

UMass Medical School Department of Psychiatry, Systems and Psychosocial Advances Research Center (SPARC). Amanda provides support on multiple research studies focused on improving the education and employment goals of young adults with lived experience. Amanda travels nationally to help inform audiences about the importance of meaningful youth voice and partnership with young adults in research, and oversees the Transitions ACR National Youth Advisory Board, where she supports young adults across the nation in developing leadership skills and using their voices to change the mental health system.



Immigration and PTSD:

The Intersection and Impact on Trauma Treatment

by Paola Contreras, PsyD (See bio of Keynote Panelist Nilda Laboy, PsyD Below)

Immigration and Trauma have both been widely discussed recently as politics and immigration policies have brought debates about the psychological consequences of how immigrants are treated in the United States. In this workshop, Paola will discuss her perspective as an expert and experienced professional working with victims of human trafficking, political persecution, and also those seeking assylum in the United States.

About the Presenter: Dr. Contreras is an Assistant Professor in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Department at William James College. For over ten years, Dr. Contreras has trained providers on the psychological consequences of trauma, including human trafficking, political persecution, and war. She is an experienced evaluator for individuals petitioning for asylum under a variety of U.S. immigration relief programs such as T-Visas, U-Visas, stays of deportation, and VAWA among others. At William James College, Dr. Contreras teaches classes on trauma, psychotherapy, research, and Latino Mental Health. Dr. Contreras is also the lead researcher of William James College's Human Trafficking Community Research Hub, where she is the principal investigator on studies related to human trafficking in the United States. She formerly served as a co-chair of the APA's Committee on Women in Psychology and was a member of the APA's Task Force on the Human Trafficking of Women and Girls. Dr. Contreras received a psychology degree from Universidad Landívar in Guatemala City and a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. She completed her clinical and research post-doctoral training at the Cambridge Health Alliance/Harvard Medical School's Program for Psychotherapy. In 2014, Dr. Contreras was the recipient of the APA's Emerging Leader for Women in Psychology award.

Keynote Panelist: Nilda Laboy, PsyD



About the presenter: Dr. Laboy is Associate Professor and Chair of the Counseling Department at William James College. She has close to thirty years' experience providing evaluation and treatment of refugees and immigrants, including evaluations of individuals seeking asylum in the U.S. As an adjunct faculty of law with the Georgetown University Center for Advanced Legal Students, she collaborated with faculty attorneys and students involved in cases of asylum petitions, which included testifying in federal court. Dr. Laboy did her predoctoral internship and was a staff member at an inpatient evaluation and treatment facility on the grounds of St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, DC that provided services to immigration detainees, mostly Cubans from the Mariel boatlift. In her practice in the Northern Virginia area, she provided assessment and psychotherapy services to refugees and immigrants, mainly from Central America. She has continued working with immigrants in Massachusetts, mainly those involved with the criminal justice system. In 2014, as part of her work with the federal Disaster Medical Assistance Team – MA1, she was deployed to Oklahoma for two weeks to evaluate unaccompanied minors during the massive immigration of that summer. At William James College, in addition to her administrative duties, she teaches courses in clinical practice (internship seminar), ethics, assessment, psychopathology and Latino mental health. Dr. Laboy has a PsyD in Clinical Psychology from Carlos Albizu University in San Juan, PR. She is member of MARIACES, ACES, ACA, MaMHCA, APA and MPA.



Mind-Body Interventions:

EMDR, EFT, and Other Mind-Body Interventions with Trauma Survivors

by Meg Connor, MA, LMHC

This workshop will focus on a more in-depth review of using mind-body interventions, such as EMDR, Mindfulness, Yoga, DBT, Energy Psychology, and other modalities in clinical work with trauma survivors.

About the Presenter: Meg is Associate Director of Field Training for the Division of Counseling Psychology at Lesley University since 2014, and has taught and supervised graduate counseling students at Lesley and Antioch for over 14 years. Her clinical experience includes colleges, community-based agencies, and private practice where her clinical specialty is working with trauma survivors using mind-body interventions. She was a founding staff member of the Kripalu Center, a holistic health center, where she remained on staff for 20 years.



Emotional Freedom Techniques - EFT®: An Introduction and Review of EFT for Trauma Treatment

by Caitlin Williams, MEd, LMHC

Emotional Freedom Techniques or 'EFT®' is a powerful energy therapy that involves tapping on acupuncture points to relieve emotional distress. This technique is based on the belief that a disruption in our energy system is the cause of negative emotions. It has been shown to be very effective in the rapid treatment of phobias, anxiety, depression, PTSD and more.

About the Presenter: Caitlin is a psychotherapist in private practice in Arlington, Massachusetts. She is a co-founder of 'Energy Therapy Associates' an organization for the purpose of training interested individuals and health care professionals in EFT. In their work, Energy Therapy Associates were trained in a variety of energy therapy techniques, and found that EFT has been the most user-friendly, both for the therapist and the client.