



# Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders in the Era of COVID-19: With a Special Focus on the Impact of the Pandemic on Communities of Color

A Virtual Workshop

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November 23, December 3, and December 14, 2020

**Forum on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders**

*The National  
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MEDICINE

**FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**

November 23, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the workshop on *Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders in the Era of COVID-19: With a Special Focus on the Impact of the Pandemic on Communities of Color*, an activity hosted by the Forum on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

Due to restrictions on travel and public gatherings as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop will be held over a series of webinars on November 23, 2020, December 3, 2020, and December 14, 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created both short-term and long-term negative consequences for behavioral health outcomes. The pandemic has also created, revealed, and exacerbated long-standing racial and ethnic disparities in behavioral health care.

The first webinar will focus on how COVID-19 has revealed and exacerbated mental health and substance use disorders and highlight the impact of the pandemic on communities of color. The second webinar will focus on access to health care and delivery of services for people with mental health and substance use disorders, especially among racial and ethnic groups that have been historically underserved. The third webinar will explore the mental health well-being of the health care workforce, with a particular focus on the impact of the pandemic on people of color.

A summary of this workshop will be published by the National Academies Press. The webinar's meeting materials as well as a video archive of the webinar will be available at:  
<https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/mental-health-and-substance-use-disorders-in-the-era-of-covid-19-exploring-the-impact-of-the-pandemic-on-communities-of-color-a-workshop>

We hope you will find the workshop presentations informative, thought-provoking, and inspiring, and that the suggestions made by the workshop participants will contribute to improved care and informed policymaking regarding people living with mental health and substance use disorders.

Sincerely,



Larke Huang, PhD (Co-Chair)  
Director, Office of Behavioral Health Equity  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services  
Administration  
Department of Health and Human Services



Deidra Roach, MD (Co-Chair)  
Medical Project Officer  
Division of Treatment and Recovery Research  
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and  
Alcoholism, National Institutes of Health

**FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**

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Webinar 2  
December 3, 2020  
1:00-3:00 PM ET

**WEBINAR NOTES**

- Join the webcast via this link:  
<https://nasem.zoom.us/j/97178154080?pwd=T2MwaFVNczlabVhxRmlPZkF0czRyZz09>
- An archive of the video webcast and presentation slides will be available at:  
<https://www.nationalacademies.org/event/12-03-2020/mental-health-and-substance-use-disorders-in-the-era-of-covid-19-with-a-special-focus-on-the-impact-of-the-pandemic-on-communities-of-color-a-workshop-part-2>
- Proceedings-in-Brief of the workshop will be published following National Academies procedures. Rapporteurs will compose the proceedings from the workshop transcript and external reviewers will examine the proceedings to make sure it accurately reflects workshop discussions and conforms to institutional policies.
- Interested in receiving updates from the Forum on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders or the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Health and Medicine Division?

Sign up for the **Forum** listserv at:

<https://nationalacademies.us8.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=ab74d126b7d2db12591de5c2c&id=211686812e>

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**FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**

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**Webinar 2: Exploring the Impact of COVID-19 on Access to Health Care and Delivery of  
Services for People with Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders**

| <b>WEBINAR 2<br/>THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020<br/>1:00-3:00 PM ET</b> |   |
|---|---|
| 1:00 PM   | <p><b>Welcome from the Forum on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders</b></p> <p><b>Colleen L. Barry, PhD, MPP</b><br/>Fred and Julie Soper Professor and Chair, Department of Health Policy and Management, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health<br/>Co-Director, Johns Hopkins Center for Mental Health and Addiction Policy Research</p> <p><b>Howard Goldman, MD, PhD</b><br/>Professor of Psychiatry<br/>University of Maryland at Baltimore<br/>School of Medicine</p> <p><i>Forum Co-Chairs</i></p> |
| 1:05 PM   | <p><b>Brief Summary of Webinar 1 and Introduction of the Speakers</b></p> <p><b>Larke Huang, PhD</b><br/>Director, Office of Behavioral Health Equity<br/>Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration<br/>Department of Health and Human Services</p> <p><b>Deidra Roach, MD</b><br/>Medical Project Officer<br/>Division of Treatment and Recovery Research<br/>National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism</p> <p><i>Planning Committee Co-Chairs</i></p>  |
| 1:10 PM   | <p><b>SESSION 1: Impact of COVID-19 on Access to Care and Treatment Utilization for MHSUD during COVID-19</b></p> <p><i>Speakers:</i></p>   |

**FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**

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|---------|--|
|         | <p><b>Brendan Saloner, PhD</b><br/>Associate Professor<br/>Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health</p> <p><b>Joe Parks, MD</b><br/>Medical Director<br/>National Council for Behavioral Health</p>   |
| 1:40 PM | <b>Panel Discussion and Audience Q&amp;A</b>   |
| 1:55 PM | <p><b>SESSION 2: Access to Care and Treatment Utilization for MHSUD during COVID-19: The Disproportionate Impact on Communities of Color</b></p> <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <p><b>Ruth Shim, MD, MPH</b><br/>Luke &amp; Grace Kim Professor in Cultural Psychiatry<br/>Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences<br/>University of California, Davis</p> <p><b>Margarita Alegría, PhD</b><br/>Professor, Department of Psychiatry<br/>Harvard Medical School<br/>Chief, Disparities Research<br/>Massachusetts General Hospital</p> <p><b>Howard C. Stevenson, PhD</b><br/>Constance Clayton Professor of Urban Education<br/>Human Development and Quantitative Methods Division<br/>Professor of Africana Studies<br/>Director, Racial Empowerment Collaborative<br/>Director, Forward Promise<br/>University of Pennsylvania</p> |
| 2:40 PM | <b>Panel Discussion and Audience Q&amp;A</b>   |
| 2:55 PM | <b>Closing Remarks</b>   |
| 3:00 PM | <b>Adjourn</b>   |

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**WEBINAR 2 SPEAKERS**

**Margarita Alegría, PhD**

Professor, Department of Psychiatry  
Harvard Medical School  
Chief, Disparities Research  
Massachusetts General Hospital

**Joe Parks, MD**

Medical Director  
National Council for Behavioral Health

**Brendan Saloner, PhD**

Associate Professor  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

**Ruth Shim, MD, MPH**

Luke & Grace Kim Professor in Cultural Psychiatry  
Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences  
University of California, Davis

**Howard C. Stevenson, PhD**

Constance Clayton Professor of Urban Education  
Human Development and Quantitative Methods Division  
Professor of Africana Studies  
Director, Racial Empowerment Collaborative  
Director, Forward Promise  
University of Pennsylvania

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#### WEBINAR 2 SPEAKER BIOSKETCHES



**Dr. Margarita Alegría** is the Chief of the Disparities Research Unit at the Massachusetts General Hospital and a Professor in the Departments of Medicine and Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. From 2002-2015 she was the Director of the Center for Multicultural Mental Health Research at Cambridge Health Alliance, and was previously the Director of the Center for Evaluation and Sociomedical Research at the University of Puerto Rico. Dr. Alegría's research focuses on the improvement of health care services delivery for diverse racial and ethnic populations, conceptual and methodological issues with multicultural populations, and ways

to bring the community's perspective into the design and implementation of health services. Dr. Alegría is currently the Principal Investigator (PI) of three National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded research studies: Building Community Capacity for Disability Prevention for Minority Elders; Mechanisms Underlying Racial/ Ethnic Disparities in Mental Disorders; and The Impact of Medicaid Plans on Access to and Quality of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment. In October 2011, she was elected as a member of the National Academy of Medicine in acknowledgement of her scientific contributions to her field. She has also been a recipient of notable awards, such as the Health Disparities Innovation Award by the National Institutes of Minority Health (2008), the Simone Bolivar Award by the American Psychiatry Association (2009), and the Award of Excellence by the National Hispanic Science Network on Drug Abuse (2011). Most recently, Dr. Alegría was the recipient of the 2018 Jonathan Mann Award by the New Mexico Public Health Association in recognition of her lifetime commitment to public health and social justice issues. Dr. Alegría obtained her B.A. in Psychology from Georgetown University in 1978 and her Ph.D. from Temple University in 1989.



**Dr. Joe Parks** currently serves as Medical Director and Vice President, Practice Improvement & Consulting, for The National Council for Behavioral Health and is a Distinguished Research Professor of Science at Missouri Institute of Mental Health with the University of Missouri, St. Louis. He is the national behavioral health representative at large for The Joint Commission. He practices outpatient psychiatry at Family Health Center, a federally funded community health center established to expand services to uninsured and underinsured patients in Columbia Missouri. He previously served as the Director of Missouri MO HealthNet Division (Missouri Medicaid) in the Missouri Department of Social Services. He was also Medical Director for the Missouri Department of Mental Health in Jefferson City and the Division

Director for the Division of Comprehensive Psychiatric Services. Dr. Parks has conducted research and published in the areas of implementation of evidence-based medicine, pharmacy utilization

## FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

management, integration of behavioral healthcare with general healthcare, and health care policy. He has received numerous awards for improving the quality of care and leadership.



**Brendan Saloner, PhD**, is a Bloomberg Associate Professor of American Health in the Department of Health Policy and Management and the Institute for Health and Social Policy at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. His research focuses on policy strategies to improve the health care of low-income and vulnerable population, with a special focus on the treatment of substance use disorders. He has investigated the impact of federal and state policies related to substance use disorders on access to care and outcomes related to treatment. He holds grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and Arnold Ventures. He has led public sector consulting strategies, including the development of a state strategy to improve opioid use disorder treatment in Delaware. He has published more than 100 peer-reviewed articles and his work has been featured

in major media outlets including the New York Times, the Washington Post, CNN, and NPR.

Professor Saloner holds a doctorate in Health Policy from Harvard University and completed the Robert Wood Johnson Health and Society Scholars Program at the University of Pennsylvania. He was the inaugural Anniversary Greenwall Fellow in Bioethics at the National Academy of Medicine. He is also the recipient of the Alice S. Hersch emerging leader award.



**Ruth Shim, MD, MPH** is holder of the Luke & Grace Kim Professorship in Cultural Psychiatry in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of California, Davis School of Medicine. She is an Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Director of Cultural Psychiatry, and Chair of the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Faculty Excellence in Diversity at UC Davis Health. Dr. Shim received an MPH in health policy from Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University and an MD from Emory University School of Medicine. She is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the American Association of Community Psychiatrists. She serves on the Editorial Boards of Psychiatric Services, Community Mental Health Journal, and American Psychiatric Publishing, and is co-

editor of the book, *The Social Determinants of Mental Health*. She is a 2018-2019 Fellow of the Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) Program. Dr. Shim's research focuses on mental health disparities and inequities, and she provides clinical psychiatric care in the UC Davis Early Diagnosis and Preventative Treatment (EDAPT) Clinic.



## FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS



**Dr. Howard Stevenson** is the Constance Clayton Professor of Urban Education, Professor of Africana Studies, in the Human Development & Quantitative Methods Division of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the Executive Director of the Racial Empowerment Collaborative at Penn, designed to promote racial literacy in education, health, community and justice institutions. He is a nationally recognized clinical psychologist and researcher on negotiating racial conflicts using racial literacy for independent and public K-12 schooling, community mental health centers, teachers, police and parents. Two National Institutes of Health funded research

projects he leads examine the benefits of racial literacy and culturally responsive interventions. The PLAAY (Preventing Long-term Anger and Aggression in Youth) Project uses basketball and group therapy to help youth and parents cope with stress and trauma from violence and social rejection and Dr. Stevenson co-leads the SHAPE-UP: Barbers Building Better Brothers Project with Drs. Lorretta and John Jemmott, which trains Black barbers as health educators to teach Black 18-24 year old males to reduce their risk of -- HIV/STDS and retaliation violence -- while they are cutting hair. Backed by a 12 million grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and based at REC, Howard also co-directs Forward Promise, a national philanthropic office that promotes a culture of health for boys and young men of color, to help them heal from the trauma of historical and present-day dehumanization, discrimination and colonization. Dr. Stevenson is the recipient of the 2020 Gittler Prize, by Brandeis University, for outstanding and lasting scholarly contributions to racial, ethnic, and/or religious relations. Also, recently, he was listed in the RHSU Edu-Scholar Public Influence Rankings of the top university-based scholars in the U.S. who did the most last year to shape educational practice and policy.

His recent best-seller book, *Promoting Racial Literacy in Schools: Differences that Make a Difference*, is designed to reduce racial threat reactions in face-to-face encounters. He is the father of two sons, Bryan and Julian.

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**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Larke Huang, PhD (Co-Chair)**

Director, Office of Behavioral Health Equity  
and Justice-Involved  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services  
Administration, HHS

**Deidra Roach, MD (Co-Chair)**

Medical Project Officer  
Division of Treatment and Recovery Research  
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and  
Alcoholism

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**Margarita Alegría, PhD**

Professor, Department of Psychiatry  
Harvard Medical School  
Chief, Disparities Research  
Massachusetts General Hospital

**Howard H. Goldman, MD, PhD**

Professor of Psychiatry  
University of Maryland School of Medicine

**Colleen L. Barry, PhD, MPP**

Fred and Julie Soper Professor and Chair  
Department of Health Policy and  
Management  
Co-Director, Center for Mental Health and  
Addiction Policy Research  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public  
Health

**Husseini K. Manji, MD, FRCPC**

Global Therapeutic Area Head,  
Neuroscience  
Janssen Research & Development, LLC,

**Lt. Commander Rashid Njai PhD, MPH**

Health Scientist/ Epidemiologist  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

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#### **PLANNING COMMITTEE BIOSKETCHES**



**Larke Huang, PhD** (Co-Chair) is a licensed clinical-community psychologist at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She provides leadership on national policy for mental health and substance use issues for children and adolescents, is Director of SAMHSA's Office of Behavioral Health Equity which was legislated by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and oversees SAMHSA's trauma and criminal/juvenile justice portfolio. For the past 30 years, Dr. Huang has worked at the interface of practice, research and

policy. She received her doctorate from Yale University. Dr. Huang has been a community mental health practitioner, a faculty member at the University of California, Berkeley and Georgetown University, and a research director at the American Institutes for Research. She has worked with states and communities to build systems of care and model policies for children and youth with serious emotional and behavioral disorders; diversion programs for individuals with SMI and SUD at the nexus of behavioral health and criminal justice; and trauma-informed approaches in multiple health and social service settings. She has developed programs for underserved, culturally and linguistically diverse populations, evaluated community-based programs, and authored books and articles on behavioral health. Dr. Huang served as an appointed Commissioner on the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, is an ongoing member of the Carter Center Mental Health Board, and serves on multiple APA committees and boards.



**Deidra Roach, MD** (Co-Chair) has more than 30 years of experience in the field of addiction treatment. She currently serves as a medical project officer for the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism where, among other responsibilities, she manages research portfolios addressing the treatment of co-occurring mental health and alcohol use disorder and alcohol-related HIV/AIDS among women. She also serves on the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (ICCFASD), the NIH Coordinating Committee for Research on Women's Health, and the Extramural Advisory Work Group, Subcommittee on Inclusion Governance, a trans-NIH committee to advise the Office of the Director/NIH on matters

related to ensuring diversity in research participation. Dr. Roach co-chairs the Interagency Work Group on Drinking and Drug Use in Women and Girls, a trans-DHHS committee which promotes collaborative research and other activities focused on the prevention and treatment of substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders among women and girls.

## FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS



**Margarita Alegría, PhD** is the Chief of the Disparities Research Unit at the Massachusetts General Hospital and a Professor in the Departments of Medicine and Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. From 2002-2015 she was the Director of the Center for Multicultural Mental Health Research at Cambridge Health Alliance, and was previously the Director of the Center for Evaluation and Sociomedical Research at the University of Puerto Rico. Dr. Alegría has been a Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School since 2004. Throughout her career, she has remained dedicated to generating knowledge that can be used to increase equity in health outcomes and healthcare services for disadvantaged and minority populations. Dr. Alegría's research has integrated three methods: a multidisciplinary and multisectorial approach to research; a multi-level framework which gives necessary consideration to environmental and social context, the individual and family system; and a strong focus on which aspects of culture and context need to be addressed to improve health, as well as service delivery for diverse populations. Dr. Alegría is currently the Principal Investigator (PI) of three National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded research studies: Building Community Capacity for Disability Prevention in Minority Elders; Mechanisms Underlying Racial/ Ethnic Disparities in Mental Disorders; and The Impact of Medicaid Plans on Access to and Quality of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment. She is also the PI of a grant funded by the William T. Grant Foundation, entitled Using the Experience of Majority and Minority Status Through Photovoice. Dr. Alegría has published over 200 papers, editorials, intervention training manuals, and several book chapters, on topics such as improvement of health care services delivery for diverse racial and ethnic populations, conceptual and methodological issues with multicultural populations, and ways to bring the community's perspective into the design and implementation of health services. In October 2011, she was elected as a member of the National Academy of Medicine in acknowledgement of her scientific contributions to her field. She has also been a recipient of notable awards, such as the Mental Health Section Award by the American Public Health Association (2003), the Health Disparities Innovation Award by the National Institutes of Minority Health (2008), and the Simone Bolivar Award by the American Psychiatry Association (2009). Most recently, Dr. Alegría was the recipient of the 2018 Jonathan Mann Award by the New Mexico Public Health Association in recognition of her lifetime commitment to public health and social justice issues. Dr. Alegría obtained her B.A. in Psychology from Georgetown University in 1978 and her Ph.D. from Temple University in 1989.



**Colleen L. Barry, PhD, MPP** is the Fred and Julie Soper Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She has a joint appointment in the Department of Mental Health. Professor Barry's research focuses on how health and social policies can affect a range of outcomes for individuals with mental illness and substance use disorders, including access to medical care and social services, care quality, health care spending, financial protection and mortality. She is involved in numerous research studies examining the implications of health insurance expansions and health care delivery system reform efforts on the treatment of mental illness and substance use disorders. She also conducts empirical research to understand how communication strategies influence public attitudes about opioid addiction, mental illness, gun policy, and obesity and food policy. One focus of this work is to identify evidence-based approaches to reducing stigma. She has authored over

## FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

160 peer-reviewed articles on these topics. Dr. Barry is founding co-Director (with Elizabeth Stuart) of the Johns Hopkins Center for Mental Health and Addiction Policy Research and is a core faculty member in the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research. Professor Barry received her Ph.D. in health policy from Harvard University and her masters degree in public policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.



**Howard H. Goldman, MD, PhD** is a professor of psychiatry at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. His expertise is in evaluating mental health services and financing programs and policies. Dr. Goldman's recent research has focused on evaluating employment demonstrations for people with severe mental disorders who are connected to the disability programs of the Social Security Administration (SSA). He has also been involved in various studies related to early intervention services for individuals experiencing a first episode of psychosis. In the past he served as principal investigator of the study team conducting the Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program, sponsored by the government. Dr. Goldman served as the senior scientific editor of the

Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health from 1997 to 1999, for which he was awarded the Surgeon General's Medallion. During 2002 and 2003, Dr. Goldman was a consultant to the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. From 2004 to 2016 he served as editor of *Psychiatric Services*, a mental health services research and policy journal published monthly by the American Psychiatric Association. He has served on the editorial boards of several other journals, including *Health Affairs*, the *American Journal of Psychiatry* and the *Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics*. He is a member of the National Academy of Social Insurance, having served on its disability policy panel. Dr. Goldman is a member of the NAM, who currently chairs a Standing Committee providing advice to SSA on its disability programs. He has also served as a member or consultant on numerous NASEM consensus committees related to disability policy. Dr. Goldman received joint M.D.-M.P.H. degrees from Harvard University and a Ph.D. in social policy research from the Heller School at Brandeis University.



**Hussein K. Manji, MD, FRCPC** is Global Therapeutic Head for Neuroscience at Janssen Research & Development, LLC, one of the Johnson & Johnson pharmaceutical companies. He is also Visiting Professor at Duke University. Dr. Manji was previously Chief of the Laboratory of Molecular Pathophysiology & Experimental Therapeutics at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Director of the NIH Mood and Anxiety Disorders Program, the largest program of its kind in the world. The major focus of Dr. Manji's research is the investigation of disease- and treatment-induced changes in gene and protein networks that regulate synaptic and neural plasticity in neuropsychiatric disorders. His work has helped to conceptualize these illnesses as genetically-influenced disorders of synaptic and neural plasticity

and has led to the investigation of novel therapeutics for refractory patients. Dr. Manji has also been actively involved in developing biomarkers to help refine these multifactorial diseases. Dr. Manji has received a number of prestigious awards, including the NIMH Director's Career Award for Significant Scientific Achievement, the A. E. Bennett Award for Neuropsychiatric Research, the Ziskind-Somerfeld Award for Neuropsychiatric Research, the NARSAD Mood Disorders Prize, the



## FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

Mogens Schou Distinguished Research Award, the ACNP's Joel Elkes Award for Distinguished Research, the DBSA Klerman Senior Distinguished Researcher Award, the Briggs Pharmacology Lectureship Award, the American Federation for Aging Research Award of Distinction, the Caring Kind Alzheimer's Disease Leadership Award, and the Global Health & the Arts Award of Recognition. He has received PhRMA's Research & Hope Award for Excellence in Biopharmaceutical Research, and has also been recognized as one of 14 inaugural "Health Heroes" by Oprah magazine.



**Rashid Njai, PhD, MPH**, is a Lieutenant Commander in the US Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps and Health Scientist at the Office of Noncommunicable Diseases, Injury and Environmental Health (ONDIEH) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Hailing from the University of Michigan, School of Public Health, where he completed his training in Health Behavior/Health Education (Phd, MPH) as a W.K. Kellogg Health Policy Fellow; he was also a Bunton-Waller Fellow and Ronald E. McNair Scholar at the Pennsylvania State University (BS, Biology). His current work includes supporting the Senior Advisor for Science of ONDIEH on cross-cutting science activities and opportunities in the area of Noncommunicable diseases (chronic diseases, birth defects and developmental disabilities, injury, and environmental health); his work broadly focuses on the social/behavioral epidemiology of mental and physical health disparities among vulnerable populations, as they relate to the Social Determinants of Health, resiliency and wellness. LCDR Njai is a recent recipient of a Commendation Medal from the USPHS in recognition for his exceptional leadership, subject matter expertise and technical guidance in improving public health surveillance and research on social determinants of health at CDC from 2009 through 2015. Outside his role at CDC, Dr. Njai supports numerous community and youth empowerment activities locally in Atlanta, nationally and globally. He remains a scholar-activist through being adjunct faculty at Morehouse University's Biology/Public Health Sciences Institutes, a Center for Research on Ethnicity Culture and Health at the University of Michigan Affiliate and a Kellogg Fellowship Leadership Alliance board member.