

## The Cultural Providers Network of the Twin Cities, Minnesota

(Co-sponsored by *Ethnic Minorities, Families and Health*, and *Family Therapy*.)

On opening day of the 2016 NCFR Annual Conference, a group of local educators, researchers and practitioners from the Twin Cities presented an overview of their collaborative, the **Cultural Providers Network** (CPN). The group's major goal was described as improving quality access to mental health services for underserved populations. In addition to sharing effective approaches to providing culturally competent care, CPN members worked together on innovative research projects. The session briefly reviewed the group's history and suggested ideas for participants interested in starting similar collaborations in their home locations.

The Cultural Providers Network (CPN) began in 2007 and brought family researchers, family life educators, mental health practitioners and members of diverse communities together to share effective approaches to improving services and outcomes for children of color. The University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Human Services along with several local social service agencies co-sponsored the emerging collaborative during the formative years and members of these organizations still play significant roles within CPN currently.

During the Conference presentation, CPN members discussed topics including how and why CPN was formed, how CPN used a process of internal dialogue to build trust and develop consensus, and how CPN continues to monitor the group's adherence to its mission. Several CPN members described their home organizations and the benefit they derived from CPN participation. An example of CPN sponsored research involving exploration of community derived definitions of individual and family health and well-being was also presented.

The session concluded with an opportunity for questions and comments from participants. The presenters were particularly interested in encouraging participants to consider establishing CPNs at their home locations. Several attendees (including graduate students and new professionals) expressed interest in how they might find support for CPN-like groups in their locations. Participants also asked about typical barriers to forming collaboratives and strategies for overcoming them.

William Allen and Cari Michaels

**Cultural Providers Network**

## Human Rights and Relationships of African Americans

(Co-sponsored by *Ethnic Minorities and Family Policy*.)

On the third day of the 2016 NCFR Annual Conference, the session *Human Rights and Relationships of African Americans: Exploring Health and Well-being* provided a stimulating conversation about the impact of human rights issues on African American relationships. The presentations explored how contextual conditions shape African American relationship behaviors and well-being. Notable factors, such as discrimination, trauma and violence, relationships with law enforcement officials, access to health insurance, and marriage market conditions, represent opportunities to promote justice.

Several noteworthy papers were presented. Dr. Chalandra Bryant and colleagues presented a paper that investigated the role that healthcare insurance and marital discord play in financial stress and poor physical health. Dr. Antoinette Landor contributed work that examined how race and skin tone-based discrimination operated in the lives of African Americans and explored whether such stressors had implications for sexual and romantic relationship health. Stephanie Armes et al. examined how racial discrimination affected marital processes and marital quality. Dr. Jocelyn Smith Lee studied how interactions with law enforcement shaped the health and well-being of young Black men. Ebony Williams and Dr. Tera Hurt Jordan discussed how inequalities in education and professional work created challenges for African American women who desired to partner with same-race men. Various theoretical frameworks (e.g., Mundane Extreme Environmental Stress model) and methodological approaches (e.g., Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), Actor Partner Interdependence Modeling (APIM)) were highlighted across the presentations.

Audience members raised thought-provoking questions and additional recommendations were offered to strengthen the papers and develop new research that focuses on families of color and human rights.

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