



PATHWAYS TO HEALTH CAREERS
Southwest Center for Health Innovation

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Quarterly Newsletter

July-August-September, 2016

Congratulations 2016 Summer Academy Graduates and Scholarship Recipients!

Special points of interest:

- Summer Academies Graduation
- July- Minority Mental Health Awareness Month
- Local Efforts to Bring Awareness to Mental Health



Pictured above are the 2016 SMASH Graduates. Below are the 2016 HCA and the MCAT+/DAT Graduates



Pictured above are the recipients of a WNMU full ride scholarship. From left to right– Laredo Schwartz, Alyssa Hernandez, Lysandra Villegas and Karisma Rodriguez.

SMASH Photo courtesy of WNMU.
HCA, MCAT+/DAT photos courtesy of Joe Kellerman, GRMC.

CHI FORWARD NM, in partnership with HMS, WNMU, and GRMC, hosted three free summer academies for students interested in health care careers:

SMASH (Summer Math And Science & Healthcare) Academy: This academy was a one-week academy for incoming 9th graders with a health career interest. There were fifteen (15) participants from Grant, Luna, and Hidalgo counties. These students participated in math studies, several hours of science and lab experience, high school preparedness, and also received CPR training. This academy was held on the campus at WNMU.

HCA (Health Careers Academy): This academy was for incoming 10th-12th grade students. This was a five-week residential academy at WNMU. This academy provided intensive American College Testing (ACT) prep, enhanced Math, Science, and English skills. There were twenty (20) participants in this year's academy, all which graduated successfully on July 22, 2016. The participants earned four (4) college credits through the WNMU dual credit enrollment program and raised their average ACT practice test

score with a record breaking 30%! During the graduation ceremony, four of the students were surprised with full-ride scholarships to WNMU for a program of their choice, due to their interest in attending WNMU and exemplary performance.

MCAT+/ DAT (Medical College Admissions Test/ Dental Admissions Test) Academy:

This is a FREE, intense, and rewarding six-week long medical and dental test preparation academy held at WNMU for college juniors, seniors, and recently graduated students interested in pursuing a medical or dental degree. The rigorous testing and training offered through the MCAT+/DAT Academy better prepares students for entrance into these very competitive programs. This year, the academy served seven (7) MCAT+ students and one (1) DAT student who improved their test scores with an average of 48.62%, another record



July- National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

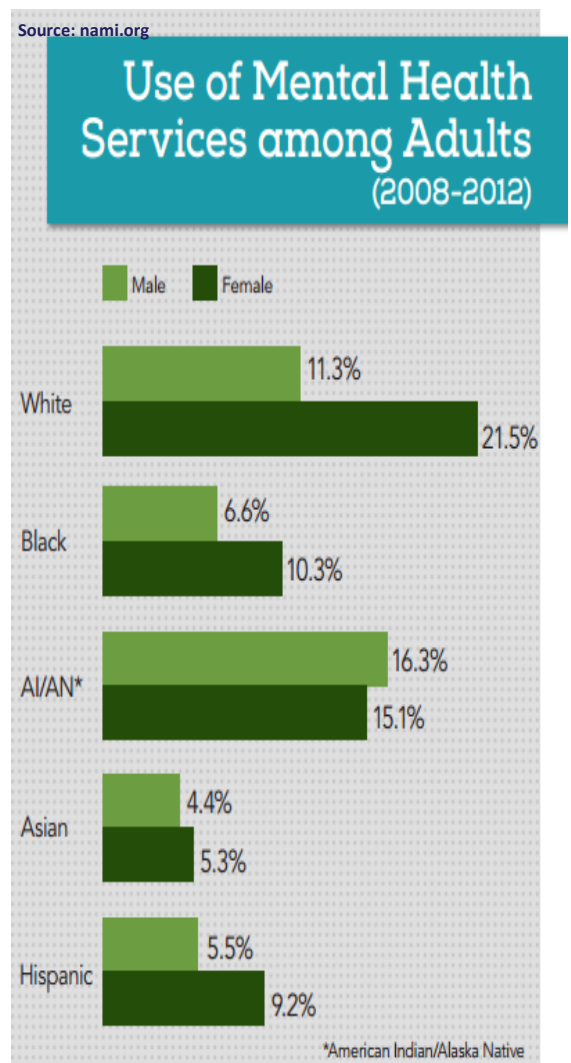
July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Why the distinction on *minorities* and not everyone as a whole? According to the National alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI), due to unmet needs and general lack of knowledge about mental illness, African Americans are 20% more likely to experience severe forms of mental health conditions including major depression, suicide, and post-traumatic stress disorder. In reference to the Latino community, NAMI states that lack of information and misconceptions surrounding mental health issues prevent many members of the Latino community from getting the help and support they need.

It is important to remember that mental illness does not discriminate regardless of a person's race, gender, religion or sexual orientation. While minorities and non-minorities can all experience mental illness, statistics show minorities are less likely to seek help.

The National Healthcare Disparities Report of 2012 reported that, "Health care quality and access are suboptimal, especially for minority and low-income groups [and while] overall quality is improving, access is getting worse, and disparities are not changing" (<http://www.ahrq.gov>)

Local Efforts to Bring Awareness to Mental Health Awareness

Three medical students from University of New Mexico are completing their Practical Immersion Experience (PIE) rotation from UNM. The students, Megan McClean, Alexandra Edwards, and Peter Holguin all grew up in Grant County. As part of their rural rotation in Silver City, the PIE students are required to identify a health need and try to address it in the community. They chose Mental Health Awareness, focusing on suicide prevention. The rates of suicide in Grant County are twice that of the state, and NM is ranked 3rd in the nation for suicides. The students recorded a radio ad in late July, which depicted a dialogue between two friends discussing some signs and symptoms of depression and the importance of seeking help. The students extended their efforts by posting flyers all over town with the national suicide prevention life-line number. In addition to this, they designed a poster to be displayed at the high schools and clinics in Grant County and some clinics with information on depression and some of the warning signs. They are hoping the radio ad, flyers and posters help educate people on these issues as well as ways to get help. Earlier this summer, another group of students also focused on mental health as part of their community project. These students were part of the BA/MD program at UNM. This program is designed to help address combat the physician shortage in NM by assembling a class of broadly diverse students committed to serving as physicians in NM communities with the greatest need. Students are enrolled in the program for 8 years, and will ultimately earn both a Bachelor of Arts and a Medical Degree at UNM. The students, Dang Vu, Bella Cervantes, Elijah Johnson and Sally Midani completed a four-week rotation here in June. As part of their project, they drafted a mental health screening that was provided to the Gospel Mission in Silver City. Individuals at the Gospel Mission are encouraged to fill out the screening and return it to the staff Social Worker for review and assistance. As an incentive for completing the screening, the individuals will receive a gift certificate to the thrift store at the Gospel Mission.



LEARN HOW TO BE...

stigmafree

3 Steps

- Live It!** Learn about mental health by educating yourself and others.
- Share It!** Share StigmaFree on social media, strive to listen, tell your own story and see the person not the illness.
- Show It!** Take action on mental health issues, raise awareness and make a difference.

Source: www.nami.org/stigmafree

Suicide in New Mexico

Suicide Statistics (2014)

	Rate per 100,000
United States	12.93
New Mexico	21.4
Grant County	47.5

Risk Factors for Suicide

- Depression or mental health disorders
 - Substance abuse disorder
 - Family history of suicide
- Firearms in the household
- Family violence (physical or sexual)
- Incarceration

If you or someone you know is experiencing depression, a mental health crisis, or having suicidal thoughts, speak to your primary care provider or seek emergency medical care at an emergency department if you are suicidal. The toll-free 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number is listed below. A crisis worker will listen to your problems and inform you about mental health services in your area. Calls are confidential.

(Table retrieved from flyer created by PIE Students.)