

**Report on Cultural and Linguistic Competence  
Vermont SAMHSA CMHS Youth in Transition  
Grant for the period January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

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Report Contents

1. Major Activities and Accomplishments during this Period

This first part of the second year was very busy and rich with many accomplishments and continuing efforts around Cultural and Linguistic Competency (CLC) locally and at the state level:

The major CLC activities for this period include:

- Minority attendance at the Young Adult Voice Movement Conference.
- Community meetings and efforts to address disparities.
- CLC trainings and conferences.

One of the most important accomplishments was to be able to have approximately seventy-five minority young adults at the Young Adult Voice Movement Conference on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Collaborations with **Jeanine Bunzigiye** (former Burlington School District Home School Liaison), **Tuipate Mubiay** (Howard Center Diversity Coordinator), **Wanda Hines** (Community and Economic Development Office Legacy Project Coordinator) and **Katherine Helm** (Winooski School District Student Learning and Regulatory Compliance Director); among others, allowed us to reach out and recruit a large number of minority young adults. In addition to the level of minority participation at the conference, we were able to identify two young adults who later on joined us at the Training Institutes Conference in Maryland. One of these two young adults, **Iris Jusufagic**, led the Diversity Conversation at the Young Adult Voice Movement Conference using the *Speak Up!* book that the *Southern Poverty Law Center* donated for every conference participant.

In the CLC Action Plan for this part of the year we discussed conducting a Mental Health Interpreter training in Vermont; but after several meetings with local groups and the Interpreter Task Force we realized that the available trainings did not meet Vermont's specific needs. Consequently, both **Karin Hammer-Williamson** (CVAHEC Education Resource Coordinator) and I were asked by the Interpreter Task Force of Vermont and the Refugee Health Committee to gather information about how mental health interpreter needs are being handled in practices, community health centers, and other settings. We had an opportunity to give input to a mental health interpreter training curriculum being developed by Cross Cultural Communication Services, Inc.(CCCS, Inc.) this summer. We were also interested in understanding what resources individuals and organizations have to share and what are needed to help the mental health care system, including primary care and delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate services in Vermont. We proposed asking key mental health providers the following questions:

1. What are the mental health needs/issues/concerns for and among Limited English Proficiency (LEP) clients? (As perceived by service providers)
2. How much and how often are LEP clients accessing mental health services?
3. How often and what kind of interpreting services are being utilized when working with LEP clients? (In-person vs. telephonic)
4. What resources do service providers have for training interpreters?

5. What are the training needs among mental health service providers about working with LEP clients?

We additionally conducted research on the appropriateness and outcomes of in person mental health interpreter vs. telephone, video and bilingual providers. Among the resources researched, we examined SAMHSA's list of information about mental health interpreter curriculum tools.

In addition to the work on Mental Health Interpreting, the Youth In Transition grant co-sponsored the spring/summer Bridging the Gap Interpreters' trainings. The grant contributed \$1500 to the already raised funding by CVAHEC and the Association of Africans Living in Vermont (AALV). Furthermore, Cultural and Linguistic Competence technical assistance funding was used to buy two copies of the new CCCS Mental Health Interpreting manuals and DVDs (volumes 1-4), the Art of Medical Interpretation manuals and DVDs and the Introduction to the Art of Medical Interpretation manuals and DVDs (High School version). These last materials for high school students were developed as a two-year program of study so that bilingual students can develop skills today that will allow them to pursue healthcare interpretation as a future profession or as a professional anchor as they work their way through college.

All of the materials above will allow CVAHEC, AALV, the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program (VRRP) and the Youth In Transition grant to collaborate in providing Interpreters' training while reducing the costs associated with training licensing. These partnerships between the Youth In transition grant and local providers will furthermore enable us to evaluate how to strengthen Vermont interagency collaborations to reach national standards for cultural and linguistic competency in mental health and health care.

Finally, I was part of the team that reviewed the AmeriCorps applications for FY 2011. The AmeriCorps program had a great response with 20 organizations requesting over 30 members (full and part time). This year, the program focused on Cultural Competency and applicants had to answer, among other questions, the following:

- 1- What efforts has your organization made to increase cultural competence (creating a diversity statement, changing policies, outreach methods, hiring diverse staff, etc.)?
- 2- What have been the key challenges to increasing cultural competence in your organization?

Among other CLC activities, I was able to reach out, meet and/or start networking with representatives of other organizations and service providers who work with culturally and linguistically diverse populations in the state:

- **Patrick Brown**, Greater Burlington Multicultural Resource Center founder and GBMRC Diversity Conference organizer.
- **Hal Colston**, *NeighborKeepers* founder.
- **Mediha Jusufagic**, Vermont Bosnia and Herzegovina Family and Youth Association founder, and director of the Lilies of Bosnia folk group.
- **Patricia Nelson-Johnson**, Vulnerable and Minority Populations Consultant, Vermont Department of Health.
- **Michael Schirling**, Burlington Chief of Police.
- **Beth Truzansky**, Coordinator Community and Neighborhood Services, Center for Community and Neighborhood Services, Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO).

## 2. Problems

Cultural and Linguistic Competence is a learning continuum and as such regions have reflected different levels of CLC. Additionally, regional needs around CLC vary dramatically and it will be necessary to accommodate these needs when professional development opportunities take place.

It is worth mentioning that I have had several requests from regions and local and state agencies to provide CLC trainings/technical assistance at their sites. There is also interest in conducting both individual and organizational CLC self-assessments. This clearly indicates a willingness to learn, but most importantly; interest in adapting strategies in order to reach out to minority young adults, address regional CLC issues and start conversations that will allow us to reduce disparities in Vermont.

## 3. Significant Findings and Events

A significant finding was to identify young adult minority leaders who are interested in making positive changes in the lives of other immigrant and refugee young adults in the state. **XiaoJun (Junie) Huang** joined the Chittenden Youth In Transition Leadership team last June and attended their monthly meeting providing essential input in strategies to reach out to young adults. **Iris Jusufagic** will join the Chittenden team in the fall.

Another significant event was to be the opening speaker for Howard Center's Diversity Fair on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Diversity Fair is an annual event organized by Howard Center's Diversity Coordinator **Tuipate Mubiay** as a celebration of our community's diversity. The fair features community organizations that work with minority groups, traditional food from different countries and local performances. This year's features included dance and performances by: Soriba Simba Camara of Guinea, Lilies of Bosnia, Jeh Kulu African Dance Group, Bhutanese and Burmese Dancers, Anne Whiting Clogger and Stepper - Dancers from Burlington Schools, among other activities. Moments from Howard Center's Diversity Fair were recorded by Channel 17 and aired several times in July. It can also be accessed at <http://www.cctv.org/node/94777>

## 4. Dissemination activities

I was invited to present a workshop on Mental Health and migrant farmworkers as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Farmworker Conference. The conference was organized by UVM's Migrant Education Extension and held in Middlebury College on Saturday, April 24, 2010. The workshop presented was part of the health care track and focused on topics related to mental health. Topics included: race and class, farmworker population demographics, health issues and stressors associated with the migrant farmworker lifestyle, importance of CLC and recommendations to improve the comprehensive health care of migrant farmworkers in Vermont.

I developed a CLC training for mental health clinicians (please see attachment 1 with training outline and objectives). This training will be offered to the twelve regions and other local and state agencies as requested.

## 5. Other Activities

I conducted the following training:

- *Towards Cultural and Linguistic Competency in Mental Health* – Farmworkers Conference – Middlebury College – April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010

I participated in the following trainings/conferences:

- CLC Community of Practice - *Listening Session on Learning Needs for Cultural and Linguistic Competence at Training Institutes* - January 12th, 2010
- Urban Institute – webcast: “*Facing our future: Children in the Aftermath of Immigration Enforcement*” - February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010
- CyraCom International - webinar titled “*Language Services and Patient Safety: How to Engage Physicians and Staff*” featuring The Joint Commission and Memorial Health System – February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- Cities of Migration – webinar: “*Making the Grade: Integration Through Education in Toronto and Zürich*” – March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010
- Greater Burlington Multicultural Resource Center Conference – 2010 Diversity Conference – March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- *The Garrett Lee Smith State and Tribal Suicide Prevention Grantee Meeting* – March 15th-18th, 2010 – Las Vegas, Nevada – (attended conference as part of the Vermont GLS Youth Suicide Prevention Project) Workshops attended:
  - o Diversity and Cultural Challenges in Suicide Prevention
  - o Adapting Programs from the SPRC/AFSP Best Practices Registry for Diverse Communities
  - o Suicide Prevention in the Juvenile System
  - o The Utility of Using Multiple Data Sources for Suicide Prevention Evaluation
  - o Using the Strategic Planning Framework (SPF) for Suicide Prevention Planning

I completed a related graduate class at UVM:

- Challenges of Multiculturalism in Social Services and Educational Institutions – Spring 2010.

#### 6. Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

Activities planned for the July 1<sup>st</sup>- December 31<sup>st</sup> 2010 period include:

- Providing input for a Mental Health Interpreters Trainings, working together with the Interpreters Task Force and key local agencies.
- Organizing CLC trainings for mental health providers in at least two of the twelve Vermont regions.

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- Creating the Technical Assistance/Social Marketing/Cultural and Linguistic Competence young adult advisory committee/council//board together with the two Young Adult Coordinators and other young adults from the regions.

- SEMI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

COVER SHEET

1. Grant Number: 03150-5225
2. Grantee Name and Address:  
Howard Center, 208 Flynn Avenue, Suite 3J, Burlington, VT 05401
3. Telephone Number: (802) 488-6600
4. Project Title: Culturally-Competent Planning and Leadership for Vermont's Youth in Transition Grant
5. Period of Performance: January 1, 2010 thru June 30, 2010
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7. Period Covered by Report: January 1, 2010 thru June 30, 2010
8. Author's Name and Telephone number: Mercedes Avila – 802-999-4985
9. Date of report: July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010
10. Comments (if any):

Attachment 1

**Towards Cultural Competency in Mental Health**

**Learning Objectives**

At the conclusion of this training, participants will be able to:

1. Increase self-awareness of racial, ethnic and class biases
2. Define cultural and linguistic competency and become familiar with the stages of cultural competency (or continuum)
3. Explain how cultural beliefs shape clinical encounters
4. Understand the impact culturally competent services can have in the clinical outcomes of refugee and/or immigrant consumers
5. Discuss the implications of demographic trends for health disparities

**Agenda**

Introductions (15')

Discussion on race, culture and class background (30')

"Race the Power of an Illusion" DVD and group activity (30')

Cultural and linguistic competence: definitions, principles and elements (30')

"Unnatural Causes...is inequality making us sick?" DVD and group activity (30')

Discussion of data and research on health disparities (25')

Questions, wrap up and evaluations (20')