

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

September 2023

In this newsletter, we aim to provide you with the latest updates related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in our Department of Psychiatry.

Message from the Department Head Eric Lenze, MD

September 15th kicked off the first day of Hispanic Heritage Month. Throughout history, Hispanic and Latino American psychiatrists have made a significant impact on mental health! For example, Honorario Delgado, MD was enormously influential throughout Latin America for pioneering the use of accurate descriptive diagnostic criteria and recognizing the biological basis of mental illness – just like Eli Robins and Sam Guze in the US. It is also important that we consider the needs of our patients with Hispanic heritage. A recent article on the American Psychiatric Association webpage celebrated the [one year anniversary of lasaludmental.org](#), a [Spanish-language mental health resource website](#). Consider using this as a resource for your patients.

Congratulations to the award recipients of the WUSM Psychiatry DEI grants!

Addressing racial disparities in adolescent mental health and increasing efficacy in treatment in an outpatient psychiatry setting
Tara Tinnin, LMSW, NBC-HWC and T. Eric Spiegel, MD

Advancing equity in Black maternal mental health
Monique D. R. Gill, LPC, NCC, CCTP, Joanna Rosenthal, LCSW, Joshua Jones, LCSW, and Taylor Bass, LMSW

Expanding knowledge in the field of Deaf/Hard of Hearing mental health care and bringing such education to WUSM psychiatry, WashU/BJC and STL communities
Jessica Williams, MD with faculty sponsors: Drs. Patty Cavazos and Bohnenkamp

Exploring opportunities to promote diversity in human studies participants and diversity on research teams
Ginger Nicol, MD



Celebrating Latine Culture & Hispanic Heritage @WUSM

The Washington University Community is invited to celebrate Latiné Heritage Month on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5pm-6pm at The Cortex @ 4220 Duncan Avenue. The event will host Benjamin Garcia, Head of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics at WUSM, named [Best Latinx Department Head as part of Vanderbilt's Recognition of Hispanic and Latinx Heritage Month in 2022](#). Dr. Garcia is WUSM's first Latine identifying department chair. [Here is a link](#) to learn more about the event and RSVP. This event is being sponsored by SOMOS WashU, the Office of Institutional Equity, WUSM Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and La Comunidad – the newest WashU Alumni network.

The [Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity](#) is hosting a panel discussion on October 12 in celebration of Latine Heritage month. The panel will feature poets [Roy Guzmán](#), [Yesenia Montilla](#), and [Matt Sedillo](#). Join us for a discussion about poetic craft and issues of race and identity.

RSVP



Meet Kavya Singh, our new department DEI Coordinator!



Kavya is originally from Kirksville, MO and graduated with a BA in Sociology from Truman State University in 2021. She enjoys hiking, reading, and listening to Taylor Swift. Kavya will be working closely with Drs. Cavazos and Navsaria to help carry out the DEI mission for the department of Psychiatry. Upon starting this position, she has shared, "I'm excited for this role because it gives me an opportunity to contribute to something I'm passionate about." Welcome Kavya!

Recommended article

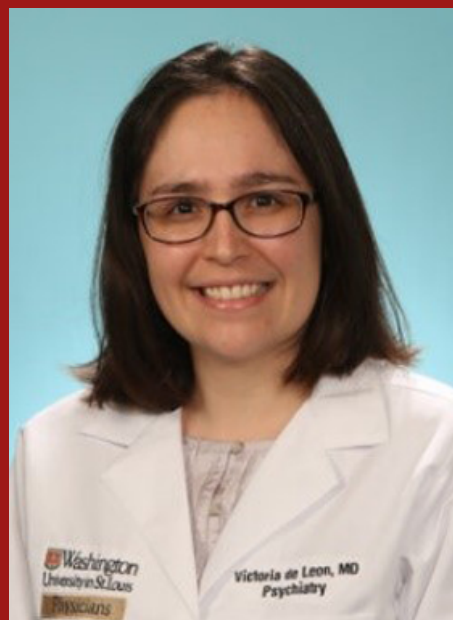
from **Jessica Williams, MD PGY-3**

[Anti-ableism and scientific accuracy in autism research: a false dichotomy](#)
Frontiers in Psychiatry

This new publication in Frontiers explores how anti-ableism vs scientific research is not a false dichotomy. Ableism has the impact of devaluing those of different abilities in interpersonal interactions and broader social contexts, and has unfortunately been inherent in earlier works led by non-autistic researchers claiming that their using such language and implications is required for "scientific accuracy." Examining these false leads may help current researchers better understand how ableism may negatively influence their areas of inquiry and lead to a new wave of anti-ableism serving as a requirement for academic rigor.

Congratulations

to **Dr. Gregory Cejas** and **Dr. Victoria de Leon!**



Drs. Cejas and de Leon were [selected to be part of the inaugural PROUD-MED cohort at WUSM](#). PROUD-MED (the Program for Underrepresented in Medicine for Equity and Diversity) is a new initiative supported by the ICTS and Washington University School of Medicine to enhance underrepresented in medicine (URiM) faculty development by providing mentored clinical research training, dedicated Research Development Program (RDP) resources, senior faculty support, and group mentorship as a community to integrate with institutional programs. PROUD-MED emphasizes essential tools to help Scholars build community and navigate academic structures as an URiM faculty member. [Learn more about PROUD-MED](#)

Coming to Psychiatry in 2024:

Understanding Systemic Racism Training

Save the Dates

January 23, 9-10:30

January 24, 11-12:30

January 30, 9-10:30

January 31, 11-12:30

Missed DEI 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 or 4.0 trainings?

We understand that it might have been difficult for everyone to attend the recent DEI training sessions. If you could not attend a session, please contact Tina Hoffman (tina.hoffman@wustl.edu) to be directed to online and in-person DEI 1.0-4.0 open sessions held by the WUSM Office of DEI.

New wellness podcast @WUSM



Our colleagues in Anesthesiology, Erin Herrera, CRNA (Associate Vice Chair of Well-Being) and Rachel Moquin, EdD (Director of Learning and Development) have released their new podcast, [Well-Developed](#). And our very own colleague in psychiatry, staff therapist [Alicia Ott, LPC](#), is a special guest in episode 3!

Erin and Rachel would love to collaborate with other departments, so please contact them if you have a good idea for a topic or want to be on the podcast.

First meeting of the IMG Wellness Initiative @WUSM



The first IMG Wellness Initiative event was held on August 30th. This initiative is led by Drs. Can Mişel Kılçıkısız (Psychiatry PGY-4), Rawan Safa (Emergency Medicine), Callie Torres (Pathology), and Nadia Wattad (Pediatric Pulmonology). It is made up of residents, fellows and attendings across multiple medical specialties who aim to improve the well-being of IMG trainees at WUSM.

The first event was a success with a number of IMGs in attendance sharing their experiences as IMGs, ways their wellness can be supported and ideas for future programming. To learn more about this initiative click [here](#). The next IMG Wellness event will take place October 25th, 5:30pm in the Schwarz Conference Room.

Psychiatry Diversity Advisors Program

The [Diversity Advisors](#) have received training from the WUSM Office of DEI to help ensure that best practices in diversity, inclusion, and equity are utilized throughout the hiring processes that occur within our department. As we prepare to launch the Diversity Advisor Program, we would like to hear about your interests in having a Diversity Advisor work with you. Please reach out to us at DEIpsych@email.wustl.edu with your ideas and questions.