



**Together  
Venture** Diversity  
Equity  
Inclusion



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## IN THIS ISSUE



### Page 1

Mental Health Awareness Month  
Diversity Quote of the Month



### Page 2

Mental Health Awareness Month  
continued  
Speech and Hearing Month



### Page 3

People's Gathering  
Join Together Venture  
Other observed holidays the month  
of May

## DIVERSITY QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Diversity and inclusion, which are the  
real grounds for creativity, must  
remain at the center of what we do.

~ Marco Bizzarri

## Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental illness, it's rather common. The National Center for Health Statistics reports that the number of visits to physician offices with mental disorders as the primary diagnosis is 55.7 million. The number of individuals that utilize emergency departments with mental, behavioral, and neurodevelopmental disorders as the primary diagnosis is 4.9 million. Sadly, the number of suicide deaths is 45,979. Why is mental healthcare not more common? Why are there disparities in some communities that need support?

In reviewing the American Psychiatric Association's (APA) fact sheets, it becomes clear that mental healthcare is not equal. In 2015, among adults with any mental illness, 48% of whites received mental health services compared to 31% of blacks and Hispanics and 22% of Asians. Indigenous populations have disproportionately higher rates of mental health problems than the rest of the population with low mental health service utilization rates. Poor utilization of mental health services is typically attributed to stigmatization of mental illness, lack of culturally trained providers, and lack of available services.



The stigmatization of mental illness among some minority groups may prevent individuals from seeking support. Some minority groups perceive mental health issues as problems to be overcome using willpower and mental toughness. The result is delaying treatment until symptoms become severe and the person feeling as though they are weak-willed.

The lack of culturally trained providers can result in racial prejudices as a result of unconscious/implicit biases. Discrimination by healthcare providers in the form of microaggressions or stereotyping can reduce adherence to treatment and lead to the discontinuation of treatment ([www.medicalnewstoday.com](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com)). For example, the APA noted that compared with non-Hispanic whites with the same symptoms, African Americans are more frequently diagnosed with schizophrenia and less frequently diagnosed with a mood disorder. The APA also noted that physician-patient communication differed between non-Hispanic whites and African Americans. Physicians were 23% more verbally dominant and engaged in 33% less patient-centered communications.

*Continue Page 2*

## Mental Health Awareness Month

*Continue from page 1*

The lack of services available is most likely a result of residential segregation that persist today. Residential segregation is associated with high levels of poverty, lack of access to jobs and education, and lower investments in infrastructure. This resulted in Black neighborhoods having fewer hospitals and under-resourced facilities, which creates an obstacle to receiving mental health services ([www.medicalnewstoday.com](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com)).

So what can we do? We need to normalize seeking mental healthcare services as we would medical services. We need to become culturally competent and aware of our implicit biases. We as direct care professionals, managers, directors, clinicians and administrative staff interact with multiple people of various backgrounds. We need to support each other as rates of depression and anxiety have only increased as a result of the current pandemic. Although more work needs to be done to address structural racism/residential segregation, healthcare professionals' implicit biases and cultural stigma, we can be the first person to support/accept a person with mental illness. Together Venture, it's not just a tag line.

Kevin T. Hughes  
Vice President of Clinical Services  
References

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/why-mental-healthcare-is-less-accessible-to-marginalized-communities>

## Speech and Hearing Month

Founded in 1927 as "National Hearing Week", expanded to "Better Hearing Month" in 1958 and recognized as "Better Hearing and Speech Month" in 1972, May has become Speech and Hearing Awareness Month.

Did you know that speech disorders affect over 11.5% of the U.S. population? Worldwide there are approximately 18.5 million people. We classify these disorders as fluency, voice, and articulation and can be further broken down into speech impairments.



Under the guidance of a Speech Language Pathologist, people can work to improve many of the communication disorders in young children. Adults who have suffered a speech impediment caused by stroke, head injury, and other medical conditions, can benefit from services provided by a Speech Language Pathologist as well.

When it comes to hearing, approximately 2-3 out of 1,000 children born, have a detectable hearing loss in one or both ears.

There is a direct correlation in a hearing deficit and the ability to understand and process speech and language. This has a huge impact on in people in:

- Communication
- Education
- Employment
- Social isolation

An Audiologist can assist in a treatment plan to improve the hearing loss. While hearing loss can be a natural part of aging due to loud noises over the years, you can minimize it by protecting your ears. By wearing earplugs or headphones while using loud equipment such as lawn mowers, and minimizing the extended use of ear buds or headphones while listening to loud music, you can control the amount of damage done to your ears. Restoration of hearing cannot occur once there is a loss, only the improvement of hearing with the use of hearing aids and other technologies.

Laurie Reynolds  
Associate Vice President of Operations

## Peoples Gathering

On May 20, 2022, Together Venture, the Venture D.E.I. (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) team hosted its inaugural People's Gathering. 16 members were able to attend to discuss a variety of important D.E.I. topics.

The event was designed to give the team an opportunity to analyze challenges that exist in Venture's workforce culture and propose possible solutions regarding communication, gender roles, religion and time management. These topics were inspired by a variety of sources from previous employee relations issues to topics that have been brought up in trainings and staff meetings.

Findings and the suggested solutions to the challenging topics will be presented in the near future.



## JOIN Together venture

If you want to participate in an energetic, game-changing team and make a difference in Venture's workforce culture, then you are an ideal candidate to join Together Venture! If interested, please email us at: [together@venturecs.org](mailto:together@venturecs.org)



## Other observed holidays in the month of May

- **Asian Pacific American Heritage Month** in the United States. The month of May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks on the project were Chinese immigrants.
- **Older Americans Month**, established in 1963 to honor the legacies and contributions of older Americans and to support them as they enter their next stage of life.
- **Jewish American Heritage Month**, which recognizes the diverse contributions of the Jewish people to American culture.
- **Haitian Heritage Month** is a nationally recognized month and an opportunity for individuals including Haitians and lovers of the Haitian culture to celebrate the rich culture, distinctive art, delicious food and learn the traditions of Haiti and its people. The celebration is an expansion of the Haitian Flag Day on May 18th, a major patriotic day celebration in Haiti and the Diaspora created to encourage patriotism.
- **South Asian Heritage Month** is the name given to the month-long celebration in United Kingdom to celebrate the heritage of people with roots in the South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives.
- **Personal History Awareness Month**. The month of May is set aside by personal historians as the month to generate awareness about the importance of personal history. During the month of May we encourage people to do something to preserve their personal and/or family history.
- **Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month** the Library of Congress, National Archives and Records Administration, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Gallery of Art, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum join in paying tribute to the generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders who have enriched America's history and are instrumental in its future success.
- **Older Americans Month** recognizes the contributions of older adults across the nation.