



BPA News

Black Psychiatrists of America, Inc.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Founded in 1969, BPA has maintained a legacy of collegial support among Black psychiatrists whose needs were best understood and addressed together, sharing resources, and clinical insights while offering mutual encouragement in an unkind world. This spirit and energy were palpable at our recent Spring meeting in Nashville, TN; some described it as "electric."

Building on this momentum we will travel to Jamaica for the fall Transcultural Conference Nov 9-

12, 2023. Given the current mood in our country and BPA's desire to optimize the mental health of Black and other people of color, this year's theme will be "Decolonization of the Mind: Manifestations, Lessons and Transcendence" in honor of our late elder, Dr. Fred Hickling. A request for abstracts will be issued soon; **the deadline for submissions is August 4.**

Among our speakers will be psychiatrists who Dr. Hickling trained in the application of decolonizing principles to the development of community-based treatment of severely ill psychiatric patients. In addition, we will hear from our state-side colleagues as they share current research findings and clinical experiences related to our theme. Save the dates and plan to join BPA as we gather in the Caribbean for what will be another enriching cultural experience!



*BPA President,
Dr. Cynthia Turner-Graham*

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The BPA Spring 2024 Conference will be held in Los Angeles, California. Drs. Denese Shervington, Helena Hansen, and Takeesha Cooper (Chairs of Psychiatry at Drew School of Medicine, UCLA, and UC-Riverside respectively) enthusiastically support our coming to LA next spring. We have begun the planning process and are excited about spending time with our west coast colleagues. Stay tuned for further details

BPA Spring Conference 2023

By Napoleon Higgins, MD

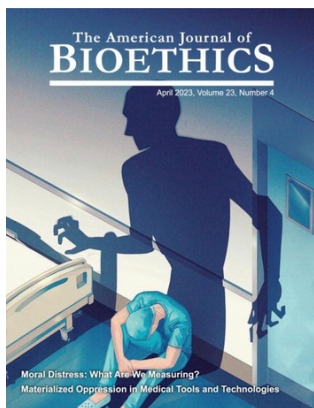
We indeed had a great time at this year's Spring Conference. While waiting on the final numbers, the reviews from attendees showed that it was a great success. The first evening we had the Research and Industry Career Fair, immediately followed by the Mentoring Network Reception. The BPA and Meharry students, staff, and faculty were in attendance, with Meharry leading the scientific session that first morning of the conference. The morning was followed by evaluating of the mental health diversity workforce shortage, and we ended the day with psychopharmacology. On the last day, we focused on careers in research and industry through the work and life cycle of a psychiatrist. We ended the day with new technology and the virtual experience.



*BPA Executive Director,
Dr. Napoleon Higgins*

New Paper Co-Authored by BPA Member

By Topaz Sampson-Mills, MD



Summary of article: Materialized Oppression In Inpatient Psychiatric Design, published in April 2023 in The American Journal of Bioethics, seeks to comment on the atmosphere of detention versus rehabilitation which the authors posit reinforced oppression in the people it aims to serve. Former BPA Secretary and Member-In-Training Trustee, Topaz Sampson-Mills co-authored this paper with fellow psychiatry colleagues. Dr. Sampson-Mills is also referenced in the article pointing out the higher incidence of Black Americans experiencing disproportionately higher fatalities and other poor outcomes when law enforcement is involved in psychiatric emergencies. The authors implore for better collaboration with law enforcement agencies in handling psychiatric emergencies. [Feel free to refer to the article for more details.](#)

We want to feature **YOU** in our next newsletter! Share your wins so we can celebrate you. [Submit your highlight or article](#) by July 1, 2023.



One Psychiatrist's Perspective and an Invitation

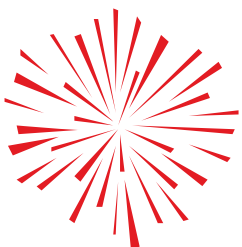
By Cynthia Turner-Graham, MD

In 1994, 10 miles from Covenant Christian School in Nashville, TN, my 13YO son saw his classmate toss a gun in the cafeteria trash can after he accidentally shot and killed a fellow student; the city and nation were left reeling. Several days later, I arranged to escort him and a group of his classmates to have a conversation with then-Tennessee Governor Ned Ray McWherter to share their horrific experience and recommendations for gun control measures from their early-adolescent perspective. He listened politely, thanked them for coming, and as we were leaving, privately scolded me for being irresponsible by giving them hope that more restrictive gun laws could ever be a reality. Since that time, laws have become significantly less restrictive, making it even easier for the March 27, 2023 incident to be carried out than in 1994. Sadly, there is still evidence of psychological trauma in my now-42 YO son's life.



In response to viewing the recent SWAT team body cam footage, weapons drawn walking down school hallways, with the distant rapid-fire of an assault rifle, I wept for the terrifying world we have created for our children and grandchildren to inhabit; I wept for the collective failure of our nation to provide one of the most basic components necessary for healthy child development – a sense of security and safety; I wept, realizing that the strategies offered up to decrease gun violence will not change the hearts and minds that drive the ongoing gun control stale mate in the U.S.; and I wept for the ways that too many children are terrorized by the greed that extracts basic resources from their families and neighborhoods, its own kind of violence.

...but I have dried my tears, and **extend an invitation to you to join the BPA Policy and Governmental Affairs Committee**. We must muster our collective brain trust to think outside the box and disrupt the status quo. If there are solutions to be found for this and other problems perpetuating Black suffering, they will come from us and other like-minded organizations. It is time to put boots on the ground so let's get busy! [Email Dr. Stephen McLeod Bryant](#) to learn how to get involved.



Celebrate

Antoine Cummins, MS4
Howard University College of Medicine
Match: Massachusetts General Hospital



Disparities in Access and Quality of Obesity Care

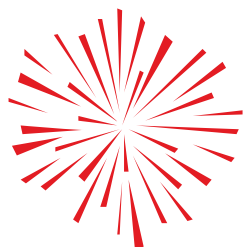
By Tiffani Bell Washington MD, MPH, FAPA, DABOM, DABLM

Hello Good People, I wanted to share an article that I authored on the *Disparities in Access and Quality of Obesity Care* which greatly impacts Black Americans. Stigma and bias greatly impact access to care for obesity and also mental health treatment and this leads to many complications. Here is a brief summary of the article [<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0889855323000249?dgcid=author>]:

"Obesity is a chronic disease and disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities and, most severely, Black persons with obesity. Health inequities affect many populations, including historically disadvantaged populations, persons living in rural areas, people with disabilities, and marginalized racial and ethnic groups. Many factors lead to this, including limited access to quality obesity care and socioeconomic factors, such as living in an obesogenic food environment or experiencing frequent microaggressions and racism, which can ultimately increase chronic stress and the development of obesity. Overwhelming data support genetic and environmental causes, but many blame individuals with obesity for their weight status.

Weight stigma impacts many areas of life for people living with obesity, including the quality of health care they receive. We should provide adequate access to obesity care to all those affected by the disease. Education about obesity, including management, weight stigma, and disparities in care, should be included in the education and training of all healthcare professionals. Every patient with obesity should be offered all appropriate treatment options regardless of age, race/ethnicity, or socioeconomic status."

I've also included a picture of my recent presentation with the National Minority Quality Forum's Leadership Summit as a previous 40 under 40 Leader for Minority Health 2022 recipient where I presented on a panel about the impact of obesity and innovations in the future that will help lessen health disparities. My hope is to continue to work in the intersection of obesity, lifestyle medicine, and psychiatry to combat bias and stigma that worsens health outcomes for Black people and marginalized. I have also been accepted to Yale SOM EMBA Class of 2025. Keep rising. Wishing you all the BEST in peace and happiness.



Celebrate

Ja'Nelle Blocker, MD

Howard University Hospital
Match: Integrative Medicine Fellowship
Marcus Institute of Integrative Health at
Thomas Jefferson Hospital





CAREER BOARD LISTINGS

Psychiatrist - Bakersfield, California

Are you a Psychiatrist (MD/DO) considering a new position? Bakersfield, CA is a wonderful place to work (& live) with an opening of Board Certified Psychiatrist at Psychiatric Medical Practitioners, Inc. (PMPI) This Psychiatrist would treat patients in-person at an acute inpatient facility-16 bed, long term care unit-55 bed, & 3 local clinics contracted in the Bakersfield area. Compensation: Contractor or direct employee. Min comp is \$360,000/year + DOE. Reimbursement for CA medical license & CA

Tele Psychiatrist (CA)

KPG Provider Services is looking for an experienced Psychiatrist in California in a remote setting. Job Title: Psychiatrist - Tele Certification: MD, DO Specialty: Psychiatry Setting: Remote Credential Requirements: BLS, CA Medical License, DEA License PT/FT: Part Time with potential for Full-Time Employment Type: Locum Tenens Days Per Week: 2+ Hours per Week: 10+

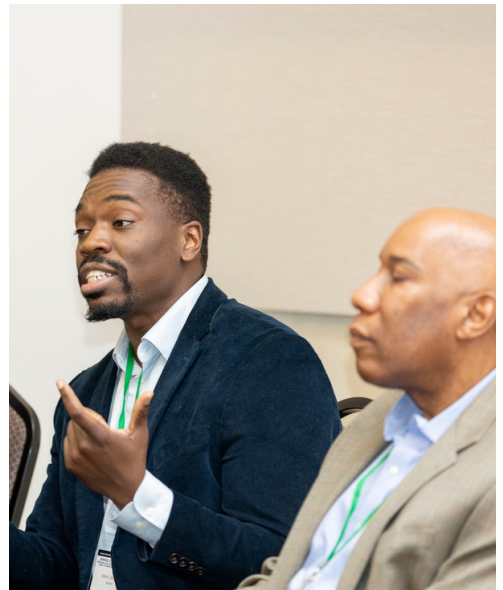
Assistant Professor, Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist

The University of Toledo is seeking a full time Assistant Professor to join the Department of Psychiatry as we expand our academic & clinical enterprise. This appointment will provide both inpatient and outpatient clinical services to children, adolescents, & adults. Provide supervision and teaching to medical students, residents, fellows & other trainees and lead treatment teams as assigned by the Department Chair. Minimum Qualifications: Board certified Unrestricted OH medical license and DEA

Medical Director of Behavioral Health Services

The Medical Director of Behavioral Health (Psychiatrist) is responsible for providing coordinated psychiatric services to patients utilizing the clinical services of Family Health Center. Clinical services provided shall include routine and crisis adult and pediatric care. Reports to: Chief Medical Officer / CEO Hours: 40-Hrs. | Days (Mon-Fri)

2023 Spring Conference



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2023 Spring Conference

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