



## MHTTC NCO Advisory Board Members

**Teri Brister, PhD**, serves as the Chief Program Officer at NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Dr. Brister is responsible for ensuring that all content created and disseminated by NAMI attains the highest possible standards of accuracy, relevance, value and academic rigor. She is the author of NAMI Basics, the national education program for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents with mental illness and co-author of the NAMI Homefront education program for families of Service Members and Veterans who are experiencing mental health challenges. Since July 2018, Dr. Brister has served as the SMI Patient and Family Engagement Expert for the APA SMI Adviser project. Prior to joining NAMI in 2005, Dr. Brister worked for twenty years in the community mental health system in Mississippi, working in both clinical and administrative roles, including Assistant Executive Director in two different centers. Dr. Brister received her Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration from Jackson State University, and her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Counseling Psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Mississippi.

**Lynn Bufka, PhD**, is the Senior Director, Practice Transformation and Quality at the American Psychological Association. Bufka received her PhD in psychology from Boston University. Her areas of professional interest include health care policy, practice patterns and trends, professional development, adult anxiety disorders and cross-cultural issues in psychology. She frequently serves as a media spokesperson for APA on these topics and other policy matters relevant to professional practice. She was on a panel of experts who developed APA's 2016 Stress in America™ survey. Before coming to APA in 2002, she served as associate director of the doctoral clinical training program and director of practice training at Boston University's Center for Anxiety and Related Disorders. Bufka has particular experience in delivering and evaluating cognitive behavioral therapy for anxiety disorders.

**Lucy R. Cannon, LCSW, EdD, CCDP-D, MATS**, is the CEO/Owner of LEJ Behavioral Health Services, LLC, a training and consulting company in Metropolitan Atlanta. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the states of Georgia and Alabama. She has the following licenses and certifications; LCSW, LICSW, CCDP-D, and MATS. Dr. Cannon has been a clinician, supervisor, director, and consultant of mental health and co-occurring disorders programs in inpatient and outpatient healthcare organizations and psychiatric hospitals in various states in the United States and Camp Zama, Japan. She is an Adjunct Professor at Clark Atlanta University School of Social Work. She is also a Facilitator/Speaker for the United States Navy Reserve Command. She is a trainer for various local and national healthcare organizations. She also serves on various healthcare organizations boards of directors and advisory boards.

**Kathryn Cates-Wessel**, CEO, American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry. Ms. Cates-Wessel has more than 30 years of background and experience in the substance use disorder field in administration, medical education, and policy. She is Chief Executive Officer of the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry (AAAP) and Principal Investigator and Project Director for both the PCSS and STR-TA grant. As Principal Investigator and Project Director of these projects, she oversees the overall administration of the projects staff; consultants and sub-awards; negotiating contracts and overseeing work of partner organizations, consultants and vendors; and ensuring that all aspects of these projects are undertaken according to the project plans. Prior to her work at AAAP, she was Associate Director of Brown University's Center for

Alcohol and Addiction Studies for over 19 years and Executive Director of Physicians and Lawyers for National Drug Policy, a think tank of leaders from law and medicine advocating for prevention/treatment of addicts over incarceration. Prior to that she was Associate Director of a residential treatment center for adolescents for substance use disorders and co-occurring mental disorders.

**Amy N. Cohen, PhD**, Project Director of the Clinical Support System for Serious Mental Illness (SMI Adviser), American Psychiatric Association. Dr. Amy N. Cohen is a licensed clinical psychologist and health services researcher who has dedicated her career to improving the quality of care for individuals with serious mental illness. The goal of her work is to eradicate inequities in physical and mental health outcomes for this population. Specifically, her work has focused on improving implementation and utilization of evidence-based practices for this population and reorganizing care to be recovery-oriented and patient-centered. Dr. Cohen's work has been continually funded through grants from the Veterans Administration, NIMH, SAMHSA, and foundations. Dr. Cohen is Project Director of the Clinical Support System for Serious Mental Illness, implemented through the American Psychiatric Association, and an Associate Research Psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at UCLA.

**Ayla Colella, LMHC**, Director of Practice Improvement, National Council for Mental Well-Being. Ayla Colella is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor with expertise in various therapeutic interventions and modalities for people living with serious mental illness. She has managed small- and large-scale projects for federal, state, and local funders, which included overseeing operations of several social services initiatives encompassing supportive housing, foster care prevention, forensic case management, and other supportive services. Currently, Ms. Colella plays critical role in providing timely and meaningful technical assistance and subject matter expertise to community behavioral health organizations nationwide, promoting an advocacy platform that resonates with federal policy priorities and national trends. She was recently selected to attend National Council's Middle Management Academy- the only program of its kind for future health care leaders. Ms. Colella frequently provides clinical guidance and direction on various National Council endeavors, including but not limited to; serious mental illness, substance use disorders, criminal justice, workforce development, trauma, telehealth, clinical supervision, and health equity.

**Judith A. Cook, PhD**, is Professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Center on Mental Health Services Research and Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is an internationally recognized authority on mental health services research, specifically the study of clinical and rehabilitation outcomes of children and adults receiving community-based care. She directs a federally funded research center along with grants focused on intervention science and psychiatric epidemiology. She designs and implements innovative programs to enhance the health and behavioral health of vulnerable populations. She works with federal, state and local authorities on behavioral health service system reconfiguration and alternative financing strategies. Her recent work focuses on randomized controlled trials of evidence-based practice treatments for serious mental illness. She also is studying the return to work process among SSI/DI beneficiaries in partnership with Mathematica's Disability Research Consortium funded by the Social Security Administration. Dr. Cook directed the first federally funded multi-site, clinical trial of supported employment services for people with major mental disorders called the Employment Intervention Demonstration Program. She served as Expert Consultant on Employment and Income Supports to the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, and as an Advisory Committee member and Reviewer of the Surgeon General's Report

on Mental Health. She consults with federal agencies including the NIH, Social Security Administration, Department of Labor, Government Accountability Office, SAMHSA, CDC, HHS Office of the Inspector General, and VA. Dr Cook's published research includes over 150 books, edited volumes, and peer-reviewed journal articles in areas such as disability and labor force participation, models of vocational rehabilitation, outcomes of supported employment services, the peer service delivery workforce, and employment approaches for youth with serious emotional disturbances. Her honors and awards include the William Foote Whyte Distinguished Career Award from the American Sociological Association in 2003, the National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers Award from NARRTC in 2004, the John Beard Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Field of Psychiatric Rehabilitation from the U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association, in 2008, and the Distinguished Faculty Award from the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine in 2012.

**Ralph DiClemente, PhD**, Professor, Chair of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Associate Dean of Public Health Innovation, Professor of Social and Behavioral Science College of Global Public Health, New York University. Dr. DiClemente was trained as a Health Psychologist at the University of California, San Francisco where he received his PhD in 1984 after completing a ScM at the Harvard School of Public Health. He earned his undergraduate degree at the City University of New York. Dr. DiClemente's research has four key foci: Developing interventions to reduce the risk of HIV/STD among vulnerable populations; Developing interventions to enhance vaccine uptake among high-risk adolescents and women, such as HPV and influenza vaccine; Developing implementation science interventions to enhance the uptake, adoption and sustainability of HIV/STD prevention programs in the community; Developing diabetes screening and behavior change interventions to identify people with diabetes who are unaware of their disease status as well as reduce the risk of diabetes among vulnerable populations. He has focused on developing intervention packages that blend community and technology-based approaches that are designed to optimize program effectiveness and enhance programmatic sustainability. Dr. DiClemente is the author of ten CDC-defined, evidence-based interventions for adolescents and young African-American women and men. He is the author of more than 540 peer-review publications, 150 book chapters, and 21 books. He serves as a member of the Office of AIDS Research Advisory Council. Previously, Dr. DiClemente served as the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Public Health at the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. He was also Associate Director of the Center for AIDS Research, and was previously Chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Health Education at the Rollins School of Public Health. Dr. DiClemente is Past President of the Georgia chapter of the Society for Adolescent Health & Medicine. He previously served as a member of the CDC Board of Scientific Counselors, and the NIMH Advisory Council.

**Brian M. Hepburn, MD**, has been the Executive Director of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) since July 2015. He previously was the Director of the Maryland Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA) from 2002 to 2014 and that position became the Director of the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) July 2014. Dr. Hepburn was the Clinical Director for MHA from 1996 to 2002. He was also the Director of Psychiatric Education and Training for MHA from 1987 to 1997. Dr. Hepburn received his MD degree in 1979 from the University of Michigan School of Medicine and received Residency Training in Psychiatry at the University of Maryland from 1979 to 1983. He was a Full-Time Faculty Member at the University of Maryland from 1983 to 1988 and has been on the Volunteer faculty at the University of Maryland since 1988. He maintained a private practice from 1983 until 2004.

**Michael F. Hogan, PhD**, Principal, Hogan Health Solutions LLC. Dr. Michael Hogan served as New York State Commissioner of Mental Health from 2007-2012, and now operates a consulting practice in health and behavioral health care. The NYS Office of Mental Health operated 23 accredited psychiatric hospitals, and oversaw New York's \$5B public mental health system serving 650,000 individuals annually. Previously Dr. Hogan served as Director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health (1991-2007) and Commissioner of the Connecticut DMH from 1987-1991. He chaired the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health in 2002-2003. He served as the first behavioral health representative on the board of The Joint Commission (2007-2015) and chaired its Standards and Survey Procedures Committee. He has served as a member of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention since it was created in 2010, co-chairing task forces on clinical care and interventions and crisis care.. He is a member of the NIMH National Mental Health Advisory Council. Previously, he served on the NIMH Council (1994-1998), as President of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (2003-2005) and as Board President of NASMHPD's Research Institute (1989-2000). His awards for national leadership include recognition by the National Governor's Association, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Campaign for Mental Health Reform, the American College of Mental Health Administration and the American Psychiatric Association. He is a graduate of Cornell University, and earned a MS degree from the State University College in Brockport NY, and a Ph.D. from Syracuse University.

**Deborah Johnson, DNP, MS, RN, NP, PMHNP-BC, FAANP**, Health Sciences Clinical Professor, UCSF School of Nursing, Co-director UC Multicampus Postmasters PMHNP Program, is a board-certified psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner (PMHNP), specialized in child and adolescent behavioral health. She is a Health Sciences Clinical Professor at the University of California San Francisco, and co-director of the UC Multicampus PMHNP Postmasters program. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (FAANP), past president of International Society of Psychiatric Nurses (2019-22) and past president of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA), California Chapter (2012-15). Her research focuses on expanding access to Mental Health Services in rural and underserved regions by expanding workforce education and training through teleprecepting. She serves on telehealth taskforces for National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty (NONPF), APNA, and the HRSA-funded [National Telehealth Educator Toolkit](#).

**Alex Karydi, PhD, LMFT, CAC, CASAC**, is currently serving as the Director of State and Community Initiatives at the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, the only federally supported resource center devoted to advancing the implementation of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. She has a Ph.D. in Clinical Sexology and a Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Therapy. She has worked in various systems, including school systems, the justice system, social services, and behavioral health, providing care as a therapist, grant writer, and program manager. In 2015, she was appointed as the Program Director for the South Carolina Department of Mental Health – Office of Suicide Prevention, where she was responsible for establishing the first state office for suicide prevention and developing the state school suicide prevention program. She has also worked as a Program Director for both Project 2025 at the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, a nationwide initiative to reduce the U.S.'s annual rate of suicide by 20 percent by 2025 and at Callen-Lorde Community Center, a global leader in LGBTQ healthcare in New York. Alex's clinical interests include lesbian, bisexual, and queer women's health; transgender youth; HIV care, addiction treatment, and suicide prevention. In addition, they are a proud parent with the wife of their Queer Deaf child and a bunch of fur babies.

**Saul Levin, MD, MPA, FRCP-E**, is the Chief Executive Officer and Medical Director of the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Prior to assuming his current position, Dr. Levin served in a variety of roles in the private and public sector, including as Interim Director of the District of Columbia's Department of Health (DOH). Prior to his tenure at DOH, Dr. Levin was the Senior Deputy Director of the Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration (APRA). Dr. Levin has served as Vice President of the American Medical Association for Science, Medicine and Public Health, where he focused on health care delivery and disparities. His other professional endeavors include serving as a special expert appointee in the SAMHSA, President for Access Consulting International, and as President and CEO of Medical Education for South African Blacks. In 1982, Dr. Levin received his M.B.B.Ch. (M.D.) from the University Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, and completed his residency in psychiatry at the University of California, Davis, Medical Center. In 1994, he received his master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians – Edinburgh, and Clinical Professor at George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Washington, D.C.

**Ron Manderscheid, Ph.D.**, recently retired from being Executive Director of the National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors. The Association represents county and local authorities in Washington, D.C., and provides a national program of technical assistance and support. He also just retired from being Executive Director of the National Association for Rural Mental Health. Dr. Manderscheid is Adjunct Professor at the Department of Mental Health, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, and Adjunct Professor, School of Social Work, University of Southern California. Dr. Manderscheid serves on the boards of the Cosmos Club, the Employee Assistance Research Foundation, the Danya Institute, the Council on Quality and Leadership, the NASMHPD Research Institute, and the National Register of Health Service Psychologists. He also serves as the Co-Chair of the Coalition for Whole Health. Previously, he served as the Director of Mental Health and Substance Use Programs at the Global Health Sector of SRA International and in several federal leadership roles at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Throughout his career, he has emphasized and promoted peer and family concerns. Dr. Manderscheid is a former Member of the Secretary of Health and Human Services Advisory Committee on Healthy People 2020, Past President of the Federal Executive Institute Alumni Association (FEIAA) Foundation, Past President of FEIAA, past Chair of the American Public Health Association (APHA) Mental Health Section and a past member of the APHA Governing Council. He co-edited *Outcome Measurement in the Human Services: Cross-Cutting Issues and Methods in the Era of Health Reform*, and contributed to *Public Mental Health*. He has also authored numerous scientific and professional publications on services to persons with mental illness and substance use conditions.

**Theresa Nguyen, LCSW**, Vice President of Policy and Programs, Mental Health America. Theresa works to improve access to mental health care through policy and programming. Her areas of special interest include prevention, early intervention, education, and building a full recovery-oriented mental health system of care. Along with supporting MHA's federal and state policy agenda, Theresa manages various programs including MHA Screening, The State of Mental Health in America, and Workplace Wellness. As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, she has over 13 years of experience in mental health as a clinician, educator and advocate. Her clinical experience focused on working with children and adults with serious mental illness, homelessness, dual diagnosis treatment, and early intervention of psychosis. As an advocate she worked to build a consumer based mental health workforce, to improve access to treatment



through community based and recovery oriented mental health programs, and to address needs of underserved communities. She was an adjunct professor in California and North Carolina teaching Mental Health Recovery, Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Social Welfare Policy. Prior to joining MHA National, Theresa worked at both MHALA (Los Angeles, CA) and MHAOC (Orange County, CA).

**Jenifer Urff, JD**, is Director of Knowledge Management and Implementation at the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH), where she leads technical assistance and training activities. Jenifer has extensive experience in project management, policy development, and working across stakeholder communities to build consensus on behavioral health policy and program issues. She has worked closely with SAMHSA and state behavioral health authorities for more than 18 years, managing multiple federal and state contracts to deliver technical assistance, training, and creative products to support recovery, community integration, and trauma-informed practices. Prior to joining MAMH, Jenifer led state technical assistance activities at the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). From 2014-2017, she was Director of Recovery for the MA Department of Mental Health's Western Area, where she managed contracts for the peer-led Recovery Learning Community and Afiya, one of fewer than 20 peer-run respite programs in the country, and established and led a Task Force on Trauma-Informed Approaches. From 2003-2014, Jenifer was Deputy Director of Mental Health at Advocates for Human Potential (AHP). From 1999-2003, she served as Director of Government Relations and then Senior Policy Counsel at NASMHPD. Jenifer is a graduate of the University of North Dakota and the University of Michigan Law School.

**Halaevalu F.O. Vakalahi, MSW, MEd, PhD**, President & CEO, Council on Social Work Education. Halaevalu is a Pacific Islander-American woman, born in Tonga and raised in Hawai'i. To her good fortune, she continues to be nurtured and mentored by phenomenal people from diverse academic spaces, cultures, and communities. For that, she is eternally grateful. Halaevalu is the President and CEO of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Prior to joining CSWE, she was Professor and Dean of the College of Health and Society at Hawai'i Pacific University over the disciplines of social work, public health, nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and physician assistant. Prior to HPU, she was Professor and Associate Dean of the School of Social Work at Morgan State University, Baltimore MD; Associate Professor and MSW Program Director at George Mason University, Fairfax, VA; Lecturer and BSW Coordinator at San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA; Assistant Professor and Department Chair at BYU-Hawai'i, La'ie, HI; and Assistant Professor at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM. She has been blessed to serve in various professional organizations including the Council on Social Work Education and National Association of Social Workers as well as in her Pacific Islander community and in communities in which she has lived and worked. Her areas of teaching include social policy, human behavior and the social work environment, and organizational leadership. Her two areas of scholarship are: Pacific Islander culture and community, and Women of Color in academia, in which she has contributed extensively to the existing literature through peer-reviewed articles, chapters/references, co-edited/co-authored books, and other communication mediums. She hopes that her work has acknowledged her deep commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion as actions that ultimately impact family and community well-being. Her eclectic educational background with a B.S. in Business Management (BYU-Hawai'i), MSW (University of Hawai'i-Manoa), and M.Ed. and PhD in Social Work (University of Utah), have informed her leadership, scholarship, teaching, and service which she hopes has forwarded social and economic justice in some small way.

**Adriane Van Zwoil, MJ, MSW, LCSW**, is a Senior Program Manager with the National School Based Health Alliance. She has worked in the school-based health care field at the local, state, and national level since 2011. As a clinical social worker and manager of behavioral health services at a local SBHC, she was able to provide direct clinical services and expand behavioral health programming, including the introduction of alternative to suspension programs and a calm room. Ms. Van Zwoil also served on the Illinois School-Based Health Alliance Steering Committee for several years. Ms. Van Zwoil is passionate about working with adolescents and increasing access to mental health care. Prior to working in the school-based health center field, she began her career in child welfare and juvenile justice, providing children and families with the much-needed support as a case manager, program manager, and therapist. Ms. Van Zwoil is a graduate of Western Michigan University (Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of Arts-Criminal Justice, 2006), University of Michigan (Master of Social Work, 2007), Loyola University Chicago (Master of Jurisprudence in Children's Law & Policy, 2014), has a certificate in School Discipline Reform also from Loyola University Chicago, and is currently pursuing her PhD in Social Work from Loyola University Chicago.