



# PRO BONO COUNSELING

Your Mental Health Connection

## THE CONNECTION | MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | JULY 2022

### Recognizing BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month

The month of July is designated as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Mental Health Awareness Month to recognize the unique struggles underrepresented groups continue to face when seeking mental health care, treatment, and resources. Research shows that members of BIPOC communities are less likely to have access to mental health services due to a number of barriers. These barriers can include systemic racism and discrimination, language barriers, cultural stigma regarding seeking mental health treatment, and an absence of cultural competency by mental health providers.



those in need. We understand the importance of connecting clients to therapists that are a good match, taking into consideration preferences for a clinician's cultural background, counseling expertise, gender, and therapy style, among other factors. PBC has two bilingual staff members and more than 80 multilingual licensed mental health professional volunteers. Interpretation and translation services are available as well at no cost.

Pro Bono Counseling (PBC) is committed to providing access to mental health services for underserved populations in Maryland and providing culturally and linguistically appropriate care to

PBC is also committed to providing continuing education to Maryland's mental health providers to improve services for BIPOC clients. Throughout this past year, we have held continuing education workshops on diverse topics like cultural competency, limited English proficient populations, gender expansiveness, interracial couples and therapy, and transgender clients.

### Donor Gives in Memory of Sister, a Mental Health Counselor

Thank you to Jani Bedrick, who recently gave to Pro Bono Counseling in memory of her sister, Miffi Bedrick, a mental health counselor.

"Miffi was passionate about her work and adored by all," stated Jani. "She was a beautiful person, inside and out, an advocate for peace who was very generous and giving."

Miffi, who passed away in 2016, was originally from Massachusetts, having attended Boston University, before settling in Montgomery County, Maryland. She worked as an elementary school counselor in Prince George's County and also had a private practice.

Miffi was also a singer, model, and actress, appearing in film roles and commercials, and was a member of the Screen



Miffi Bedrick and her 22 year old cat Tammy

Actors' Guild. She had great compassion for the homeless as well as for animals, living as a vegan and helping with their wellbeing and rescue.

To honor Miffi's work and ensure that children have access to mental health care, Jani plans to continue to donate in her memory.

### PBC Resource Corner: 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

A new easy-to-remember number to reach the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available now nationwide -- If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text 9-8-8 or chat 988Lifeline.org. 988 connects you with a trained crisis counselor who can help.



When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources as necessary.

The 988 number is not replacing but

is in addition to the previous Lifeline phone number (1-800-273-8255), which will remain available to anyone in emotional distress or suicidal crisis.

This new resource number is seen as an important advancement for mental health resources. In the longer term, the vision of the program is to further build a complete crisis care response system across the country that links callers to community-based providers who can deliver a full range of crisis care services, if needed, in addition to connecting callers to tools and resources that will help prevent future crisis situations.

### Upcoming Continuing Education Workshops

Don't miss these upcoming continuing education workshops (online unless indicated). Mark your calendar and register to attend today!

#### August 17 - Introduction to Pro Bono Counseling: Clinical Applications for Volunteers

One (1) CE credit  
Presenters: Amy Greensfelder, LMSW; Sherri Bloom, LCSW-C; Alexa Biddle

#### September 9 - Language Access and Inclusion for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Individuals

Two (2) CE Credits  
Presenter - Staci M. Rensch, PhD

#### September 14 - TMS Fundamentals: What Every Therapist Needs to Know

One (1) CE Credit  
Presenter - Hanita Chhabra, MD

#### October 14 - Effectively Supporting Children's Mental Health

1.5 CE Credits  
Presenter - Phyllis Fagell, LCPC

#### October 26 - Supporting LGBTQIA+ Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence

1.5 CE Credits  
Presenter - Dominic Goodall

For more information on PBC's continuing education workshops or to register to attend, please visit the [Events and Workshop](#) page on our website.

### Service of Distinction Award

Pro Bono Counseling (PBC) team member Zainab Sohail was selected as one of Maryland Non-profits Service with Distinction Awardees. Each awardee is recognized for delivering commitment, integrity, compassion, and care for their organizations and their communities.



Zainab Sohail

As PBC's Office Assistant, Zainab is the first person clients engage with when they call. She assures that the highest level of confidentiality is maintained throughout their time with PBC and eases their concerns about their ability to access free quality mental health care.

Award recipients will be honored at the organization's 30th anniversary event on July 28.