

**M E M O R A N D U M**

November 10, 2020

TO: Education & Culture Committee and Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Nicole Rodriguez-Hernandez, Legislative Analyst  
Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT: **Diversity & Cultural Competency in Mental Health Professions**

PURPOSE: Receive update and have discussion, no action required

**Expected Participants:**

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS):

- Dr. Raymond Crowel, Director, DHHS
- Dr. Rolando Santiago, Chief, DHHS Behavioral Health and Crisis Services
- JoAnn Barnes, Chief, DHHS Children, Youth, and Family Services
- Monica Martin, Administrator, DHHS Child and Adolescent School & Community-Based Services
- Dorne Hill, Administrator, DHHS Trauma and Crisis Services
- Susan Seling, Chief, DHHS Human Capital Management and Organizational Development
- Carmen Saenz, Program Manager, Welcome Back Center of Suburban Maryland

Montgomery County Office of Human Resources (OHR):

- Berke Attila, Director
- Samuel Frushour, Special Assistant to OHR Director
- Melissa Davis, Chief for Recruitment and Selection

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS):

- Dr. Jack Smith, Superintendent
- Dr. Monica McKnight, Deputy Superintendent
- Ms. Karen Stratman, Chief of Staff
- Dr. Janet Wilson, Chief of Teaching, Learning and Schools
- Dr. Helen Nixon, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources and Development
- Ms. Ruschelle Rueben, Associate Superintendent Office of Student & Family Support and Engagement

Montgomery College (MC):

- Dr. Sanjay Rai, Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Dr. Monique Davis, Dean of Health Sciences and Director of Nursing
- Mr. Steve Greenfield, Dean of Business, Information Technology and Safety

Universities at Shady Grove (USG):

- Dr. Joan Pittman, Program Director for the UMB School of Social Work
- Ms. Katie Morris, Program Director for the UMBC Social Work Program

The Education & Culture (E&C) and Health and Human Services (HHS) Committees will meet with key stakeholders to discuss current efforts and potential solutions to increase the language capabilities, racial/ethnic diversity, and cultural competency of the County's mental health workforce. This summer, Councilmember Navarro proposed, and the full E&C Committee supported, a recommendation to hold a joint Committee meeting to discuss these issues.

It is important to note that this meeting will focus on County agencies and employees and does not include extensive conversation surrounding the role and needs of community and nonprofit partners. In addition, as this meeting serves as an initial conversation, Council staff has not provided specific action recommendations for the joint committee's review at this time.

**Council staff suggests that the Committees consider holding two additional meetings to 1) review specific recommendations as follow-up to this meeting and 2) address the needs and roles of community and nonprofit partners.**

Today's worksession is an effort to centralize the discussion surrounding the staffing, recruitment, retention and education/training trends and needs in the County's mental health workforce. The last meeting with a similar purpose was in June 2013 where the HHS Committee received a comprehensive update on the behavioral workforce needs which included participation from the Department of Health and Human Services, Montgomery College, and the Universities at Shady Grove.

Therefore, this worksession will in-part provide an update on the topics discussed in the 2013 committee meeting but include a diversity lens and additional stakeholders to those mentioned above: the Montgomery County Office of Human Resources, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), and the Welcome Back Center of Suburban Maryland/Latino Health Initiative.

Today's briefing will focus on the following three overarching topics:

1. Current staffing and strategies to address language and diversity needs (HHS and MCPS);
2. Pathways and programs to encourage individuals and students to pursue credentialed mental health professions; and
3. Jurisdictional practices and models that address diversity needs in the mental health sphere.

Most participants have prepared a presentation or memorandum to the joint committee. Council staff has summarized key information and provided suggested discussion questions for each stakeholder.

## **A. Background**

The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates one in five U.S. adults and kids have a mental health or substance abuse issue. However, only approximately 40% of adults and 50% of children receive care. Health organizations state a combination of recent factors such as increased access to health insurance (Affordable Care Act) and the decreased stigmatization of mental health illnesses has led to a substantial increase in the demand for care. This increase in demand has caused a

nationwide shortage of qualified providers, especially in racially/ethnically diverse and multilingual providers.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration estimates that there will be a continued shortage of mental health providers in the United States. The following table depicts the breakdown of projected need and availability of different mental health providers in 2025.

| Profession                     | Need    | Availability | Percentage of Need Met in 2025 |
|--------------------------------|---------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| School counselors              | 321,500 | 243,450      | 75.72%                         |
| Social workers                 | 157,760 | 109,220      | 69.23%                         |
| Mental health counselors       | 172,630 | 145,700      | 84.40%                         |
| Psychologists                  | 246,420 | 188,930      | 76.67%                         |
| Psychiatrists                  | 60,610  | 45,210       | 74.59%                         |
| Marriage and family therapists | 40,250  | 29,780       | 73.99%                         |

Table 1.

**Diversity.** The mental health workforce consists of a large spectrum of professions<sup>1</sup> requiring different levels of education and licensing. Due to the varied pathways, there is no single data source that identifies the racial/ethnic composition of the mental health workforce. However, a review of a select positions depicts that there is still a significant lack of diversity despite increasing rates of non-White providers in recent years.

- In 2015, only 14% of licensed psychologists were non-White: 5% Asian, 5% Black, and 4% Hispanic. Eighty-six percent were White. However, 34% of early career psychologists were non-White in 2015. (Source: American Psychological Association 2018)
- Of active social workers in 2015, 31.2% were non-White: 21.6% Black, 3.6% Asian, 6% other (Hispanics not identified). Sixty-eight percent were White. Similar to the psychology workforce, there was a greater percentage of non-White students in each racial/ethnic category for 2015 social work graduates (except Asian). (Source: The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute and School of Nursing)
  - **Bachelor’s in Social Work:** 21.1.% Black, 2.1% Asian, 15.6% Hispanic, 7% other
  - **Master’s in Social Work:** 16.5% Black, 2.9% Asian, 13.5% Hispanic, 8.5% other

**COVID-19.** The ongoing health pandemic exacerbates the demand for mental health care providers. The CDC released data in August 2020 that reports for people aged 18-24, 25% have seriously considered suicide within the past 30 days at the time of the survey. In addition, 40% of

<sup>1</sup> Psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, advanced practice psychiatric nurses, marriage and family therapists, certified prevention specialists, addiction counselors, mental health/professional counselors, psychiatric rehabilitation specialists, psychiatric aides and technicians, paraprofessionals in psychiatric rehabilitation and addiction recovery fields, peer support specialists, and recovery coaches.

adults reported struggling with mental health or substance abuse within the past 30 days at the time of the survey. The National Council for Behavioral Health notes behavioral health organizations have seen a 52% increase in demand for services. Meanwhile, 54% of organizations have had to close programs and 65% had to cancel, reschedule, or refuse patients due the pandemic.

## B. County Agencies and Partners

The information provided below summarizes the presentations prepared by the stakeholders. Council staff has included suggested discussion questions to help facilitate next steps in addressing the needs to increase the diversity and cultural competency of the County’s mental health workforce. The requested information is noted in each subsection.

### Department of Health and Human Services ©1-3

As noted earlier in this memo, the Council has been concerned about this issue for many years and in June 2013, the Health and Human Services Committee held a worksession.<sup>2</sup> The 2013 worksession had a specific focus on social workers; however, as also noted there are many classifications that make up the staff complement in the County Government’s behavioral health system.

The table on the following page shows that there are 499 behavioral health positions across the DHHS service areas and shows the different classifications. DHHS Exhibit C attached at ©3 shows that 151 of the employees speak a language other than English and specifies whether they are certified at a basic or advanced level.

|                                       | Aging & Disability Services | Behavioral Health & Crisis Services | Children, Youth & Family Services | Office of Community Affairs | Public Health Services | Services to End & Prevent Homelessness | No. of Positions |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|--|------------------|
| BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSOCIATE COUNSELOR |                             | 14                                  |                                   |                             |                        |  | 14               |
| COMMUNITY SERVICE AIDE III            | 07                          | 12                                  | 42                                | 02                          | 26                     | 09                                     | 98               |
| PSYCHIATRIC NURSE CLINICAL SPECIALIST |                             | 02                                  |                                   |                             |                        |  | 02               |
| PSYCHOLOGIST                          |                             |                                     | 01                                |                             |                        |  | 01               |
| SUPERVISORY THERAPIST                 |                             | 18                                  |                                   |                             |                        |  | 18               |
| THERAPIST II                          |                             | 103                                 | 01                                |                             |                        |  | 104              |
| SUPERVISORY SOCIAL WORKER             | 09                          |                                     | 20                                |                             | 01                     | 03                                     | 33               |
| SOCIAL WORKER I/II                    | 02                          |                                     | 69                                |                             | 02                     | 12                                     | 85               |
| SOCIAL WORKER III                     | 41                          |                                     | 50                                |                             | 06                     | 13                                     | 110              |
| CLIENT ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST          | 08                          | 07                                  |                                   | 06                          | 02                     | 03                                     | 26               |
| PSYCHIATRIST                          |                             | 08                                  |                                   |                             |                        |  | 08               |
| TOTAL                                 | 67                          | 164                                 | 183                               | 08                          | 37                     | 40                                     | 499              |

<sup>2</sup> Link to June 27, 2013 staff report:

[https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2013/130627/20130627\\_HHS1.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2013/130627/20130627_HHS1.pdf)

**Strategies.** Several strategies were identified in the 2013 discussion. DHHS has provided the following updates to each.

- **Changed Department’s licensure requirements for entry level Therapist positions.**  
The License requirement for a Therapist I entry level – Grade 23 has been changed. The classification now requires one of the following licenses, issued by the State of Maryland, prior to appointment:
  - Licensed Graduate Social Worker (LGSW);
  - Licensed Graduate Professional Counselor (LGPC); or
  - Licensed Graduate Marriage and Family Therapist (LGMFT)
  
- **Offering supervision for licensure to new graduates.**  
Clinical supervision is offered to all new graduates hired under the Therapist and Social Work classifications. This supervision is provided by appropriate licensed supervisory staff. The supervision is provided on a regular schedule and clinical supervisors are available as needed for clinical case consultation.
  
- **Offering incentives to licensed line staff to clinically supervise new hires.**  
No movement on this effort.
  
- **Offering training opportunities to graduate level students.**  
The Department has Memorandum of Agreements with area Universities to offer Graduate level internship opportunities. The Department offers internship opportunities, annually. The opportunities provide both real-time in the field experience as well as training opportunities that complement their graduate program studies.
  
- **Changing clinical service models to include funded Peer Support services – both in County run services and the provider community.**  
The Department has implemented the following Peer Support service models:
  - Stop, Triage, Evaluate, Engage and Refer (STEER) Peer Recovery Model/Program
  - Peer Recovery Specialist Training/Certification
  - Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (in development)
  
- **Developing recruitment strategies and pilot programs.**  
The Department has:
  - Created an open and continuous recruitment for bilingual – Spanish Therapists.
  - Implemented a targeted recruitment for the bilingual – Spanish Therapist recruitment to include:
    - National Latino Behavioral Health Network Career Site
    - Greater Washington Latino Mental Health Network
    - DC Hispanic Employee Network
  - Partnered with the Welcome Back Center to promote training and employment opportunities in the Behavioral Health Provider community

## **Welcome Back Center of Suburban Maryland/ Latino Health Initiative.**

The Welcome Back Center's homepage shares the following about the mission of the Welcome Back Center:

Building on the personal and professional assets of individuals who obtain a degree outside of the United States with backgrounds in health, the Welcome Back Center helps these professionals re-enter the health workforce to:

- Address health professional shortages
- Diversify the health workforce
- Improve economic opportunities for underutilized individuals
- Enhance health outcomes for minorities and the entire community

The Director of the Welcome Back Center has provided the following update on the Center's work as it relates to behavioral health professionals.

### **BACKGROUND**

Starting in 2014, the Center's services expanded its reach from nursing to behavioral health career pathways building up on the successfully proven model of services to help internationally-trained nurses to obtain a licensure and/or certification to reenter the health workforce in Maryland.

### **WELCOME BACK CENTER WORK FOCUSING ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CAREER PATHWAYS**

Starting in February 2014, the Center secured engagement and commitment of five Behavioral Health employers through assistance of the HHS Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS) that convened a meeting with the *Behavioral Health Providers Council*. Working closely with the committed employers, we began the design of the model of services for the *Welcome Back Pilot Program for Behavioral Health (BH Pilot)* taking advantage of an Employment Advancement Right Now (**EARN**) Grant.

The three-module Behavioral Health Program (*BH Program*) includes:

**Module 1**- Career Navigation in the Behavioral Health Field. This included assistance with the Credentials Evaluation of foreign degrees and obtaining certifications and/or licensures in the Behavioral Health field working in coordination with the Maryland Boards as appropriate.

**Module 2** - English as a Second Language (ESL)/ English Health Training (EHT) instruction customized for health professionals.

**Module 3** - Stepping Stone Employment offering a career pathway in the behavioral health field, starting at entry level or mid-level positions aiming to become therapists or counselors.

### ➤ **Recruitment of internationally-trained health professionals interested in pursuing a career in Behavioral Health**

Thirty-four participants were recruited to the program which involved intense efforts to identify individuals with degrees in behavioral health, or other medical disciplines such as physicians and nurses who were interested in re-entering or pursuing in the behavioral health field with the possibility of entry-level or mid-level jobs. Thirty of the 34 participants were actively engaged with the Center.

Breakdown of the 34 participants' professional background and language capacity:

- 24 behavioral health professionals (23 Spanish and one Amharic/Tingriya speakers)

- 4 nurses interested in exploring behavioral health career pathways (One Spanish, two Amharic, and one French speakers)
- 6 physicians interested in exploring behavioral health career pathways (Two Spanish, one Spanish/English, two Amharic, and one English speaker)

➤ **Credentials Evaluation of internationally-trained health professionals**

There were 18 individuals among the 34 participants who completed the credentials evaluation to obtain the U.S. equivalency of their studies outside the U.S. The credentials evaluation reports indicated that the 4.5 to 5-year programs in Psychology in Latin American countries are comparable to a Bachelor degree in Psychology in the U.S.

➤ **Strategic Industry Partnership with Behavioral Health Employers**

Through the collaboration with the strategic employer partners, the Center developed and implemented key strategies and action steps to facilitate the incorporation of 16 out of 30 participants into different levels of the employment continuum, including entry level and mid-level positions in the behavioral health field.

➤ **Advancing work with the Maryland Behavioral Health related licensing Boards**

Because of the many requirements of the three Behavioral Health related licensing Boards in Maryland, only one participant obtained the equivalency of her foreign Master’s degree in Family and Marriage. None of the other participants were able to obtain an equivalency in the US with their internationally obtained Master and PhD degrees that could have allowed them to work as licensed counselors or therapists in Maryland.

The initial goal to add therapists to the Montgomery County behavioral health workforce has not yet been fulfilled with the efforts with this group of 30 participants. However, because of the work with the participants, employers, and Boards, important knowledge has been gained and the Center has a much better understanding of the requirements of the 3 main boards in Maryland as well as the challenges for internationally trained health professionals with a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology to transition into the Maryland behavioral health workforce as counselors or therapists.

The three Boards related to behavioral health professions approached by the Center are:

- ✓ **Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists**
- ✓ **Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners**
- ✓ **Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists**

The Maryland Boards of Social Work Examiners and Examiners of Psychologists require masters and doctoral degrees respectively for therapists.

The Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists is the only board that offers some options for licensure for counseling for internationally trained individuals at the Bachelor level in psychology.

The two examples below described successful job placements in the behavioral health field with different levels of involvement between a participant and the employer.

➤ **A successful career pathway for one participant with a partner employer, Maryland Treatment Centers**

An internationally trained psychologist worked very closely with one of the employer partners, the Maryland Treatment Centers (MTC). MTC identified the possibility of a Trainee Counselor position in

Alcohol and Drug. The Center assisted the participant to obtain the Trainee Authorization and apply to obtain a position as State Coordinator and to complete the continuing education credits required to apply for the certification as Associate Counselor-Alcohol and Drug (CAC-AD). MTC had a key role in this success story through intentional and intense mentoring and coaching of the trainee. The steps undertaken by the MTC to identify entry and mid-level positions helped to motivate the participant in completing continued education to gradually reach the certifications needed to advance its level of practice. This model could be adopted by HHS as a way to improve the diversity of the County behavioral health workforce.

*Testimony from the participant employed by MTC:*

“My name is Lorena. I am a Psychologist and Speech-Language Therapist from Bolivia, where I worked in both professions for 17 years. When I moved to the United States almost 5 years ago, I noticed that there was a huge need for my professional services in my community, but I quickly realized that I needed assistance to achieve this goal. In addition to the language barrier, there was the complexity of the licensure and certification processes, and I was working long hours at several jobs in different locations in Maryland and Virginia earning at most \$10 per hour. From the Center, I have received guidance and financial assistance with evaluation of my academic credentials, substance abuse trainee certification from the Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists, employment preparation, and English courses. Currently, I am a full-time employee as a State Care Coordinator, earning \$22.75 per hour. I am very proud to work at this organization and contribute my share to the well-being of the community and the accomplishment of my American dream.”

➤ **A successful story from a participant who secured a job with the County as CSA**

A participant who joined the Center when working at an entry level behavioral health position as Case Manager with Family Services Inc. (FSI) was able to make a career advancement at FSI securing a job as Family Outreach and Recruitment Coordinator with the Early Head Start Program. The participant’s professional goal was to become a Counselor and decided to start her studies for a Master’s degree for a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) taking one course at a time while continuing to work full-time. The participant needed more time for her studies therefore she transitioned to work a 30-hour broker position actor with Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NON) and Adult Behavioral Health employed. The participant was able to make another career advancement by securing a County position as a Community Service Aide (CSA) with HHS’s Family Preservation Unit, Child Welfare Services in April 2019. The participant completed the Master in Counseling Psychology (CP) in December 2019 and continues her studies towards the LCPC degree.

➤ **Family Services Inc. hired 5 internationally trained psychologists and the value of the networking fostered among Center participants**

The English Health Training course implemented between November 2015 and February 2016 included a component related to employment with the participation of four guest speakers: a therapist from FSI, a registered nurse and CNA instructor from Montgomery College, a therapist from the City of Arlington, and a career coach. Guest speakers discussed career exploration and resume writing. The participants were able to ask very detailed questions about jobs in the healthcare industry. After each guest speaker presented, participants were assigned to write an essay about the presentation. The career coach offered guidance on resume writing and the participants were assigned to present a resume to the instructor who worked individually with each student to update and edit their resumes. This effort which also included intense networking among the eight course participants, yielded 4 job placements at FSI as follows:

- One participant employed as Case Manager at FSI vacated that job to get a career advancement as Family Outreach and Recruitment Coordinator with the Early Head Start Program.



- Another participant employed as Family Support Worker at FSI vacated the job to get a career advancement as Case Manager (position that was vacated by the participant above),
- A third participant applied to FSI and secured the first job in the health field as Family Support Worker (position that was vacated by the Center participant above), and
- A fourth participant was able to secure a non-paid volunteer position with Catholic Charities . This initial connection was crucial several months later when the individual was able to secure a first job in the behavioral health field as Family Case Worker with FSI.
- A fifth participant who remained connected with Center peers working at FSI was informed of an upcoming job vacancy at FSI and secured a job as Family Support Worker

➤ **Possible strategies to help foreign trained professionals:**

- Explore the creation of entry and mid level positions focused on offering additional opportunities for foreign trained behavioral health professionals
- Offer tailored coaching and mentoring of participant since each foreign trained professional's educational background, work experience and personal circumstances are unique
- Flexibility of work schedule for entry and mid level positions to allow for time to meet academic studies and internship requirements
- Offer targeted tuition assistance if possible

**Suggested Discussion Questions**

1. The Department has identified changes to improve the recruitment of Spanish speaking therapists (open/continuous recruitment and identification of organizations and networks). Are there any other languages that require this type of targeted recruitment to respond to residents' needs?
2. After the Joint Committee hears from the College and USG, the Committee should discuss the success of the MOA for internship opportunities. Is there success with interns continuing to work with the County after their internship is completed?
3. The next section of this memo includes information from OHR about the multi-lingual pay differential. After hearing from OHR, the Joint Committee should discuss with DHHS and OHR whether they think there are ways to improve this incentive for recruitment.
4. The Welcome Back Center discusses the cohort of 34 participants for the behavioral health program that started in 2014. What would be needed to undertake this type of effort again?
5. Should the County engage with any of the State licensing boards regarding equivalencies for requirements? (The update notes that the Board of the Professional Counselors and Therapists offered options.)
6. The last item in the update from the Welcome Back Center are four strategies. The narrative talks about the support and mentoring from two organizations, Maryland Treatment Center and Family Services. When the Joint Committee schedules a session with program partners, the Welcome Back Center should be a part of that discussion to see how these partnerships can be increased.

## Office of Human Resources. ©4

While the Council often talks directly with DHHS about this issue during budget and programmatic discussions, DHHS works within the County framework that is the responsibility of the Office of Human Resources (OHR).

**Multi-lingual Pay.** One important tool for recruiting new multi-lingual employees and leveraging the skills of current multi-lingual employees is the multi-lingual certification and pay system. OHR has provided the following overview:

The Multilingual Certification Program is only for Montgomery County Government employees and prospective new hires in positions designated as requiring a language or designated by a department for language skills certification. Employees/prospective new hires must pass a bilingual test in order to be certified in one of the approved languages identified as the predominant languages used by county residents.

Employees recommended for participation in the Multilingual Certification program complete a language certification exam for one of the following languages: Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese, Sign Language. **Police FOP members are not restricted to these 7 languages.** The Office of Human Resources facilitates the process for prospective new hire candidates.

County merit employees registered as certified language interpreters/translators are compensated for their language skills used to provide services to customers or clients in a language other than English. As available, language certified employees may be called upon to provide their language skills outside of their service area or department.

There are two main levels of language certification exam based on the language requirement of the staff position: Basic Level Certification (oral interpretation only) and Advanced Level Certification (oral interpretation and written translation). **Police FOP members have an additional level – Expert.**

### Levels of Multilingual Certification.

- Basic – requires oral communication skills in a second language.
- Advanced – requires oral and written communication skills in a second language.
- Expert (only for members of the Fraternal Order of Police) – requires mastery of both basic and advanced skills necessary for comprehensive use in interrogations, investigations and legal proceedings.

The table attached at ©4 shows that 1,103 employees currently receive a pay differential. There are 29 languages identified. Seven hundred and ninety (790) speak Spanish. The next highest numbers are French (76), Amharic (64), Chinese (50), and Korean (34). In DHHS, 382 employees receive a pay differential; this is the highest number of any department. This is followed by Police (216) and Transportation (127).

Council staff asked when the last time was the pay differential or other incentive programs for being multi-lingual were reviewed, the results of the review, and whether the review looked at compensation/incentive programs in neighboring jurisdictions. If a review has not been done, Council staff asked if it should be undertaken now. OHR responded:

OHR has not conducted a review of the multilingual pay differential. OHR is currently exploring partnerships with institutions of higher education to conduct a regional study on multilingual pay differential and related incentive programs.

**Strategies.** At the June 17, Joint session of the GO and HHS Committee on the handling of the surge in calls from residents related to COVID-19<sup>3</sup>, Director Attila discussed strategies that were be looked at to directly reach out to job seekers with certain skills, such as being bi-lingual. OHR has provided the following update. While the update discusses Athena temp contractor (also referred to as brokers) with regard to 311, Athena is used by DHHS to temporary fill positions or increase staff resources.

There are several strategies that OHR has pursued or is currently pursuing to intentionally increase the number of workforce personnel who are multilingual.

1. **Active Recruitment:** OHR began a pilot with LinkedIn to actively recruit and engage with qualified prospective employees. The software allows OHR recruiters to reach out directly to job seekers with certain skills. When a department has a position that would benefit from LinkedIn recruiting, the OHR recruiter can utilize this tool to post a vacancy, source candidates, and filter by skills (including language). The current scope of the pilot only enables a limited availability to post concurrent priority positions and actively engage with prospective employees. During the pilot, OHR utilized LinkedIn to post and recruit for HHS positions such as therapists, nurse practitioners and clinical social workers, including specific additional paid promotion for bilingual therapists. Pending success of the pilot, OHR plans to expand the utilization of LinkedIn in recruiting.
2. **Athena temp contractors:** OHR worked with Athena in June 2020 to hire five temporary contractors for MC311, all of whom spoke Spanish. Unfortunately, all five have already separated from the position. Due to the nature of MC311 (fast-paced, high call volume) this position tends to have relatively higher turnover rate. At this time, OHR is in the process of working with Athena to hire additional bilingual temporary contractors for MC311.
3. **MCPS Language Bank:** The Office of Community Partnerships is still exploring a concept of partnering with MCPS to utilize its cadre of 200 language certified individuals.

---

<sup>3</sup> The GO Committee also held a session on November 9 to continue the effort to improve staff capacity for MC311 and enhance call response to residents. The GO Committee has agreed on written and meeting follow-up to move improvements forward.

4. **MC311 Staffing:** There are 36 Customer Service Representatives (CSR). Of the 36 CSRs employed, 12 are bi-lingual, with the majority speaking Spanish. MC311 job announcements frequently list information that people with multilingual skills are encouraged to apply but are not required to have a second language proficiency. The predominant advertised language skill is Spanish. MC311 did not receive a blanket exemption from the Hiring Freeze. It recently received OMB approval to fill their 1 vacant CSR position, which currently does not have a multilingual requirement.

Council staff asked how OHR can partner with DHHS to specifically address the need to increase language and cultural diversity of behavioral staff. OHR provided the following response:

OHR can partner with HHS to address the need to increase cultural diversity of behavioral health staff. Given the current fiscal climate and impact on operations from the COVID-19 pandemic, these items may be limited in scope or have a delayed timeframe.

1. **Workforce Planning:** Currently HHS has the highest percentage of employees that are certified in any language with Spanish being the predominate language. HHS also has the most recruitments. OHR could collaborate with HHS on workforce planning to review its current behavioral health staff language and cultural diversity and create target goals for strategic growth in recruitment of multilingual certified individuals. OHR can also review HHS turnover rates and assist the department in better understanding trends in separation.
2. **Recruitment Advertising:** Currently all HHS recruitments advertise that multilingual skills are either required, preferred or requested by the department.
  - a. Moving forward, the statement about multilingual skills could be added to **“all”** of HHS job announcements whether required or preferred. A question can also be added to the HHS Proform templates asking the following:

Do you possess multi-lingual skills in any of the following languages listed below:  
Yes/No.?

- 1 American Sign Language (ASL)
- 2 Amharic
- 3 Chinese
- 4 French
- 5 Korean
- 6 Spanish
- 7 Vietnamese

3. **Recruitment Sourcing:** In order to find qualified individuals for these roles that also have multilingual skills or cultural awareness, OHR and HHS can develop key relationships with populations already receiving their education credentials;
  - o Develop a pipeline with colleges and universities. OHR and HHS can develop a relationship with regional schools, either within the University System of Maryland or with historically black colleges and universities that offer the education credentials of these positions. Montgomery County can work to develop and offer practicums and field sites for upperclassmen and graduate students with a pipeline strategy to offer full-time employment upon completion

of their education/licensure. This will allow the students to gain real world experience, allow the offices to be able to hire full-time and part-time people interested in these fields, and develop a relationship with the faculty who then encourage students to participate. Will require the dedication of a staff member from HHS to be able to participate.

- Advertise these opportunities to Peace Corps returning volunteers. Montgomery County can create a relationship with the Peace Corps. They have volunteers who are returning from around the world and have typically been intently trained in various languages and are looking for work opportunities when their assignments end.
4. **OHR/HHS Partnership:** We currently meet with HHS weekly and have assigned additional HR Specialist to assist with the hiring process (from 2 to 5 staff). This effort has proven to be a success as the total number of vacancies has reduced from approximately 240 a year ago to 130 currently.

#### **Suggested Discussion Questions**

1. Does OHR have any metrics on the language capacity needed either County Government-wide or by Department that would help measure progress on being able to meet the needs of residents?
2. When will OHR know if it will be able to partner with an educational partner to conduct a study on the County's pay differential system? Does OHR know of any systems that have different incentives for specific classifications of positions to improve recruitment?
3. When will OHR have findings from the LinkedIn pilot and be able to determine if it is successful?
4. What is the most important aspect of the OHR DHHS partnership that has resulted in fewer vacancies? Is the improvement just from additional staff or has any part of the hiring process been reformed to make the process less time-consuming?

#### **Montgomery County Public Schools. ©5-36**

MCPS's role in the community continues to expand beyond meeting the educational needs of their students. The school system serves as a community resource hub providing services such as physical and mental health care, meals, social work case management, and more. As MCPS is a natural setting for collaboration amongst agencies in meeting the varied needs of the community, they have an imperative role in meeting the diverse mental health needs of students.

Council staff requested information on current mental health supports available to students; efforts to increase the diversity and cultural competency of mental health staff; and pathways to encourage students to pursue mental health professions.

**MCPS Mental Health Workforce.** MCPS currently has seven position classifications that serve as mental health care providers to students. Table 2 below outlines the current credentialed and support mental health staff workforce at MCPS. Table 3 provides the starting salaries for most of the positions.

All MCPS schools are served by a psychologist, Pupil Personnel Worker, and at least one school counselor. There are eight Spanish-speaking School Based ESOL Counselors: six of them serve 12 high schools<sup>4</sup> and the remaining two counselors are each assigned to the Thomas Edison School of Technology and Seneca Valley High School, respectively.

| Positions   | Ratio<br>Staff: Students  | Budgeted Staffing<br>Allocations | Vacancies                          |
|---|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Credentialed, school-based mental health staff<br/>(provide school-based mental health supports to students)</i> |   |                                  |                                    |
| <b>School Psychologists</b>   | Including Special Programs<br>● MCPS: 1:1251<br>K-12  | 132.0 FTE                        | 8.0 FTE                            |
|   | ● MCPS: 1:1631<br><br>> Recommended National<br>Ratio: 1:500  | 99.0 FTE                         |                                    |
| <b>School counselors</b>  | MCPS:<br>● Overall 1 counselor:319<br>students ratio<br>● ES ratio 1 counselor:529<br>students<br>● SS ratio 1 counselor:238<br>students<br><br>> Recommended: 1:250            | 517.50 FTE                       |                                    |
| <b>School Based ESOL<br/>Counselors (Spanish)</b>   | Support 14 schools for Spanish-<br>speaking students  | 8.0 FTE                          | 0                                  |
| <b>Social workers</b>   | Assigned to Alternative<br>programs, Headstart, Special<br>Education (SESES, Rock<br>Terrace, Carl Sandburg)<br>● staff at SESES programs<br>support entire building &<br>SESES | 33.0                             | 4 in SESES; 3 at<br>Blair G. Ewing |
| <b>Social workers (in<br/>community schools)</b>  | Support 2 Community Schools:<br>Harmony Hills ES and Joann<br>Leleck ES   | 2.0 FTE                          | 0                                  |
| <i>School-based staff that support mental health needs, including referrals to professional services</i>            |   |                                  |                                    |
| <b>Pupil personnel workers</b>  | All schools have a PPW<br>assigned  | 54.4 FTE                         | .4 FTE                             |
| <b>Parent Community<br/>Coordinators</b>  | Allocated by elementary<br>FARMS level (40%+),<br>secondary METS  | 34.0 FTE                         | 0                                  |

Table 2

<sup>4</sup> Gaithersburg, Rockville, Northwood, Blair, Springbrook, Sherwood, Wheaton, Einstein, Quince Orchard, Watkins Mill, Richard Montgomery, and Kennedy High Schools

MCPS requires credentialed mental health staff to have an advanced degree (Master’s degree or higher) and state-approved certification. The table below provides the starting salaries for each position, but each staff member’s salary is negotiated based on experience and union negotiated salary structures.

| Position                                   | Description  | Salary    | Benefits     | Total Annual |
|--|--|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Counselor, Elementary</b>               | MA/MEQ,<br>Step 8 (10 month /15 SE days)   | \$ 75,449 | \$ 20,386 \$ | \$ 95,835    |
| <b>Counselor, Secondary</b>                | MA/MEQ,<br>Step 8 (10 month /21.5 SE days)   | \$ 77,785 | \$ 21,018    | \$ 98,803    |
| <b>Psychologist/Social Worker</b>          | MA/MEQ,<br>Step 7 (10 month /20 SE days)   | \$ 74,402 | \$ 20,103    | \$ 94,505    |
| <b>Social Worker</b>                       | MA/MEQ,<br>Step 7 (12-month)   | \$ 79,290 | \$ 21,424    | \$ 100,714   |
| <b>2 Social Worker (Community Schools)</b> | MA/MEQ+30 Step 2(Leleck)<br>MA/MEQ+30 Step 3(Harmony Hills)<br>(both are 10 month) | 119, 852  | 32,384       | 152,236      |

Table 3

**Diversity of MCPS Mental Health Workforce.** MCPS has provided the racial/ethnic composition of their school psychologists and school counselors in Table 4 and the language capabilities of their mental health staff in Table 5 and 6.

Approximately 37.12% of MCPS’ school psychologist and counselor workforce identifies as non-White: 22.2% Black, 8.88% Hispanic, 4.97% Asian.

| Race/ Ethnicity               | School Psychologists |        | School Counselors |        |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
|                               | Count                | %      | Count             | %      |
| American Indian/Alaska Native |                      |        | 1                 | 0.18%  |
| Asian                         | 9                    | 7.03%  | 28                | 4.97%  |
| Black/ African American       | 15                   | 11.72% | 125               | 22.20% |

|                                 |            |        |            |        |
|---------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|--------|
| Hispanic                        | 15         | 11.72% | 50         | 8.88%  |
| Multi Ethnic                    | 1          | 0.78%  | 5          | 0.89%  |
| Pacific Islander/ Hawaii Native | 1          | 0.78%  | 0          | 0      |
| White                           | 87         | 67.97% | 353        | 62.70% |
| Unidentified                    |            |        | 1          | 0.18%  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>              | <b>128</b> |        | <b>563</b> |        |

Table 4

The group of 121 staff members who serve as school psychologists and counselors (including SBEC counselors) speak a total of 25 unique languages. Approximately 65 staffers speak Spanish making it the most popular language available.

| School Psychologists   |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| American Sign Language | 3         |
| Chinese/Mandarin       | 3         |
| French                 | 1         |
| German                 | 1         |
| Greek                  | 1         |
| Gujarati               | 1         |
| Hebrew                 | 1         |
| Hindi                  | 1         |
| Korean                 | 1         |
| Polish                 | 2         |
| Punjabi                | 2         |
| Spanish                | 13        |
| Turkish                | 1         |
| Urdu                   | 1         |
| Vietnamese             | 2         |
| <b>Grand Total</b>     | <b>34</b> |

Table 5

| School Counselors (including ESOL) |           |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Arabic                             | 1         |
| Bengali                            | 1         |
| Bulgarian                          | 1         |
| Cambodian                          | 1         |
| Chinese/Cantonese                  | 1         |
| Chinese/Mandarin                   | 4         |
| Dutch                              | 2         |
| French                             | 5         |
| Greek                              | 2         |
| Gujarati                           | 2         |
| Haitian Creole                     | 1         |
| Hebrew                             | 2         |
| Hindi                              | 4         |
| Italian                            | 1         |
| Korean                             | 3         |
| Portuguese                         | 2         |
| Punjabi                            | 2         |
| Spanish                            | 52        |
| Ukrainian                          | 1         |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                 | <b>88</b> |

Table 6



**Diversity Efforts.** MCPS requires all school staff to complete an equity compliance training. Additional equity focused professional development resources are also available. The Directors of Psychological Services and Student Well-being and Achievement include equity focused professional development and conversations in their staff meetings. They are also collaborating with the Office of Communications to launch the MCPS Waymaking video series focusing on mental health.

In an effort to recruit more diverse school-based mental health staff, MCPS has attempted partnerships with Bowie State University, Towson University, and Howard University. All were unsuccessful for separate legitimate reasons. MCPS notes that the high education requirements (and high education costs), competing industries attracting mental health professionals, and low-admission rates (especially for nearby universities) are core challenges to increasing the current diversity of their staff.

**Recruitment.** MCPS provides an in-depth description of their recruitment efforts in their memo ©25. Below are key points on how they recruit diverse school-based mental health professionals.

- MCPS school psychologists serve as clinical supervisors to graduate students through practicum and internship opportunities from programs in Maryland, D.C. and Virginia.
- MCPS also hires student school psychologists as interns. Approximately 90% of the interns are hired to work as employees at the conclusion of their program.
- Recruitment activities focus on nearby graduate programs as well as select institutions that have a specialization in bilingual school psychology.
- Additional outreach includes the Bilingual School Psychologist directory and racial/ethnic psychologist associations and Facebook pages.

**Pathways.** The higher education pathways available to MCPS high school students are described more in-depth in the Montgomery College and Universities at Shady Grove sections. However, MCPS also offers a Healthcare Professions program to current students which includes an internship and capstone opportunities—a focus on mental health is also available.

While there are several options for MCPS students to be exposed to careers in mental health, MCPS also notes challenges within their role as a K-12 school system in encouraging students to pursue a position within the mental health workforce.

- The advanced degree requirements for many mental health positions are not usually achieved until 6-7 years beyond high school graduation.
- Other MCPS career and technical programs allow students to conclude their high school education with a professional certification acceptable for an entry-level job in their field. This is not possible within the mental health sphere.

- Second-career professionals cannot easily transition into school-based psychology due to the extensive education and certification requirements.

### **Suggested Discussion Questions**

1. Please describe the specific programs and models used in equity training for staff.
2. What is the standard process to ensure culturally and linguistically diverse students have access to a school-based mental health staff member who shares their language or understands their culture?
3. What are the diversity recruitment strategies for hiring student school-based psychology interns?
4. Are pay differentials offered/provided to multilingual staff members? How does MCPS encourage staff members to become multilingual certified?
5. Please describe any additional efforts to increase cultural competency trainings for staff.

### **Montgomery College. ©37-47**

Montgomery Community College (the College) offers associate degrees and certificates in a variety of fields on three campuses located in Germantown, Rockville, and Silver Spring/Takoma Park. Council staff requested information on available mental health related areas of study; recruitment efforts in those areas; diversity and cultural competency initiatives; and additional workforce related programs and pathways for mental health professions.

The College is currently awaiting approval from the Maryland Higher Education Commission to transition from their Mental Health Associate Degree to the new Behavioral Health Associate Degree program. Students will be educated in a broad array of mental health fields and participate in county, state, and community field placements. In addition, cultural competency training will be required. Additional mental health related programs at the College include a Nursing Associate of Science and psychology courses (no degree).

**Diversity Efforts.** In addition to the cultural competency requirement included in the new Behavioral Health degree program, the College offers training programs and courses to advance equity and inclusion through their Diversity Institute. The College also collaborates with various County programs to increase the diversity of their student body.

**Pathways.** In order for students to receive a bachelor's degree, Montgomery College students must transfer to a university. Montgomery College is leveraging their existing partnership with USG to establish a pathway from an associate's degree to a bachelor's and/or master's degree at USG. The new pathway will allow students to easily transfer to one of three programs at USG:

- University of Maryland, Baltimore County's Social Work program;
- University of Maryland, College Park's Behavioral and Community Health program; and

- University of Maryland, Baltimore Master's of Social Work with a focus on behavioral health program.

Behavioral health program students are also eligible for a grant from the Healthcare Initiative Foundation to support students who begin their education at the College and continue to USG.

In addition to the traditional higher education pathway (post high school graduation), Montgomery College has several partnerships with MCPS to provide accelerated college opportunities.

- **Middle College:** Hosted at Clarksburg, Northwest and Northwood High Schools
  - Provides students with a progressive transition to the College in their senior year
  - Network and Information Technology Pathway, General Engineering Pathway, General Studies Pathway
- **Early College:** Available to all MCPS 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders
  - Allows students to simultaneously complete their high school program and their first two years of college
  - The nursing program is available to high school students at the Takoma Park campus
- **Dual Enrollment:** Allows high school students to enroll in one to four courses each term

These programs are important as stakeholders discuss pipelines to increase the diversity of and encourage students to pursue mental health professions. Montgomery College notes they are planning to partner with MCPS to expand the Early College program with an additional pathway on behavioral health. Students will also have access to clinical agencies for internship experiences.

### **Suggested Discussions Questions**

1. Can additional opportunities be made available for high school students to enroll in mental health related courses?
2. Do nursing students receive exposure to nurse psychiatry (or other mental health) pathways?
3. How are multilingual students encouraged to use their skills in their career pathways and are non-multilingual students encouraged to take language courses?
4. How do students utilize their degree/courses in their mental health careers (if they do not pursue further education)?

### **Universities at Shady Grove. ©48-54**

USG offers select undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs from nine public Maryland universities on one campus located in Montgomery County. It is important to note that new students at USG must have approximately 60 college credits prior to enrolling/transferring.

Council staff requested information on mental health related areas of study available; recruitment efforts into those areas; diversity and cultural competency initiatives; and additional workforce related programs and pathways for mental health professions.

Within the realm of mental health professions, USG offers the following programs:

| Program                           | University                                      | Enrollment Trends   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>B.A. in Social Work</b>        | University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 321 total students- Fall 2020</li> <li>• 160 students in the USG program</li> <li>• 85% of USG students identify as non-White</li> <li>• 40% of USG students are multilingual (Spanish)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Masters in Social Work</b>     | University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB)         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 170 students in the USG program</li> <li>• 56% of USG students identify as non-White</li> </ul>  |
| <b>B.A. in Psychology</b>         | UMBC  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,028 total students- Fall 2020</li> <li>• 194 students in the USG Program</li> <li>• 61% of total students identify as non-White</li> </ul>   |
| <b>B.S. in Nursing</b>            | UMB   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 853 total students- Fall 2020</li> <li>• 57% of total students identify as non-White</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Doctor of Nursing Practice</b> | UMB   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 total students- Fall 2020</li> <li>• 45% of total students identify as non-White</li> </ul>   |

**Diversity Efforts.** The social work programs offered at USG have taken active steps to increase the cultural competency and diversity of their programs. In addition to cultural competency-based curriculums, the programs offer fellowships, scholarships, and stipends in an effort to increase diversity. Students are also able to participate in placements located in diverse communities. Currently, 17 undergraduate social work students serve as bilingual interns in placements throughout the County.

**Suggested Discussion Questions**

1. Please describe the trends surrounding student enrollment in mental health related programs.
2. How are nursing students involved in mental health specialties/courses?
3. How are multilingual students encouraged to use their skills in their career pathways and are non-multilingual students encouraged to take language courses?

4. How do students move beyond their degree program into credentialed professions? What are the typical steps necessary to be able to practice mental health care?
5. What are the barriers/costs to pursuing mental health professions?

### **C. Jurisdictional Practices & Models**

Jurisdictions across the nation are taking action not only to address the demand for mental health care providers, but to increase the number of diverse and culturally competent providers in the mental health workforce. Short-term efforts focus on improving recruitment and training strategies to enhance the current workforce. While there are efforts to assist students currently pursuing mental health fields, many health organizations note a keyway to increase the diversity of students is to also provide early exposure to mental health interventions and careers.

**Recruitment & Career Pathways.** The American Hospital Association (AHA) notes that in addition to a lack of students specializing in behavioral health, the current workforce is aging out. Over half of the current psychiatric workforce is 55 years old or older. Below are key issues and recommendations to address short-term needs to recruit and expand the current mental health workforce and increase diversity.

- The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services recruits and supports immigrants/refugees to serve as “qualified cultural navigators” to new immigrants with the goal of receiving the training necessary for entry level behavioral healthcare positions.
- The National Health Service Corps recruits fully trained professionals to provide culturally competent, interdisciplinary primary health and behavioral health care services to underserved populations. In 2015, over 33% of recruits provided behavioral health services and 87% continued to practice in their placements up to two years after the conclusion of their service commitment.
- Even prior to the COVID-19 health pandemic, behavioral health stakeholders have proposed increasing telemedicine/telepsychiatry as a means to expand the workforce. Telemedicine can help expand the reach of current diverse and multilingual providers in the County as well.
- The AHA recommends training upcoming nurse practitioners and retraining current nurse practitioners in behavioral health care to expand the workforce. Additional potential healthcare providers include registered nurses, physician assistants, and pharmacists.
  - The nursing programs available at USG currently do not include a nurse psychiatry specialization.
- The Oregon Health Authority report on Recruitment and Retention Recommendations for Oregon’s Behavioral Health Workforce recommends providing wage and benefits commensurate with education, experience, and levels of responsibility and acuity of care.

- Low salaries/compensation and lack of adequate reimbursement disincentivize health care workers from pursuing behavioral health care. A regional review of behavioral health salaries (and multilingual pay differentials) can help determine the adequacy of County salaries for recruitment.
- The median compensation for psychiatrists is the third lowest among the 30 medical specialties (AHA).
- The mean wage of clinical, counseling, and school psychologists was between \$72,4270-\$80,060 in Maryland in May 2019 (Bureau of Labor and Statistics- BLS).
  - Top five paying states: Oregon, California, D.C., New York, & Louisiana
- BLS identifies Maryland (May 2019) as a state with one of the highest employment levels, concentration levels, and wages of “other” psychologists (other= non-industrial organizational psychologists or clinical, counseling, and school psychologists).
- Massachusetts has developed the Massachusetts Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Program to support providers as they transition to value-based payment.
- Compensate community-based settings that provide training for new behavioral health providers in their first year of practice, incentivize and support the training sites (Oregon).
- Expand/offer work study programs to current health department employees to pursue advanced degrees while working (Maryland Health Department).
- Develop behavioral health career ladders and opportunities for individuals already in the community (Oregon)

### **Standards & Trainings.**

- The National Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards Blueprint from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has been implemented in several jurisdictions to inform a culturally competent health workforce.
- The CLAS standards blueprint notes the importance of mandatory diversity trainings from the top of the organization down and the need to establish goals to increase diversity and cultural competency within the organization’s strategic plan.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health sponsored e-Learning course: *Improving Cultural Competency for Behavioral Health Professionals*
- Race and trauma focused trainings for school providers (e.g. Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network & National Center for School Mental Health)

- Behavioral health interpreter training (National Latino Behavioral Health Association)
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health funds curriculum development of specialized and culturally competent training for community health worker supervisors (for mental/behavioral health issues)
- The Psychology and Spanish Elective Opportunity (PASEO) program provides graduate students and mental health professionals four-or-eight-week summer immersion programs for psychologists to gain language and cultural knowledge skills for Spanish-speaking populations.

**Higher Education Incentives.** In 2015, only 4% of U.S. medical school graduates applied for residency training in psychiatry. As noted previously, the extensive education requirements and related costs to education can serve as a barrier for those attempting to obtain the necessary advanced degrees for credentialed mental health positions. Below are jurisdictional practices attempting to address those issues and to increase diversity in the mental health workforce.

- The State of Maryland offers state loan repayment and assistance programs in an effort to recruit and retain health professionals (physicians and physician assistants) in underserved areas. The State of Washington offers a similar program and includes four behavioral health occupations: clinical psychologist; licensed clinical social worker, marriage & family therapist, and mental health counselors (all with a Master's degree or higher). The AHA found significant student loan debt disincentivizes students from pursuing behavioral health specializations due to low salaries/reimbursements compared to other specialties.
  - The Alaska SHARP program offers loan repayment and direct incentives for practicing in underserved areas.
- The UnitedHealth Group has provided two Californian institutes of higher education (University of California, San Diego and University of California, San Francisco) separate four-year, \$4 million grants to go grow and diversify the workforce of child and adolescent psychiatrists in the state.
- The California Social Work Education Center at the University of California, Berkeley has a contract with the state to encourage more diverse and bilingual students to study mental health as part of social work graduate studies.
- Colorado plans to give colleges financial incentives to increase student diversity
- Higher education institutions have increased residency slots specifically for psychiatrists. Local higher education institutions can increase (and fund) admission slots for master's and doctoral degrees in mental health fields (focus on bilingual). Local agencies can offer clinical placements/incentives.

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration oversees the Minority Fellowship Program which aims to increase the presence, knowledge, and skill base of practitioners available to serve racial/ethnic populations.
- Expand/offer work study programs to higher education students to have increased exposure to behavioral health career paths which serve diverse clients
- Offer financial incentives to bilingual/bicultural students to complete training in behavioral health (training stipends, tuition assistance, loan forgiveness)
- Expand current scholarship opportunities for individuals from underserved populations to pursue the educational requirements for a career in mental health

**Early Exposure & Awareness Efforts.** Many stakeholders in the field of mental health note that a key factor in increasing diversity in the mental health workforce is to destigmatize mental health issues and expose students to mental health care providers. Researchers believe that by increasing behavioral health literacy in underserved populations, the stigmas surround mental health illnesses and treatment will decrease and more diverse students will pursue careers in mental health. County agencies are already pursuing several progressive steps to expose students the field early and help streamline the education pathway into the field of mental health. Below are examples of additional efforts taken by jurisdictions across the nation.

- Alaska Area Health Education Centers offer 3-day behavioral health career camps to students 16 years old or older in exchange for one college credit
- The Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska incorporates a mentoring program for high school and college students to increase the number of students studying psychiatry (could be relevant to other mental health fields, e.g. social work).
- The National CLAS Standards Blueprint references the Johns Hopkins Medicine Diversity & Inclusion 2020 multi-year strategic plan. One aspect is their Career, Academic, and Research Experiences for Students (CARES) Network and Symposium which provides science, public health, and medicine opportunities to underrepresented graduate, undergraduate, and high school students.
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends local jurisdictions develop government-sponsored behavioral health internships and mentorships with community-based organizations that serve underserved populations. They believe this will create a pipeline for youth and young adults of color to enter the behavioral health workforce.
- Expand culturally and linguistically tailored health communication on mental health (e.g. the County's Asian American Health Initiative resource library)
- Massachusetts' Department of Mental Health prepares a Multicultural Mental Health Resource Directory that is updated yearly



This packet contains:

Circle Page #s:

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Memorandum from HHS                  | 1  |
| Memorandum from HHS-Exhibit C        | 3  |
| Memorandum from OHR                  | 5  |
| Presentation from MCPS               | 6  |
| Memorandum from MCPS                 | 26 |
| Presentation from Montgomery College | 38 |
| Presentation from USG                | 49 |

F:\LAW\Karen\Linda Mac\EC-HHS 11-12-2020\EC-HHS 1-Memo-Diversity In Mental Health Professions.Docx

## Meeting Need for Linguistic and Culturally Diverse Mental Health Staff

As Linkages to Learning (LTL) and School and Community-Based Youth Services (SCYS) providers are tasked with serving the school communities in Montgomery County with the highest rates of not just eligibility for Free and Reduced Meals Service (FARMS), but also of ESOL students and students from Hispanic/Latinx, African-American and various diverse immigrant/newcomer populations, they have strived over the years to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of the target populations they serve.

A current snapshot of the 42 mental health FTEs currently employed in LTL and SCYS contracts reflects that 44% of this workforce is Hispanic/Latinx, 33% is White, 10% is African-American, 6% is Native American/Indigenous and 5% is Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (remainder undisclosed). With regards to linguistic capacity, while other languages have been represented in this workforce in the past, currently 56% of this workforce is bi-lingual in Spanish and 5% is bi-lingual in French. It is important to note these figures certainly ebb and flow over time, not only among the employed workforce, but also due to the expanded workforce and capacity that is realized via hosting and training of graduate interns from many area universities - but the general trend has been one of overall diversification over the years. And while we live in a Montgomery County that is much more diverse than these figures represent, it is important to note the significance of the diversity of this workforce given that the greater disparity that exists between the overall mental health workforce and diversity of the United States. According to the American Psychological Association's Center for Workforce Studies, as of 2015 86% of psychologists were white, with "other mental health professions being similarly homogeneous".

Strategies that LTL and SCYS providers have employed to meet the need for linguistic and culturally diverse mental health staff have included:

- Recruitment via listservs and other platforms created for mental health professionals from specific populations or who serve specific populations
- Intentional staff development on equity, cultural competencies and trauma-informed approaches
- Partnerships with area universities to host diverse and multi-lingual graduate interns, creating internal pipelines for recruitment of these students whenever possible (for example, students from Asian and other un/under-represented backgrounds in the figures reported above do exist in this year's intern workforce)
- Use of non-licensed bi-lingual and/or culturally diverse staff to support social/emotional wellness of youth and families through non-clinical yet effective engagement, support and intervention. These staff may be youth development specialists that facilitate youth support or skill-building groups, outreach/coordination staff that can also provide interpretation for parents during family therapy sessions, etc.
- Splitting/job sharing across schools to spread bilingual capacity (with tele-therapy and virtual group programming being employed during the pandemic, new opportunities exist to do this)

- Language classes for staff to grow language capacity (not intended as a replacement for native fluency for therapists – but to expand capacity, for example, with staff who may come in with conversational skills, at least enough to ensure they are able to conduct consultations with parents and/or other related support communications).

Despite some success with the above strategies, LTL and SCYS providers have identified current needs to increase representation of African-American (there has been higher representation in the past that was not retained); the need for Portuguese-speaking (Brazilian), Amharic, and Vietnamese-speaking mental health staff; the need for Asian/Asian-American and Middle Eastern representation in this workforce; and ensuring LGBTQ+ competence across the diverse workforce. Strategic planning conversations across the LTL partnership to meet these needs include:

- Eliminating the “one size fits all” staffing complement per school community
- Looking at other elements of equity – not just bi-lingual need- as driving force for hiring
- Reviewing the breakout of sub-populations on FARMS by school
- Utilizing the Social Determinants of Health model and related local indicators to drive resource allocation for mental health services
- Revising Program of Requirements for LTL facilities to support space needed to make more robust use of interns as well as potential ability to host other mental health staff on-site to expand capacity (not just DHHS-funded/BHCS, but potentially other community providers as well)

**Exhibit C:**

**FY2021 Position Information: DHHS Multilingual Pay by Identified Behavioral Health Classifications**

| Classification                           | Service Area                               | Language   | Level    | No. of Employees |
|--|--|------------|----------|------------------|
| Behavioral Health Associate Counselor    | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services      | Spanish    | Advanced | 4                |
| Client Assistance Specialist             | Aging and Disability Services              | Spanish    | Basic    | 1                |
|  | Aging and Disability Services              | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services      | Spanish    | Advanced | 4                |
|  | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services      | Spanish    | Basic    | 1                |
|  | Office of Community Affairs                | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Office of Community Affairs                | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Office of Community Affairs                | Amharic    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Spanish    | Basic    | 1                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | French     | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Services to End and Prevent Homelessness   | Spanish    | Basic    | 1                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
| Community Services Aide III              | Aging and Disability Services              | Spanish    | Basic    | 1                |
|  | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services      | Spanish    | Basic    | 4                |
|  | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services      | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Children, Youth and Family Services        | Spanish    | Basic    | 3                |
|  | Children, Youth and Family Services        | Spanish    | Advanced | 17               |
|  | Children, Youth and Family Services        | Vietnamese | Basic    | 1                |
|  | Office of Community Affairs                | Amharic    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Office of Community Affairs                | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Amharic    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Spanish    | Basic    | 6                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Spanish    | Advanced | 6                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Spanish    | Basic    | 2                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Services to End and Prevent Homelessness   | Spanish    | Basic    | 2                |
| Services to End and Prevent Homelessness | Spanish                                    | Advanced   | 1        |                  |
| Medical Doctor III - Psychiatrist        | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services BHCS | Spanish    | Advanced | 2                |
|  | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services BHCS | Spanish    | Basic    | 1                |
| Social Worker II                         | Children, Youth and Family Services        | Spanish    | Advanced | 16               |
|  | Children, Youth and Family Services        | Amharic    | Basic    | 1                |
|  | Children, Youth and Family Services        | Spanish    | Basic    | 2                |
|  | Public Health Services                     | Amharic    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Services to End and Prevent Homelessness   | French     | Advanced | 1                |
| Social Worker III                        | Aging and Disability Services              | Chinese    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Aging and Disability Services              | Spanish    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Aging and Disability Services              | Farsi      | Basic    | 1                |
|  | Aging and Disability Services              | Amharic    | Advanced | 1                |
|  | Children, Youth and Family Services        | Spanish    | Advanced | 4                |
|  | Children, Youth and Family Services        | French     | Basic    | 1                |

| Classification            | Service Area                             | Language      | Level    | No. of Employees |
|---------------------------|--|---------------|----------|------------------|
|                           | Children, Youth and Family Services      | Spanish       | Basic    | 1                |
|                           | Public Health Services                   | Spanish       | Basic    | 1                |
|                           | Services to End and Prevent Homelessness | Spanish       | Basic    | 1                |
|                           | Services to End and Prevent Homelessness | Sign Language | Basic    | 1                |
| Supervisory Social Worker | Services to End and Prevent Homelessness | Spanish       | Advanced | 1                |
| Therapist II              | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | Spanish       | Advanced | 2                |
|                           | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | Chinese       | Advanced | 1                |
|                           | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | Spanish       | Basic    | 16               |
|                           | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | Spanish       | Advanced | 19               |
|                           | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | French        | Advanced | 1                |
|                           | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | French        | Basic    | 1                |
|                           | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | Cantonese     | Advanced | 1                |
| Therapist, Supervisory    | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | Spanish       | Advanced | 2                |
|                           | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | Spanish       | Basic    | 1                |
|                           | Behavioral Health and Crisis Services    | Farsi         | Advanced | 1                |

1. How many employees in County Government currently receive a pay differential for language and what languages do they speak?

**RESPONSE:** 1103 employees currently receive a pay differential. Charts below give further information on the counts per department, as well as the counts for each language.

| DEPT       | EMP COUNT  |
|------------|------------|
| ABS        | 5          |
| BOE        | 6          |
| CAT        | 4          |
| CCL        | 4          |
| CCT        | 3          |
| CEC        | 10         |
| CEX        | 2          |
| COR        | 48         |
| CUS        | 3          |
| DEP        | 6          |
| DGS        | 10         |
| DOT        | 127        |
| DPS        | 18         |
| DTS        | 1          |
| FIN        | 6          |
| FRS        | 92         |
| HCA        | 19         |
| <b>HHS</b> | <b>382</b> |
| HRC        | 1          |
| LIB        | 74         |
| OAS        | 7          |
| OCP        | 4          |
| OHR        | 3          |
| OIG        | 1          |
| PIO        | 16         |
| POL        | 216        |
| PRO        | 1          |
| REC        | 9          |
| SAO        | 1          |
| SHF        | 24         |

| LANGUAGE         | EMP COUNT  |
|------------------|------------|
| Amharic          | 64         |
| Arabic           | 5          |
| Bengali          | 1          |
| Cambodian        | 1          |
| Cantonese        | 7          |
| Chinese          | 50         |
| Creole (Haitian) | 1          |
| Farsi            | 9          |
| French           | 76         |
| German           | 5          |
| Greek            | 3          |
| Hindi            | 6          |
| Italian          | 2          |
| Japanese         | 1          |
| Korean           | 34         |
| Malay            | 1          |
| Nepali           | 1          |
| Oromo            | 1          |
| Other            | 2          |
| Polish           | 3          |
| Portuguese       | 11         |
| Russian          | 7          |
| Sign Language    | 6          |
| <b>Spanish</b>   | <b>790</b> |
| Tagalog          | 3          |
| Tigrinya         | 1          |
| Urdu             | 3          |
| Vietnamese       | 10         |
| Yoruba           | 1          |

---

# Status Report: Diversity in Mental Health Professionals in MCPS

Report to County Council - E&C/HHS Committee  
From Montgomery County Public Schools  
November 2020

# Overview

## MCPS SchoolBased Mental Health Professionals

- Staff count & demographics
- Qualifications & Salary

## Career Pathways and Programs to Encourage Careers in Mental Health



---

# MCPS School-Based Mental Health Professionals

---

# MCPS School-Based Mental Health Professionals

## School Counselors

- 517.5 FTE
- MCPS ratio- 1:319 students
  - Elementary - 1:529
  - Secondary- 1:238
- Recommended: 1:250

## School Based ESOL School Counselors

- 8.0 FTE
- Support 14 high schools with the highest concentration of Spanish-speaking students
  - Full-time at Career Readiness Education Academy (CREA) programs at Thomas Edison, Seneca Valley

---

# MCPS School-Based Mental Health Professionals

## School Psychologists

(K-12, not including special programs)

- 99.0 FTE
- MCPS Ratio- 1:1404 students
- Recommended:1:500

(2020 student population – 157,000)

## Social Workers

- Alternative Programs
- Headstart
- Special Education
  - Social Emotional and Special Education Services (SESES)
  - Rock Terrace
  - Carl Sandburg

---

# MCPS School-Based Staff that Support Mental Health Services

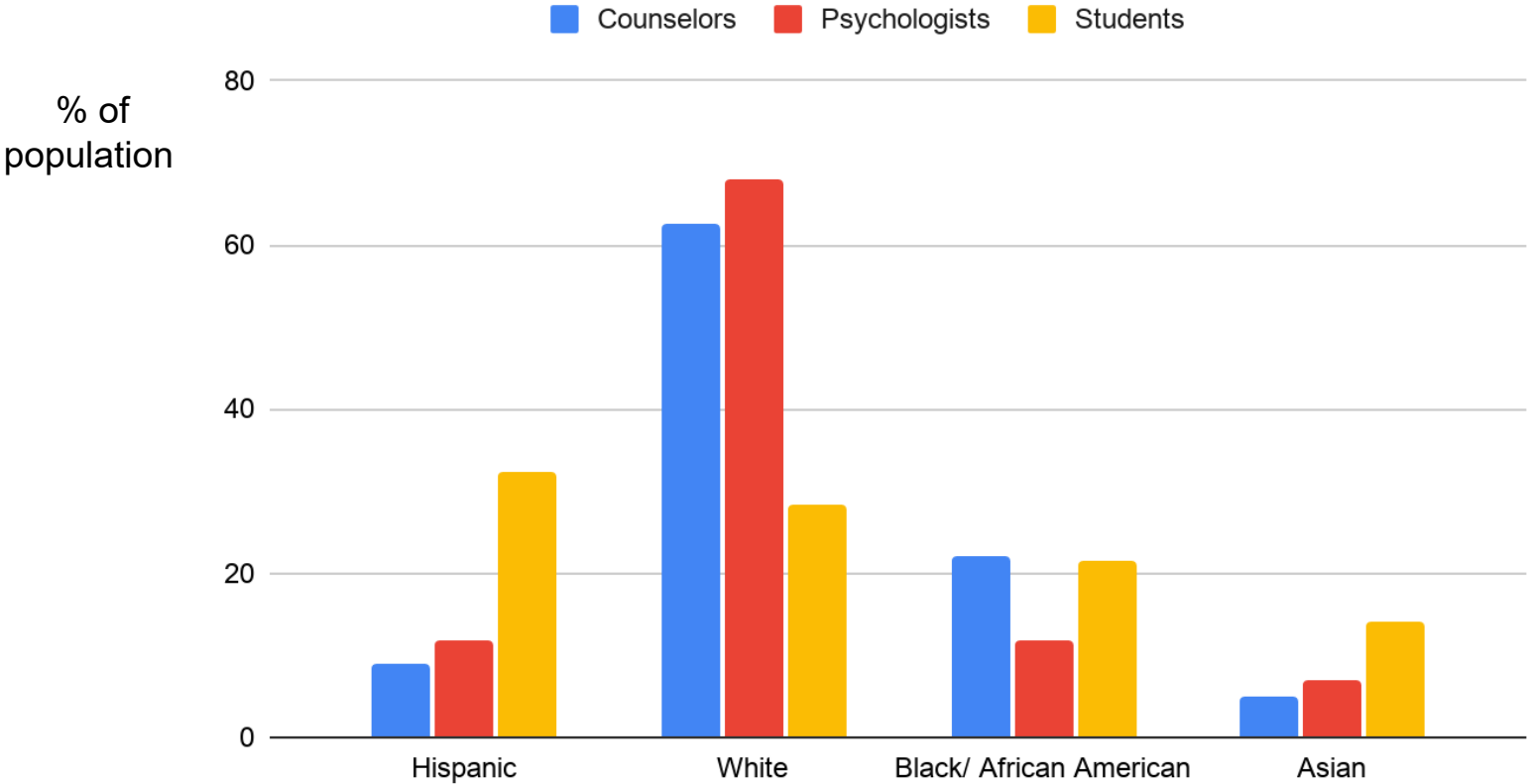
## Pupil Personnel Workers

- 54.4 FTE
- Assigned to cover all MCPS schools

## Parent Community Coordinators

- 34.0 FTE
- Assigned to 79 schools
- Allocated by elementary FARMS level (40%+), secondary Multidisciplinary Education, Training, and Supports Program (METS)

# Demographics: MCPS Students & Mental Health Prof'ls



---

# Bilingual Mental Health Professionals

## Languages Spoken by School Psychologists (34)

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| American Sign Language |            |
| Chinese/Mandarin       | French     |
| German                 | Greek      |
| Gujarati               | Hebrew     |
| Hindi                  | Korean     |
| Polish                 | Punjab     |
| Spanish                | Turkish    |
| Urdu                   | Vietnamese |

## Languages Spoken by School Counselors (88)

|                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Arabic            | Bengali          |
| Bulgarian         | Cambodian        |
| Chinese/Cantonese | Chinese/Mandarin |
| Dutch             | French           |
| Greek             | Gujarati         |
| Haitian Creole    | Hebrew           |
| Hindi             | Italian          |
| Korean            | Portuguese       |
| Punjabi           | Spanish          |
| Ukrainian         |                  |

# Professional Qualifications & Salary

| <b>Position</b>            | <b>Description</b>                                   | <b>Total Annual<br/>(Salary + Benefits)</b> |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Counselor, Elementary      | Masters Degree Required<br>(10 month/15 SSE days)    | \$ 95,835                                   |
| Counselor, Secondary       | Masters Degree Required<br>(10 month/21.5 SSE) days) | \$ 98,803                                   |
| Psychologist/Social Worker | Masters Degree Required<br>(10 month/20 SSE days)    | \$ 94,505                                   |
| Social Worker              | Masters Degree Required<br>(12-month)                | \$ 100,714                                  |

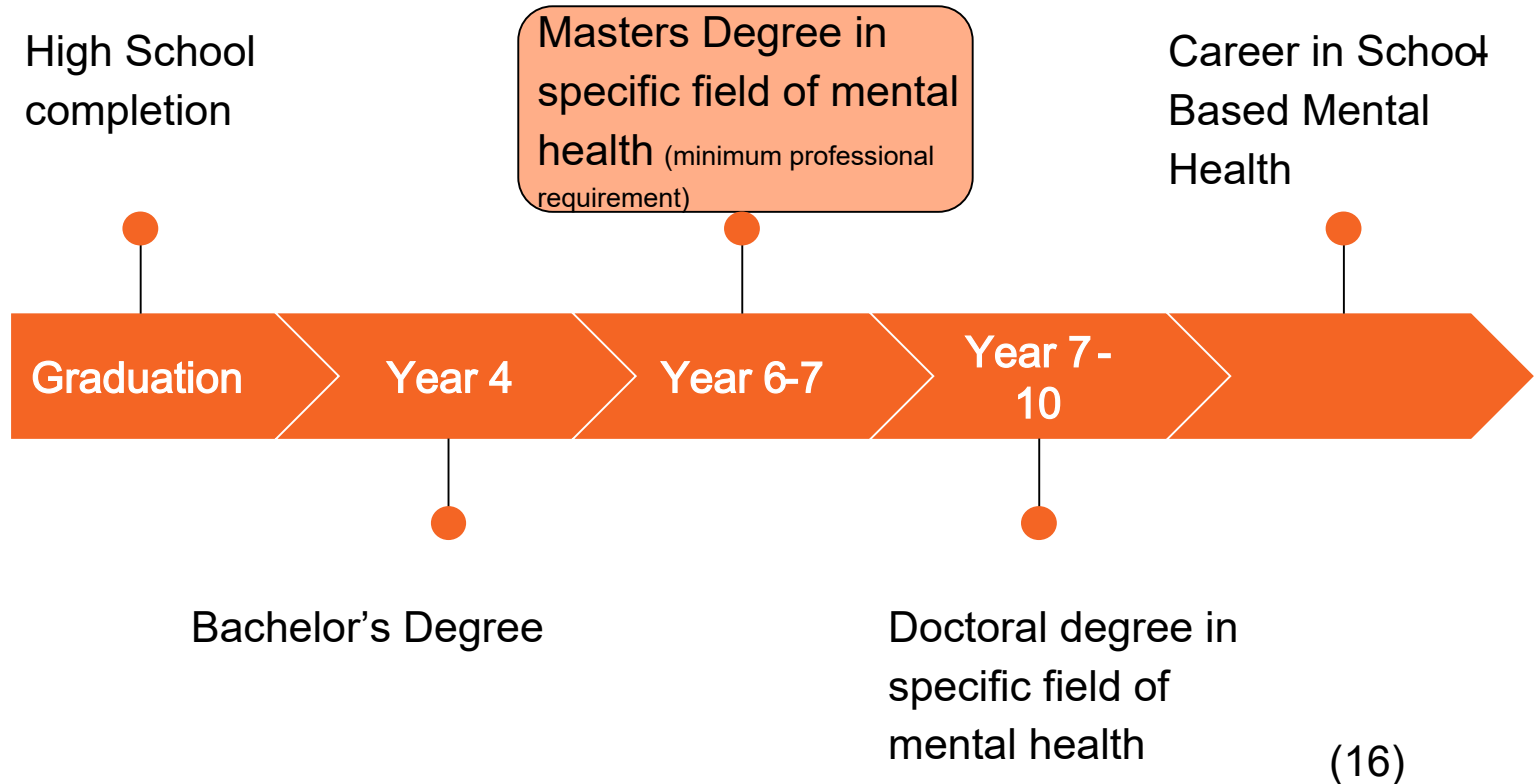
Supplemental Summer Employment (SSE) days

---

# Career Pathways & Programs



# Career Path for Mental Health Professional



---

# Strategies to increase school -based mental health professionals

## Use of online recruitment platforms

LinkedIn

University alumni and Career Center list serves

Virtual informational sessions through college/university career centers and classroom visits

Media advertisements through HULU.

## Active recruitment for school psychologists

Area colleges (Maryland, DC, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York)

---

# Strategies to recruit graduate students in mental health to MCPS

## Graduate Internships

MCPS school psychologists staff provides clinical supervision to graduate students through practicum and internship experiences. Students are very likely to apply to MCPS upon graduation.

MCPS school counselors also provide practicum and internship supervision for graduate students pursuing a degree in school counseling.

---

# Strategies to increase diversity in hiring of mental health professionals

## Active recruitment of bilingual professionals

Recruitment at colleges and universities who have a specialization in bilingual school psychology

## Targeted recruitment through professional organizations

Black School Psychologist Facebook page, National Association of School Psychologists, Asian American Psychology Association, and National Latina/o Psychological Association

---

# Strategies to encourage MCPS students towards careers in mental health

## Dual Enrollment Programs, Early College

Jump Start to College Pathway, dual enrollment credits or AA degree in Mental Health from Montgomery College while in high school

## Internship and capstone opportunities

Opportunities in Healthcare Professions programs

## Future Plans

Full Early College degree programs being considered for Fall 2021;  
Pathways to 4 year degree programs at Universities at Shady Grove

---

# Challenges in Increasing Mental Health Professionals in MCPS

## Career Pathway

High School Students

Second Careers

## Supply & Demand

Degree Programs: Enrollment & Completion

Industry Competition

---

# Challenges in Increasing Mental Health Professionals in MCPS

## Career Planning

- CTE programs do not provide professional certification or job-entry qualifications for mental health
- Students must continue to graduate school for professional qualifications

## Second Career Option

- Mental health professions require specific degree and certification
- School-based professionals are specific designation for mental health professionals

---

# Mental Health Degree Programs

## Availability of graduate programs and faculty

- 240 universities offer school psychology graduate programs
- Maryland: Towson University, University of Maryland College Park, and Bowie State University; 510 graduates per school year

## Rates of enrollment in graduate programs

- School psychology: 2,054 masters degrees, 353 doctorates awarded (2017)
- School counselor: 12,575 degrees were awarded (2017)



---

# Where do mental health professionals work?

## School Psychologists

- Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Colleges and Universities
- School-based Health and Mental Health Centers
- Community-based day treatment or residential clinics and Hospitals
- Juvenile Justice Programs

## School Counselors

- Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools
- Junior Colleges
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Educational Support Services

## School Social Workers

- Individual and Family Services
- State Government
- Local Government
- Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Community Food and Housing, and Emergency and Other Relief Services

# Discussion



| <i>Positions</i>   | <i>Ratio Staff: Students</i>  | <i>Budgeted Staffing Allocations</i> | <i>Vacancies</i>                |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|  | > Recommended National Ratio: 1:500   |                                      |                                 |
| School counselors  | MCPS:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Overall 1 counselor:319 students ratio</li> <li>● ES ratio 1 counselor:529 students</li> <li>● SS ratio 1 counselor:238 students</li> </ul> > Recommended: 1:250  | 517.50 FTE                           |                                 |
| School Based ESOL Counselors (Spanish)   | Support 14 schools for Spanish-speaking students  | 8.0 FTE                              | 0                               |
| Social workers   | Assigned to Alternative programs, Headstart, Special Education (SESES, Rock Terrace, Carl Sandburg) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● staff at SESES programs support entire building &amp; SESES</li> </ul> | 33.0                                 | 4 in SESES; 3 at Blair G. Ewing |
| Social workers (in community schools)  | Support 2 Community Schools: Harmony Hills ES and Joann Leleck ES   | 2.0 FTE                              | 0                               |
| <b>School-based staff that support mental health needs, including referrals to professional services</b> |   |                                      |                                 |
| Pupil personnel workers  | All schools have a PPW assigned   | 54.4 FTE                             | .4 FTE                          |
| Parent Community Coordinators  | Allocated by elementary FARMS level (40%+), secondary METS  | 34.0 FTE                             | 0                               |

*FTE: Full-Time Equivalent; the actual number of staff may be higher as some staff may be part-time*

**School Based ESOL Counselors (SBECs)** all speak Spanish. Six SBECs are assigned to the 12 high schools with the highest concentration of Spanish-speaking students, as listed below; two full time SBECs are assigned to the CREA programs at Thomas Edison School of Technology and Seneca Valley High School. SBECs are not counted in the counselor:student ratio.

- Gaithersburg HS
- Rockville HS
- Northwood HS
- Montgomery Blair HS

- Springbrook HS
- Sherwood HS
- Wheaton HS
- Albert Einstein HS
- Quince Orchard HS
- Watkins Mill HS
- Richard Montgomery HS
- John F. Kennedy HS
- Thomas Edison (CREA)
- Seneca Valley (CREA)

**Diversity of Mental Health Staff**

| Race/ Ethnicity                 | School Psychologists |        | School Counselors |        |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
|                                 | Count                | %      | Count             | %      |
| American Indian/Alaska Native   |                      |        | 1                 | 0.18%  |
| Asian                           | 9                    | 7.03%  | 28                | 4.97%  |
| Black/ African American         | 15                   | 11.72% | 125               | 22.20% |
| Hispanic                        | 15                   | 11.72% | 50                | 8.88%  |
| Multi Ethnic                    | 1                    | 0.78%  | 5                 | 0.89%  |
| Pacific Islander/ Hawaii Native | 1                    | 0.78%  | 0                 | 0      |
| White                           | 87                   | 67.97% | 353               | 62.70% |
| Unidentified                    |                      |        | 1                 | 0.18%  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>              | <b>128</b>           |        | <b>563</b>        |        |

**Bilingual staff** - Of our mental health professionals, 34 school psychologists and 88 school counselors (including ESOL counselors), are reported as being bilingual. Among school psychologists, Spanish is the most represented language, followed by American Sign Language and Chinese of the 15 unique languages spoken. Among school counselors, Spanish is the most represented language, followed by French and then Chinese, of the 19 unique languages spoken.

| School Psychologists   |   |
|------------------------|---|
| American Sign Language | 3 |
| Chinese/Mandarin       | 3 |
| French                 | 1 |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| German   | 1 |
| Greek    | 1 |
| Gujarati | 1 |
| Hebrew   | 1 |

|                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Hindi              | 1         |
| Korean             | 1         |
| Polish             | 2         |
| Punjabi            | 2         |
| Spanish            | 13        |
| Turkish            | 1         |
| Urdu               | 1         |
| Vietnamese         | 2         |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>34</b> |

|                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Chinese/Mandarin   | 4         |
| Dutch              | 2         |
| French             | 5         |
| Greek              | 2         |
| Gujarati           | 2         |
| Haitian Creole     | 1         |
| Hebrew             | 2         |
| Hindi              | 4         |
| Italian            | 1         |
| Korean             | 3         |
| Portuguese         | 2         |
| Punjabi            | 2         |
| Spanish            | 52        |
| Ukrainian          | 1         |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>88</b> |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>School Counselors (including ESOL)</b> |   |
| Arabic                                    | 1 |
| Bengali                                   | 1 |
| Bulgarian                                 | 1 |
| Cambodian                                 | 1 |
| Chinese/Cantonese                         | 1 |

**Roles/duties:** School-based mental health professionals provide group therapy, direct therapy, emotional support, familial support, crisis response and intervention, functional behavioral analyses, consultation.

- [Counselor, Elementary](#)
- [Counselor, Secondary](#)
- [School Psychologist \(10 month\)](#)
- [School Psychologist \(12 month\)](#)
- [Social Worker \(SESES\)](#)

**Additional Training in Equity, Diversity and Cultural Competency**

In overall efforts of MCPS to move the district forward in being a more equitable school district, all school staff complete equity compliance training, development by the Equity unit. Additionally, staff may enroll in option professional development offered by the Equity unit.

Under the direction of the current Directors of Psychological Services and Student Well-being and Achievement, these professionals also discuss issues of equity, diversity and cultural relevance in their regular staff meetings and ongoing professional development.

In response to the current pandemic and most-recent racial protests, Psychological Services, in coordination with Student Well-being and Achievement, the Office of Communications, and other MCPS offices, has launched the MCPS Waymaking video series to present topics of mental health to families, staff, and the general community. A select number of MCPS and independent mental health professionals were involved in the planning and execution of these videos, as well as participating on camera. Several of these videos focus specifically on mental health in the Black, Hispanic and Asian communities and as related to racism. These videos have served as educational material for families, as well as school staff. The YouTube Playlist for this series can be found [here](#).

**Qualifications & Salary**

- All MCPS credentialed mental health professional positions require an advanced degree, a Masters degree in the appropriate field, as a minimum and state-approved certification
- MCPS mental health professionals’ salaries are dependent on position and experience. Salary increases are a part of the union negotiated salary structure and determined by time in service. The beginning salaries for the various staff positions (based on FY 2020 Salary Schedule), are listed here.

| <b>Position</b>                     | <b>Description</b>                      | <b>Salary</b> | <b>Benefits</b> | <b>Total Annual</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Counselor, Elementary               | MA/MEQ, Step 8 (10 month /15 SE days)   | \$ 75,449     | \$ 20,386       | \$ 95,835           |
| Counselor, Secondary                | MA/MEQ, Step 8 (10 month /21.5 SE days) | \$ 77,785     | \$ 21,018       | \$ 98,803           |
| Psychologist/Social Worker          | MA/MEQ, Step 7 (10 month /20 SE days)   | \$ 74,402     | \$ 20,103       | \$ 94,505           |
| Social Worker                       | MA/MEQ, Step 7 (12-month)               | \$ 79,290     | \$ 21,424       | \$ 100,714          |
| 2 Social Worker (Community Schools) | MA/MEQ+30 Step 2(Leleck)                | 119, 852      | 32,384          | 152,236             |

|  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
|  | MA/MEQ+30 Step<br>3(Harmony Hills)<br>(both are 10 month) |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|

*SE: Summer Employment; the contractually determined number of days these positions work in the summer months*

## **PATHWAYS AND PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE CAREERS IN MENTAL HEALTH**

---

### **Recruitment strategies for school-based mental health professionals**

- There are several online recruitment platforms utilized to maintain active engagement with experienced and future school based mental health professionals:
  - LinkedIn to target experienced school based mental health professionals
  - University alumni and Career Center list serves
  - Virtual informational sessions specifically for school psychology students through college and university career centers and classroom visits
  - Media advertisements through HULU.
- The Office of Human Resources and Development and OFSE partner in the recruitment and interviewing process.
- MCPS school psychologists staff provides clinical supervision to graduate students through practicum and internship experiences to programs in the Maryland, DC, and Virginia region. This has created significant recruitment opportunities for these students to then apply for positions in MCPS upon graduation.
- MCPS provides school psychology student internship opportunities. Approximately 90% of the interns are hired to work as employees in MCPS at the conclusion of the internship program.
- Active recruitment for school psychologists occurs at colleges and universities within closest proximity to the school district as well as with the largest number of students majoring in the field. Schools include University of Maryland College Park, Bowie State University, Towson University, Howard University, Pennsylvania State University, University of Virginia Curry, University of Pittsburgh, and New York University.
- This year, active recruitment for bilingual school psychologists will be focused on colleges and universities who have a specialization in bilingual school psychology--Texas A&M University, New Mexico State University, St. John's College, Brooklyn College, Queens College, and New Rochelle University.
- This recruitment season, school psychologist positions will be advertised through the Black School Psychologist Facebook page, National Association of School Psychologists, Asian American Psychology Association, and National Latina/o Psychological Association.



- The directory of Bilingual School Psychologist is used to directly communicate and recruit mental health professionals.

### **Strategies to encourage students towards careers in mental health**

Dual Enrollment Programs, Early College - partnerships with Montgomery College and Universities at Shady Grove

- Dual enrollment programs and Associates of Arts degree in Mental Health are available from Montgomery College while in high school, via the Jump Start to College Pathway program they can complete at least 30 credits prior to high school at a reduced cost.
- We are exploring adding a full degree program in Mental Health in Early College to advertise in Fall 2021 and also a pathway to 4 year degree programs at Universities at Shady Grove.
- Our Healthcare Professions programs has internship and capstone opportunities that can include focus areas in mental health. There is an *Other Medical Specialty Course Pathway Option* within the Healthcare Professions pathway that includes:
  - Foundations of Medicine and Health Science
  - Structure and Functions of the Human Body
  - Other Medical Specialty Course (Mental Health)
  - Clinical Allied Health Internship OR
  - Allied Health Internship

## **CHALLENGES TO INCREASING DIVERSE MENTAL HEALTH STAFF IN MCPS**

### **Challenges in Career Programming and Encouragement**

Coordinating a career pathway for MCPS students to pursue mental health careers is a complicated process in that most mental health careers require an advanced degree for professional status, an achievement that is at least six to seven years beyond high school graduation. While students may be encouraged and inspired to study mental health as a career through their high school courses (psychology, for instance) and dual enrollment opportunities, a Masters degree in the particular field, at minimum, as well as appropriate state-approved certification is required for professional status and employment.

- Some existing CTE human services programs such as nursing, medical technology or child development/early education, provide a student with a professional certification with which they can attain an entry-level position in their field.. Mental health fields do not have similar professional certifications.
- A challenge for encouraging second-career professionals to enter the school system as mental health professionals is that such fields require degrees and certification in the particular area of work. For

instance, where a computer science professional could be certified to teach computer science in a secondary school, a school psychologist must be degreed and certified in school psychology, even as opposed to general psychology or other areas of focus. School psychology is a specialization area in the field of psychology. Clinical psychologists are the equivalent of a General Practitioner in the medical field; they do not have the additional credentials to serve as a School Psychologist.

### **Mental Health Workforce**

While MCPS desires to have a more diverse mental health staff and have implemented strategies to increase the diversity, by culture and language proficiency, there exists a limitation on the supply of such professionals, impacted by the demand by other school districts and industries. Unfortunately, the supply of multi-cultural mental health professionals is not relative to the general population.

Current professional demographics: School Psychologists

- 2013: data indicate that 90.7% of school psychologists are White, 3% Black, 1.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.6% Native American/Alaskan Native, and 3.4% Hispanic/ Latino (Castillo et al., 2013).
- 2017: Culturally diverse school psychologists are underrepresented within the school psychology workforce: About 87% are White, and only 6% are Hispanic (Walcott, Charvat, McNamara, & Hyson, 2016), which differs sharply from the student population (McFarland et al., 2017).
- 2016: Bilingual school psychologists are in short supply within school psychology: 86% of school psychologists are fluent in English only, and among those who are fluent in a second language, less than 8% provide services in that language (Walcott et al., 2016).

Several factors impact shortages in school psychology, from the availability of graduate programs and faculty to the rates of enrollment in graduate programs and the rates at which school psychologists leave the profession via attrition and retirement.

- 353 doctorate degrees in school psychology awarded in 2017; 2,054 masters degrees awarded in 2017 (actually represents a 27% increase in number of degrees awarded over a 10-year period)

<https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/features/spq-spq0000154.pdf>

<https://nces.ed.gov/datapoints/2019020.asp> (school counseling)

<https://datausa.io/profile/cip/4217/> (school psychology)

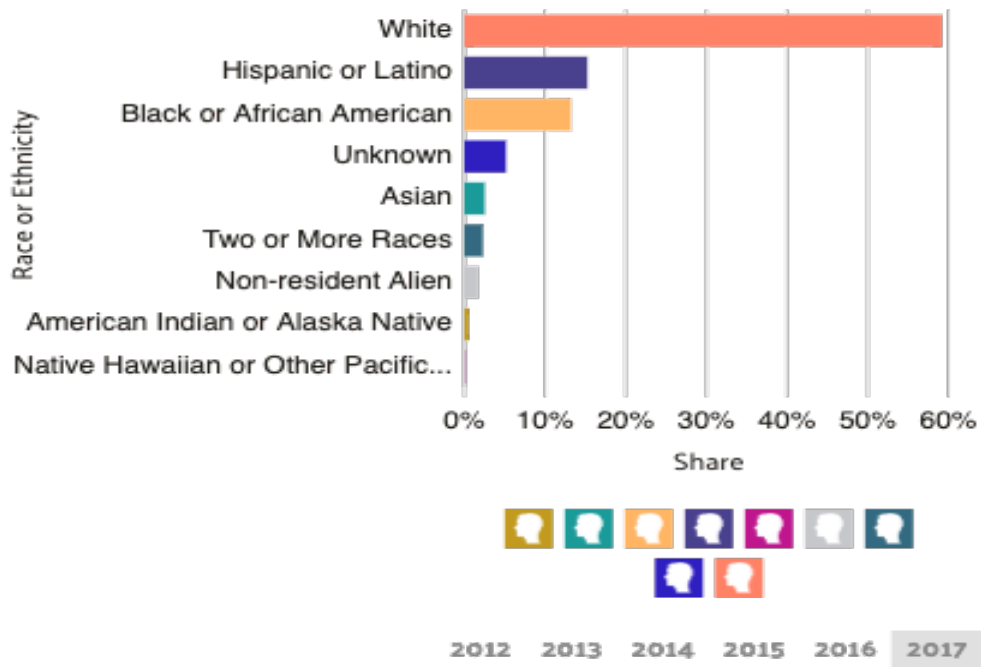
<https://www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology> (school psychology)

[ASCA Membership demographics](#)

### **Graduate programs in mental health fields**

- About 240 universities offer school psychology graduate programs.
- Some programs may have no more than 5 to 6 students per entering class, while others may have 20 students in their entering class.
- There are only 3 universities in Maryland that have a school psychology program (i.e. Towson University, University of Maryland College Park, and Bowie State University). Washington DC has one school psychology program (i.e. Howard University). Those programs graduate 5-10 graduates per school year in May.
- HBCU Degree programs
  - Psychology: 32 HBCUs offer a Masters degree in Psychology; 9 offer a doctoral degree
  - Social Work: 26 HBCUs offer a Masters degree; 7 offer a Doctoral degree
- MCPS tried to collaborate with Bowie State University over the past three years to develop a “Grow Your Own” program out of the Universities of Shady Grove campus to encourage MCPS staff to go into School Psychology. Bowie State University was unable to logistically work out the plan. Towson is not willing to develop a program at this time. Howard’s program prepares students for certification in Washington DC. The certification requirements are higher in the state of Maryland and their graduates from their Masters program are ineligible for certification in Maryland until they have worked for 2 years as a school psychologist in another jurisdiction.
- School Counselors - In 2017, 12,575 school counselor degrees were awarded: White graduates: 7447, 59.2%; Hispanic/Latino: 1916, 15.2%; Black: 1661, 13.2%; Asian: 316, 2.51%

Number of School Counseling Degrees Awarded for Each Race and Ethnicity:



References & Additional Resources

NCES: [Mental Health Staff in Public Schools](#)

**Educational Path to Mental Health Professions**

Mental health professions such as school psychologist and school counselor require an advanced degree, which is a minimum of 6 years of college and graduate school. This is a significant investment of time beyond high school graduation; and while students may have the necessary level of commitment, the resources to pay tuition and living expenses for an advanced degree may be a barrier.

- According to a September 2019 U.S. Department of Education report on graduate financing, African Americans made up 14.1 percent of all graduate student enrollments in 2015-16, the majority of which were financing their education with some type of financial aid. “In the 2015-16 academic year, more than 53 percent of African American graduate students received student loans but no other financial aid. For Whites, only 32.4 percent received only loans. Only 18.1 percent of African American graduate students receive no loans but did receive other financial aid. For Whites, the figure was 41.8 percent.” <https://www.jbhe.com/2019/09/racial-inequities-in-the-financing-of-graduate-education-in-the-united-states/>
- As reported in the Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, in 2018 – African Americans were more than 13 percent of all graduate students in education, business, social sciences, and public

administration. <https://www.jbhe.com/2019/10/examining-the-racial-gap-in-graduate-school-enrollments-in-the-united-states/>

### **Industry Competition**

While the majority of graduates in school-related mental health fields, such as school counseling and school psychology, do work in school systems, they are also employed in competing industries. By statistics provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the following areas are the top five areas which employed these professionals in 2019.

#### School Psychologists

- Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Colleges and Universities
- School-based Health and Mental Health Centers
- Community-based day treatment or residential clinics and Hospitals
- Juvenile Justice Programs

#### School Counselors

- Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools
- Junior Colleges
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Educational Support Services

#### School Social Workers

- Individual and Family Services
- State Government
- Local Government
- Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Community Food and Housing, and Emergency and Other Relief Services

### **Conclusion**

There is a definite need for diverse and culturally proficient school-based mental health professionals to relate to and support the increasingly diverse school-aged population of children and adolescents and their families. MCPS, like many other diverse school districts, is challenged in building a workforce that is as

diverse relative to the student population by such factors as described in this report. MCPS continues to work with community agencies and partners to provide diverse and culturally relevant mental health resources and services to its student body, while developing strategies to encourage more students towards the professions and recruit a more diverse professional workforce. At the same time, recognizing that changes in diversity require a long-term strategy and creative solutions.

# Diversity and Cultural Competency in Mental Health Professionals

New pathways and closing workforce gaps

Montgomery County Council Committees:  
Education and Culture  
Health and Human Services  
November 12, 2020

# Workforce Gaps in Behavioral Health

- There is a critical shortage of trained professionals to meet the behavioral health needs of both Montgomery County and the state of Maryland. Within a 50 mile radius of the College, there are over 45,000 jobs and this need is expected to reach 52,000 by 2029, a 16% overall gain.
- According to EMSI data, the job posting demand in this area is high and is expected to increase until 2029. EMSI data is derived from official government sources (U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Bureau of Economic Analysis)



# Changes to address Workforce Gaps

## Transition from Mental Health to Behavioral Health Program:

- Montgomery College's A.A. in Behavioral Health will be the first of its kind in the state of Maryland once approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC).
- Includes the study of mental health/illness, substance abuse prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery, as well as marriage/family counseling and chronic disease management.
- Focus is on behavior; how to influence the acquisition of health enhancing behaviors while mitigating the impact of health risk behaviors.
- Programmatic evolution to provide students with entry level knowledge and clinical skills for employability, as well as a firm foundation for continuing their education to the bachelors level and beyond.

# Required: Cultural Competency

Upon successful completion of the program students will:

- Acquire and apply the fundamental knowledge and skills of the behavioral health profession.
- Model ethical and professional behavior in both classroom exercises and field placements.
- Demonstrate effective verbal and written communication skills.
- **Demonstrate an understanding of how diversity and difference impacts behavior.**
- Use critical thinking skills to solve problems relevant to the field of behavioral health.

# Diversity Institute: Training Programs to Advance Equity and Inclusion

Training programs:

- A range of tailored courses and content provided on demand to businesses and government each year
  - Unconscious Bias, Challenging Implicit Bias, Gender in the Workforce, the Multigenerational Workforce, Mediation & Conflict Resolution, and more
- Leadership and management courses include diversity content and emphasis
- Organizations include County government, City of Gaithersburg, Housing Opportunities Commission

# Efforts to Increase Diversity/Cultural Competency

## Collaboration with Current Montgomery College Programs:

- Combat to College
- Federal TRIO Program
- Achieving the Promise Academy
- Boys to Men and Sister to Sister Mentoring Programs
- The Challenge Program
- MC Mentoring Network/ALMA (Advancing Latino Male Achievement)
- Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) Program

# Closing the Workforce Gap: Academic Pathway with MCPS

## Behavioral Health Program:

- Planning to partner with MCPS to expand the Early College Program with this additional program
- Partner with clinical agencies for internship experiences

# Closing the Workforce Gap: Academic Pathway with USG

Advancing degree from associate's to bachelor's and master's

- Designed new pathway to enable students to transfer seamlessly
  - University of Maryland Baltimore County's baccalaureate program in social work housed at the Universities at Shady Grove (USG)
  - The University of Maryland, College Park, bachelor of science in behavioral and community health, also offered at USG
  - The University of Maryland School of Social Work with a concentration in behavioral health as part of its master's in social work program offered at USG

# Closing the Workforce Gap: Recruitment/ Incentives

- Recruiting efforts: Information sessions including marketing to support students seeking to apply to the program
- Intrusive advising while matriculating through the program
- Connection with university partners for seamless pathway to bachelor's degree and beyond
- Healthcare Initiative Foundation grant for behavioral health program students
  - Scholarship funds supporting students begins at MC and continues to USG

# Closing the Workforce Gap: Employment Opportunities

- Behavioral Health associate's degree employment opportunities
  - Case worker, psychiatric technician, psychiatric aide, community health worker, social work aides, certified addictions counselors (CAC), behavioral health specialist assistant, behavioral health technicians, behavioral health coach, mental health promotion worker, and behavioral health clinician assistant
- Behavioral Health bachelor's degree employment opportunities
  - Behavioral health counselor, behavioral health specialist, integrated behavioral health therapist
- Settings: hospitals; health care systems; outpatient care centers; individual/ family services care providers; local, state and federal government; senior centers; and non-profit clinics







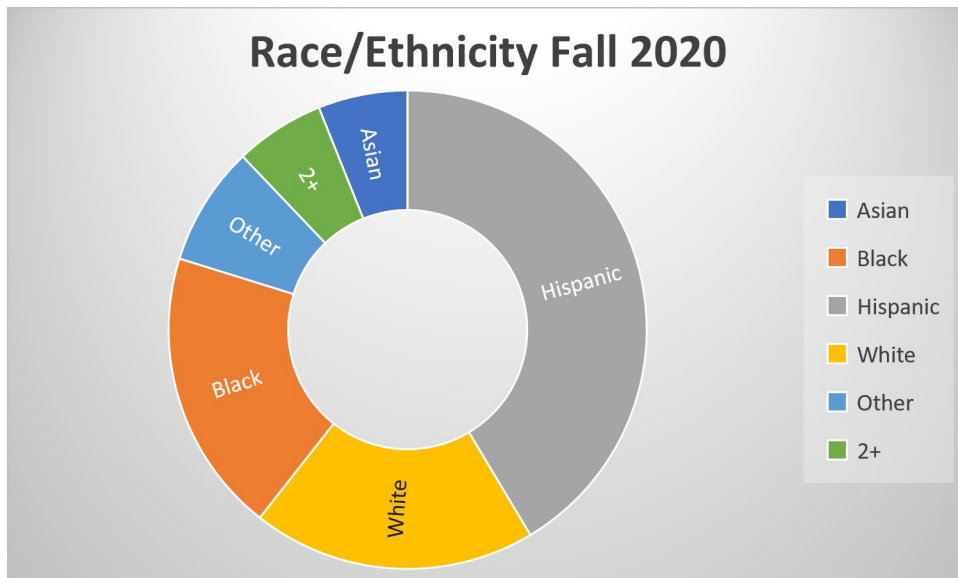
# USG Social Work Pipeline

Katie Morris: UMBC Social Work [kath@umbc.edu](mailto:kath@umbc.edu)

Dr. Joan Pittman: UMB School of Social Work [jpittman@sww.umaryland.edu](mailto:jpittman@sww.umaryland.edu)

# BSW Enrollment, Demographics, Recruitment

- Student enrollment 160
- 40% multilingual, Spanish
- 40% first-generation college students



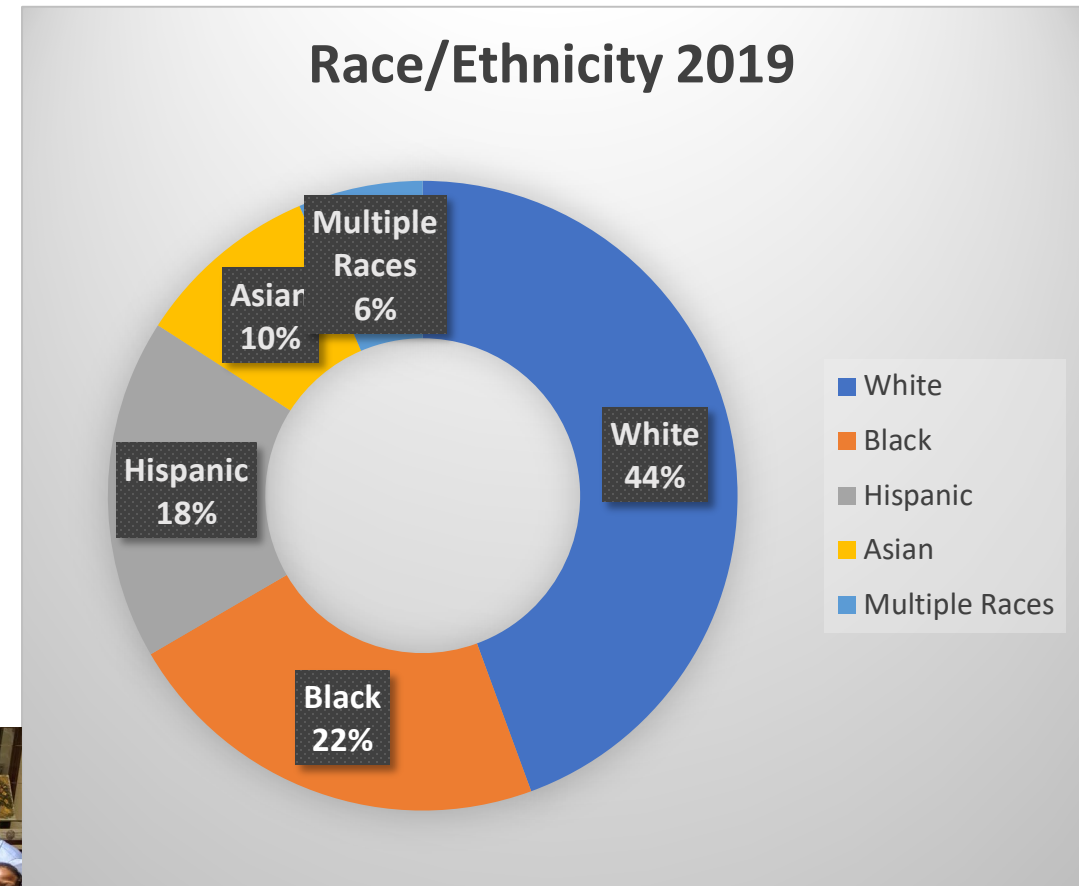
- Majority arrive with AA degree
- 85% transfer from Montgomery College
  - Associate of Arts in Behavioral Health (formerly Mental Health AAS)
  - General Studies (SSAH) in Sociology
  - ACES
- Complete BSW 5-6 semesters
- 95% of 2019 grads report being employed or heading to grad school

# 51 UMB MSW at USG

- 170 Students Enrolled
- 60 Credit MSW
  - Full-time or part-time (2-4 years)
  - Advanced standing (1-2 years) – many from UMBC's BSW program
- Clinical Behavioral Health and Children and Families
- 86% of grads pass the Licensed Masters SW Exam



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND AT  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



**The Universities**  
AT SHADY GROVE



## BSW Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

- Competency- based curriculum infuses social work values and theories:
  - Power and privilege
  - Critical race theories
  - Oppression
  - Identity
  - Intersectionality
  - Self-awareness and impact on social work practice
- Foster environment of equity and inclusion
- Social work field placement in diverse communities
- 17 of the 40 field placements in MoCo have bilingual BSW interns
- 40-50 BSW students receive USG scholarships
- Title IV Stipends 2-3 students, placed in Prince George's DHHS

# UMB MSW at USG: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Pre-requisite History of Oppression Course
- Structural Oppression and Its Implications for Social Work
- Field Seminar
- Competency Based Education
- Assistant Dean for DEI



UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

## Scholarships

- Title IV-E
- Behavioral Health Workforce Integration Service and Education (BHWISE) Fellowships
- USG Endowed Scholarship

## Employed Based Placements

## Recruitment Efforts



AT

**The Universities**

AT SHADY GROVE

# Importance of Community Partners: BSW/MSW Field Placements

*Over 70 placements in  
Montgomery Co*

- *Need for*
  - *multilingual students*
  - *more placements*



Department of  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Building A Healthy, Safe and Strong Community -  
One Person at a Time





# Summary Points on Expanding and Diversifying the Behavioral Health Workforce in Mont Co.

- Scholarships help underrepresented students
- Both BSW and MSW programs growing at USG
- Programs are preparing students to work in Behavioral Health Settings
- Need more field placement opportunities
- Partnerships for Recruitment Efforts
- Expand employment-based opportunities

