



## **BHPOC Work Group on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Behavioral Health**

Legislative Office Building Room 3000, Hartford CT 06106  
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**[www.cga.ct.gov/ph/BHPOC](http://www.cga.ct.gov/ph/BHPOC)**

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**Co-Chairs: Alice Forrester and Selma Ward**

### **Agenda**

**June 7, 2022 11:00 AM via ZOOM**

*The BHPOC is committed to creating to an environment that provides equal access to behavioral healthcare in a culturally competent capacity, with particular attention to social and racial justice.*

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95844380526?pwd=WGp5NHZRZU0zTThPdGRSWXILYzNtUT09>

Meeting ID: 958 4438 0526

Passcode: 971141

+19292056099,,95844380526#,,, \*971141# US (New York)

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Join by SIP

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Join by H.323

162.255.37.11 (US West)

162.255.36.11 (US East)

Meeting ID: 918 1345 4786

Passcode: 834245

Yvonne Jones, Kelly Phenix, Alice Forrester, Brenetta Henry, David Kaplan, Selma Ward, Bonni Hopkins, Mark Vanacore, Lois Berkowitz, Jaya Daptadar, Donyale Pina, Ron Winstead, Bert Plant, Ben Stang, Donaicis Alers, Noel Casiano, Amy Soto

### **I. Update on plan to increase the capacity of MSW programs – Ben Stang, Director of Healthcare Workforce Strategy, Social Venture Partners**

- SVP is a social philanthropy group providing consulting, support and education to non-profits
- Office of Workforce Strategy is a state agency charged with carrying out the plan of the governor's workforce council
- SVP is in the early development stages of increasing capacity at MSW programs
- Special Act 229 was passed expanding training programs in healthcare. It asks for the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) and other agencies in collaboration with higher education to address the workforce shortage including behavioral health. Also calls on an initiative to focus on programs in higher education.

- OWS in collaboration with Connecticut colleges and universities applied for and was awarded \$35million from the American Rescue Plan.
- Three goals:
  - Address the bottlenecks in nursing and behavioral health programs and expand faculty levels
  - Increase diversity of students entering nursing and behavioral health education and therefore the workforce
  - Support innovative and accelerated education programs in partnership with industry and employers
- Three pillars:
  - Tuition assistance to incentivize low income and minority students
  - Recruitment and retention of faculty
  - Support innovative programs to promote partnerships between healthcare and behavioral health employers and institutes of higher education
- Hartford Healthcare announced a \$5million partnership with Quinnipiac. YNHH announced a partnership with four different nursing schools
- They are seeking to create development pipelines for students entering the workforce and also for incumbent workers so they can get another degree or credential for a reduced educational price
- Dollars can also be available to increase capacity of behavioral health agencies and providers to provide supervision hours for MSW students. We lose BSW students who don't go on to get their Masters.
- Accelerated MSW programs have a 4 plus 1 plan where students are already accepted to get their Masters without having to reapply
- Developing partnerships with school districts to introduce middle and high school students to behavioral health careers early. Dollars could be spread between high school, the higher education and the employer
- An RFP will likely be available in the Fall. Applicants would be institutes of higher education for the 3 pillars in one application.
- Build pipelines so that students in a Connecticut program are employed by a Connecticut employer
- Regarding licensure for drug and alcohol counselors, SVP surveyed behavioral health providers on what areas had the greatest shortage. It is a three year program where results are needed. The program is targeted for that reason
- Gather feedback directly from students on what the barriers are
- Compare pay rate of POC vs. Caucasian peers
- Challenge in gathering data on race and ethnicity is because more individuals opt out of identifying their race on various forms

## **II. Consideration of DEI next steps on workforce development - All**

- Amy Soto will look into DPH data on failure rates and race and ethnicity
- Dr. Reyes will look into getting last year's data from Connecticut State University
- Ben Stang provided links on DOL for information

**III. New Business, Announcements, Adjournment**  
None discussed

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 6, 2022 at 11:00 AM via ZOOM**