35 years, he has worked for different institutions (e.g., national and international, public and private) as a consultant, manager or coordinator, in various fields, in particular community development (design, management, implementation, and training) and community and rural tourism (promotion, services and events). He has also served as a member and coordinator of several Boards and Networks.
BIOGRAPHIES OF PANEL PRESENTERS

ADETUTU AJIBOSE, M.A.
Ms. Adetutu Ajibose is a 2nd year doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology Program at William James College. Her major areas of concentration are in African and Caribbean Mental Health, and Children and Families of Adversity and Resilience. Ms. Ajibose is the student representative for the American Psychological Association’s Division 52 (International Psychology). She is also the United Nation Fellow for the Association for Trauma and Outreach & Prevention (ATOP) Meaningfulworld for 2018-2019. Ms. Ajibose’s long-term professional goal is to develop a foundation committed to eliminating the stigma associated with the mental health profession in African countries. She hopes to establish mental health clinics in Nigeria that will address trauma and educate the public about the impact of mental health on well-being. She currently works with patients of diverse ethnic backgrounds at Arbour Fuller Hospital’s Partial Hospitalization Unit and In-Home Therapy Unit. Her clinical areas of work have focused on psychotherapy with children and their families, and group therapy with adults suffering with substance abuse and/or mental health disorders. She took part in the 2016 Kenya Service Learning Program in Thika. This summer, she will be returning to Kenya to participate in the Always Project, an initiative responsible for the distribution of sanitary napkins to thousands of school-age girls in Nairobi. Ms. Ajibose also took part in the 2017 Haiti Service Learning Program in Vallue, Petit-Goâve.

ROSE N. DORGILUS, B.A., M.A.
Ms. Rose Dorgilus immigrated from Haiti many years ago and enjoys connecting immigrant groups to local community resources. She is currently the Haitian Creole Family Liaison at Prospect Hill Academy Charter School and a Community Connector in the RISE Project at Tufts University. She previously worked as a Haitian Parent Engagement Specialist for Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center. In all these roles, she serves as a bridge between families, school and teachers. Ms. Dorgilus is fluent in Haitian Creole and provides linguistic support to Haitian families who are not fluent in English. She volunteers for various non-profit organizations such as L’Eglise de Dieu Pentecote Libre, Haitian Multi-Service Center, Haitian American Public Health Initiatives and English New Bostonians. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Counseling Psychology and Case Management, and a Master’s Degree in Mental Health.
DIEUFORT FLEURISSAINT, M.DIV.
Pastor Dieufort Jean Fleurissaint, a native of Haiti, serves as the Executive Pastor at Voice of the Gospel Tabernacle in Mattapan, Massachusetts. Pastor Fleurissaint (referred to as “Keke”) received his Associate degree in Accounting and Business Administration from Bunker Hill Community College, and obtained a Master’s degree in Divinity from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary as well as a Master’s degree in Practical Theology. He is also a small business owner and a community leader who hosts radio and television programs on diverse topics such as spirituality, social issues, and economics. Currently, he is the Chairman of Haitian-Americans United, Inc. He has served in numerous roles, including as a Strategic and Executive Team Member of GBIO; President and Founder of True Alliance Center; Board Member of Greater Boston Nazarene Compassionate Center, Mattapan United, and Mattapan Square Main Streets; Advisory Board Member of Boston Community Capital; President of the Massachusetts Association of Haitian Parents; Board Member of Haitian American Chamber of Commerce; Former Board Member of Youth and Family Enrichment Center and Massachusetts Community Health of Brockton; and Liaison for the New England Haitian Fellowship Pastors Association.

YOLETTE IBOKETTE, M.ED., M.A., C.A.G.S.
A former public elementary school teacher in Cambridge and Malden for 18 years, Mrs. Yolette Ibokette joined Prospect Hill Academy Charter School as an assistant principal in 2010. She then joined the Boston Public Schools in 2013 as an academic design and support specialist in the Office of English Language Learners. She later served as the director of operations at the Timilty Middle School, and then as interim principal of the Winthrop Elementary and Roger Clap Innovation schools before being appointed assistant principal of the Mattahunt Elementary School. She is currently a Co-Lead Teacher at the Boston Teachers Union Pilot School. Mrs. Ibokette holds a master’s degree in bilingual education; a master’s degree in curriculum/instruction; and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in policy, planning, and administration. She is currently pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership. She was born in Haiti and is fluent in Haitian Creole.
LIONEL LUCIEN
Mr. Lionel Lucien serves as the current Chair of the Board for Youth and Family Enrichment Services (YoFES). In 2012, Lionel enthusiastically accepted Dr. Nicole Prudent’s invitation to join YoFES’s Board of Directors after listening to a moving performance by the youth orchestra in a remembrance ceremony at the State House on the anniversary of the 2010 devastating earthquake in Haiti. He was elected Chair of the Board in 2016 for a period of three years. As Chair, he provides leadership to YoFES’s officers and executives and ensures that the organization’s duties to youth, families, funders, and the public are being fulfilled by acting as a link between the board and executive management. In his professional life, Mr. Lucien is a registered professional engineer and is the Director of the Public/Private Development Unit at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). He received Bachelor and Master of Sciences degrees in Civil Engineering from Northeastern University and the University of Massachusetts, respectively.

JOEL PITON, MD, M.Ed.
Dr. Joel Piton is the Assistant Project Director of the Haitian Adult Day Health Center “Sant Belvi” located in the Dorchester area. Sant Belvi is a program of the Mentor Network with the aims of improving the quality of life of our elders in the community. Dr. Piton brings many years of experience working with the Boston Haitian community. He is currently the Assistant Pastor at Mount Olives Evangelical Baptist Church located in Hyde Park, MA. Dr. Piton earned his medical degree from the University Ibero-Americana (UNIBE) in the Dominican Republic and was the medical Director of Nazarene Health Center in Petion-Ville Haiti. Dr. Piton earned a Master’s degree with a concentration on mental health and addiction counseling from Cambridge College. He has completed a Community Based Participatory Research Program at Tufts Medical Center. He is the Program Manager for Project SMART: An STI/HIV prevention and education program at Youth & Family Enrichment Services. He is the president of the United Christian Artists, a non-profit organization that promotes young Christian artists, teaches children how to play instruments, and honors music pioneers for their work and legacy within the church.
KENELLE PRESUME, RN
Ms. Kenelle Presume currently works as an operating nurse at Massachusetts General Hospital and Mount Auburn Hospital. Prior to this position, she worked for five years as Haitian Family Liaison for the Cambridge Public Schools. Ms. Presume is fluent in Haitian Creole. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing, a Bachelor's Degree in Theatre, a Bachelor’s Degree in Library Sciences, and a Certificate in Surgical Technology.

DARRYL SWEEPER, JR., M.A.
Mr. Darryl Sweeper, Jr. is currently a 2nd year, advanced-standing student in the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program at William James College. He is the recipient of the Serving the Mental Health Needs of the Underserved Scholarship. The scholarship focuses on students' current and anticipated commitment to reducing mental health and workplace disparities, and to providing culturally responsive services to historically underserved individuals and marginalized communities. Prior to his doctoral studies, Mr. Sweeper received a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from William James College with a concentration in Expressive Arts Therapy and an emphasis in African and Caribbean Mental Health. To complement his clinical training, he is also dually enrolled in a certification program to become a poetry therapy facilitator with the International Federation of Biblio/Poetry Therapy (IFBPT). His research and clinical interests include topics related to diversity, in particular prejudice and stereotyping towards racial/ethnic/sexual minorities, positive youth development, co-morbid illnesses in people of color, and the role of creative arts in medicine. He participated in the 2017 Haiti Service Learning Program in Vallue, Petit-Goâve.
Memorable Moments at the Networking Luncheon & Art Exhibition
BIOGRAPHIES OF 2018 “POTO MITAN” AWARD RECIPIENTS

NICOLE PRUDENT, MD, MPH, FOUNDER, YOUTH & FAMILY ENRICHMENT SERVICES; PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN, BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER

Dr. Nicole Prudent is a Primary Care Pediatrician at Boston Medical Center, and an Associate Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine. She obtained her medical degree at the Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara, Mexico, and did her post-graduate medical training in Washington, DC and in Boston. Dr. Prudent has a Master’s degree in Public Health from the Harvard School of Public Health, with a concentration on Maternal and Child Health, and a Master’s degree in Public Administration from Suffolk University, with concentrations in Public Policy for Children with Developmental Disabilities and Non-profit Management.

Dr. Prudent has been a health activist, advocate, and educator for the Boston Haitian community since the 1980’s. She has been instrumental in the creation of several health initiatives in the community, with a particular focus on opening access to culturally-sensitive care for Haitians.

In 2003, she co-founded Youth and Family Enrichment Services, Inc. (YoFES). YoFES (www.yofes.org) is a community-based organization located in Hyde Park that provides a range of services to help immigrant families raise healthy, successful children despite economic and social disparities. YoFES’ flagship program, Open Access to Music Education for Children (OAMEC), brings music education to neighborhood children and offers other academic enrichment programs for many Boston-area youth. YoFES strives to build strong families that can raise healthy children in the face of poverty and social inequities. It does so by creating interventions that engage community participation in the conception, design, development, and implementation of social programs. YoFES is committed to empowering economically disadvantaged communities with a range of high-value educational services that strengthen families. YoFES works to increase parents’ knowledge and understanding of the different stages of child development, and provide them with the communication and nurturing skills that strengthen family relations.

In addition to being an activist, advocate, and educator, Dr. Prudent has been a role model and a mentor, inspiring numerous young Haitian men and women to pursue careers in medicine and other health-related fields. Dr. Prudent’s new passions include enjoying her two grandchildren, Leila and Leo, and helping her son and daughter-in-law raise a healthy family.
**Abner September, M.A., Executive Director, Association des Paysans de Vallue**

Abner is a Sociologist who received his Master’s degree at the University of Ottawa. He is a founding member of the Association des Paysans de Vallue and an expert in community development and management. Enhancing life in the rural mountain community, with access to the main infrastructures and to basic services, and changing the relationship of its habitants with the rest of the society are the central focus of his work in Vallue, Petit-Goâve, Haiti.

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**Marie St. Fleur, J.D.**

Ms. Marie St. Fleur is a highly effective and passionate organizational leader and consultant. With 30 years of legislative, municipal and legal leadership linking public and private resources, she facilitates transformational changes that enhance the quality of life in vulnerable communities. Her experience as an attorney, legislator, senior leader in municipal government and nonprofit executive ensures she makes a difference for her clients. She has driven grassroots research on early education and care and workforce systems, advocated for change in the public sector, and expanded the engagement of families, providers, policymakers, government agencies and the public.

As the former CEO and President of a state-wide nonprofit, Ms. St. Fleur spearheaded the formation of the influential Put MA Kids First coalition, securing increased investment in early education and care in Massachusetts for two consecutive fiscal years. Ms. St. Fleur was appointed by Mayor Thomas M. Menino on June 13, 2010 as the Chief of Advocacy and Strategic Investment for the City of Boston. She was elected to serve in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1999, and is the first Haitian-American elected to state office in the United States. A former Assistant State Attorney General and Assistant District Attorney, Ms. St. Fleur has significant experience protecting underserved communities in the areas of criminal justice, human services and civil rights.

A graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, she earned a Law Degree from Boston College Law School. She served as Chair of The Advisory Council for the Haiti Fund at The Boston Foundation, is a former trustee of the Boston Bar Foundation, and past President of the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association. She has been featured on WCVB Television’s City Line and Chronicle, WGBH Television’s Greater Boston, Boston Magazine, and Commonwealth Magazine. Ms. St. Fleur is a recipient of Boston Business Journal’s 2014 Women Up award and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Dorchester Boys and Girls Club, and Nativity Preparatory School.
CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MARLINE AMEDEE, M.A., is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Haitian Community Partners Foundation, Inc., a progressive organization with the vision to empower the underprivileged. She has many years of experience working with the Haitian community. Mrs. Amedee has expertise in corporate administration, executive leadership, and marketing, including promotional, event planning and support. Currently, she is a Social Worker with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Family Services. Her clinical experiences include conducting therapy and assessments with young children and with seriously emotionally disturbed youth in both residential and community settings. Her civic leadership experiences include being appointed by Mayor William Carpenter as a Commissioner on the Council on Aging Commission in 2014, and the Brockton Cultural Council in 2016. She is a Board member of the Haitian Mental Health Network, Board member of the Cape Verdean Association and the YMCA, and the current Chair of SHOR Neighborhood Association. She is married with three children. In her leisure time, she enjoys gardening and dancing. She is the recipient of several community awards for her work in the Brockton Community. Mrs. Amedee earned her Master’s Degree with a concentration in Counseling and Psychology at Framingham State University. She also holds a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Applied Behavioral Analysis from the University of Massachusetts Boston.

GINA DESSOURCES, LICSW, has been an active member of the Haitian Mental Health Network since its inception in 2010. She has served on the Steering Committee since 2014. For the past three years, she has represented the HMH Network, as a community partner to William James College, on service learning and knowledge exchange immersion trips to Haiti. Ms. Dessources received her Master of Social Work degree from Simmons College School of Social Work and has worked with the Department of Mental Health since 2005. Currently, she is the Clinical Social Worker in a homeless shelter for men and women living with major mental illnesses at Massachusetts Mental Health Center. She is an active member of Roslindale Baptist Church where she is the servant leader of the Singles Ministry. She is also developing a collaboration as Partners in Ministry with the Baptist Church in Chato, Haiti through the Missions Ministry of her local church. She is proud and honored to serve as the Vice-President of the Haitian Mental Health Network.
MYRTISE KRETSEDEMAS, MSW, MPH, LICSW, is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker and public health professional with two decades of experience integrating public health and social work principles to address health and mental health problems. Her clinical work focuses on depression, cultural identity, adolescent and young adult issues, and the relationship between mental health disorders and physical health conditions. She has worked primarily with adolescents, young adults and families of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and in various settings such as schools and outpatient mental health clinics. She is currently a consultant to the In-Home Therapy Program at Priority Professional Care. She received Master’s degrees in Public Health and Social Work from Boston University and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Boston College. She is a board member of the Haitian Mental Health Network and a member of the American Telemedicine Association, the Massachusetts Telemedicine Coalition, and the International Society for Mental Health Online.

MARIE PIERRE-VICTOR, LICSW, is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker with a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master’s degree in Social Work from Boston College. For the past 21 years, she has worked at Codman Square Health Center as a Psychotherapist and has been the Clinical Director of Behavioral Health since 2003. Ms. Pierre-Victor delivers clinical services in a variety of modalities, including individual, couples, families, and groups. She has a private practice in Canton, MA. She is the Past President of the Association of Haitian Women in Boston. She has presented on cultural competence at local conferences and taught professional education classes at area colleges. As the newly-elected President of the Network, her main agenda is to grow the membership base and increase the Network’s visibility in the Greater Boston Metropolitan area and beyond. Ms. Pierre-Victor is the parent of two young adult males.

SUZE PRUDENT, PH.D., is a psychologist with over 25 years of clinical experience doing individual, couple and group psychotherapy, primarily with adults. She has private clinics in Cambridge and in Newton, MA, where she works with a diverse clientele. Her professional interests include psychological trauma and recovery, the process of change, female development, and cultural transition. She is an Instructor at Harvard Medical School where she has been teaching for more than 20 years. Since the 2010 earthquake she has been contributing her skills to various efforts to improve access to mental health for Haitians in Boston and in Haiti.
GEMIMA ST. LOUIS, PH.D., is an Associate Professor in the Clinical Psychology Department at William James College (WJC). She is the Co-Director of the Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health, the Director of the African & Caribbean Mental Health Concentration, and a Faculty Member in the Concentration on Children and Families of Adversity and Resilience at WJC. She is also the Director of the PATHWAYS Program, a school-based initiative that provides trauma-focused, evidence-informed mental health services to urban youth in the Boston Public Schools. 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 has conducted research on trauma and HIV disease among ethnic minority and immigrant groups. Dr. St. Louis is the Co-Founder and Past-President of the Boston-based Haitian Mental Health Network and an alumna of the American Psychological Association’s Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology. She leads an annual Haiti Service Learning and Cultural Immersion Program for WJC faculty and students.

DONICKA SUPRICE, M.A., is a first-generation Haitian American, the eldest of three siblings, and the first in her family to receive a graduate education. She obtained an undergraduate degree in Psychology at Framingham State University, and a Master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling with an emphasis in Couples and Family Therapy at William James College (WJC). She is currently pursuing a Clinical Doctorate degree with a concentration in Global Mental Health at WJC. At William James College, she is a member of the Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health, a Scholar in the Black Mental Health Graduate Academy, and a student member of the American Psychological Association. Outside of WJC, she is a volunteer for the Greater Boston Food Bank and a member of UNICEF. She is also a member of a Christian-based mission team, A.M.J.C.H., Inc., which travels annually to different cities in Haiti to provide aid with medical, educational, and basic needs. Her goals include increasing personal growth, continuing to gain a variety of clinical experiences in different settings, being involved in her school and church community, and finding ways to serve others by raising awareness through activism, multicultural advocacy, and global humanitarian issues.
BIOGRAPHIES OF ART EXHIBITION ORGANIZERS

JOSEPH M. CHÉRY
Mr. 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 Mr. Chéry’s life and that of his family. To find the strength to go on and continue to care for his two younger children, Mr. Chéry 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
Mr. 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 four 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 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. Mr. Lucien frequently offers readings and conferences on Haiti in academic and cultural venues in the U.S., Canada, Haiti, Guadeloupe and France. His creative work and cultural activism have been featured in several newspapers in Haiti and abroad. 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. In his regular line of work, Mr. Lucien is a Public Health Manager for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts where he has coordinated and monitored the provision of services in the areas of HIV/AIDS, refugee and immigrant health, and mental health by publicly-funded grantees.
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- Members of the HMH Network’s Steering Committee and CMGMH Faculty & Staff
- Conference Planning Committee Members: Marline Amedee, Gina Dessources, Myrtise Kretsedemas, Marie Pierre-Victor, Suze Prudent, Gemima St. Louis, and Donicka Suprice
- Dr. Nicholas Covino, President, William James College (WJC)
- Charlot Lucien and Joseph M. Chéry, Co-Founders, Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts
- Dr. Alan Dodge Beck, Director of Alumni Relations and Dean Emeritus, WJC
- Dean Abby, Director, Continuing & Community Education, WJC
- Kevin Costello, Facilities Manager, and the Facilities Staff at WJC
- The 2018 Conference Sponsors
- Mrs. Olivia Apollon
- The presenters, artists, and conference attendees

CATERING SERVICE

**Luncheon Catered by:**

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Celebrating Haitian Heritage Month

Haitian Art Exhibition: Affinities: Maternity and Creativity

Affinities: Maternity and Creativity will feature 30-35 paintings from New England-based artists and guest-artists from Jacmel, Haiti, exploring the intersection between the state of maternity and creativity.

ON EXHIBIT: May 3–June 28, 2018
OPENING RECEPTION:
Saturday, May 5, 2018
12:00–1:30 pm
William James College
1 Wells Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

Featuring local Haitian artists, the popular “Buy Art at the Baz’Art,” and a book signing: Migrating Colors: Haitian Art in New England

Hosted by the Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts, Haitian Mental Health Network, and the Center for Multicultural & Global Mental Health at William James College

For more information, please contact:
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