



[www.LASuicidePreventionNetwork.org](http://www.LASuicidePreventionNetwork.org)

10th Annual Summit  
Thursday, September 10, 2020

Hope, Transformation, Wellbeing: The Hero in Each of US: Finding Your Role in Suicide Prevention

DAY 2 PROGRAM

**Keynote Speaker 8:45 a.m.-9:30 a.m.**

**“Never give up: Finding strength in our vulnerabilities, our shortcomings and yes, even in our failures.”**

**Angela Padilla** is a passionate mental health advocate. Angela's commitment is rooted in her personal experience with mental health. For nearly forty years, Angela's mother has lived with bipolar and schizoaffective disorders. As a



result, Angela became an avid consumer of mental health information at a young age, which motivated her to earn a degree in Psychology. She learned that even in the age of the internet, accurate and reliable mental health information could be difficult for consumers to find.

As part of her advocacy, Angela publicly shares her unique perspectives and experiences with a diverse range of audiences by speaking at schools, to community organizations, and at special events. Before establishing FundaMental Change, Angela worked as an Assistant Vice President/LR Manager for Bank of America.

Angela was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley. She graduated from Canoga Park High School, earned an Associate's degree from Los Angeles Pierce College and a Bachelor's degree from California State University Northridge. Angela lives in the San Fernando Valley with her husband Secretary of State Alex Padilla and their three sons.

SESSION ONE-9:40 A.M.-11:10 A.M.

**Safety & Suicide- “Safety isn’t always safe, you can find one on every gun.” Safety planning and reducing access to lethal means. Reforming intervention and focusing on de-escalation**

**Dr. Mike Anestis** is the Executive Director of the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center and an Associate Professor of Urban-Global Public Health in the School of Public Health at Rutgers. He received his bachelor's degree from Yale University in 2002 and his PhD in psychology from Florida State in 2011.



Dr. Anestis has been a named investigator on approximately \$5 million in externally funded suicide prevention grants including serving as the PI on one of the first randomized controlled trials of lethal means counseling for firearm owning service members – Project Safe Guard. He served on the means safety task force for the Defense Suicide Prevention Office and the lethal means line of effort for the PREVENTS task force. Dr. Anestis currently serves on the research advisory board for the American Foundation for Firearm Injury Reduction in Medicine (AFFIRM) and chairs the firearms and suicide committee for the American Association of Suicidology (AAS). In 2018, Dr. Anestis was the recipient of the Edwin Shneidman Award from AAS, designating him as the scientist under age 40 and within 10 years of having received his or her degree whose research has made the greatest impact on suicide prevention.

Dr. Anestis' research focuses on risk for

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suicide, both within the military and among civilians, with a particular emphasis on the role of firearms. He has published over 140 peer reviewed scientific articles as well as a recent book entitled Guns and Suicide: An American Epidemic. Dr. Anestis seeks to better understand who is most at risk for firearm suicide, how factors such as firearm storage practices and firearm beliefs may influence risk, and how to diminish suicide risk among firearm owners. Along these lines, Dr. Anestis recently led Project Safe Guard, a large randomized trial of lethal means counseling for firearm-owning members of the National Guard as an effort to examine how to effectively prompt meaningful and sustained changes in firearm storage behavior among service members. Dr. Anestis is also interested in better understanding who has been driving the surge in firearm purchasing behavior during COVID-19, what their motivations are, and to what extent such individuals may require different interventions to reduce their risk for problematic outcomes. Lastly, Dr. Anestis has been particularly interested in better understanding how best to develop persuasive messaging around firearm storage behavior so as to more effectively reach firearm owners who store their firearms unsafely. His work in this area focuses on who is delivering the message, how the content of the message is structured, and in what manner the message is received.

**SESSION TWO 11:20 A.M.-12:50 P.M**

**Violence & Suicide-**



**“Connections between multiple forms of violence.”  
Examining the intersections between intimate partner violence, child abuse and suicide across the lifespan.**

**Andrea Welsing** is a public health leader with over 25 years of experience working collaboratively with multiple sectors and community partners to develop, implement and evaluate public health programs, including more than 15 years managing violence

prevention efforts. Her work has addressed violence in all forms, starting with oversight of a hospital-based sexual assault and domestic violence program and leading to her role as Director of the Injury and Violence Prevention Program for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) where she provided oversight and strategic direction for the county’s participation in the Violent Death Reporting System and the Trauma Prevention Initiative.

In September 2019, she was appointed to serve as the Director of the County Office of Violence Prevention where she is responsible for coordinating a comprehensive approach to violence prevention across multiple sectors and government agencies to ensure an effective countywide response to violence and trauma. Ms. Welsing received her Master’s degree in Public Health from the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), and a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from the University of California Berkeley.

**Nicolle Perras** has worked at the intersections of public and mental



health for 20 years conducting research, data surveillance, program development and evaluation. Her areas of expertise include suicide prevention, mental and behavioral health, the impact of trauma on health and wellbeing, trauma informed care and healthcare utilization, vicarious trauma and staff wellbeing, and connecting the dots between multiple forms of violence. She has served on the Los Angeles County Suicide Prevention Network (LASPN) since its inception 10 years ago. Nicolle currently works for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, as a Health Program Analyst for the Office of Women’s Health addressing the prevention of gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, sexual violence, human trafficking and the commercial and sexual exploitation of children). She examines these public health issues through their intersections with mental health, chronic disease management, healthcare utilization, trauma informed service delivery and systems, and overall population health and wellness. Nicolle received her BA and MPH from UCLA, and is also a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in Los Angeles, California.

**SESSION THREE 1:20 P.M.-2:50 P.M**

**Youth & Suicide-  
“Keeping the Brain in Mind”  
Restoring the Whole Child**



**Mr. Carlos Alvarez** is the creator of Right Brain Restorative practices, which centers on the individual's right brain psychological capacity. We now know right brain regions significantly influence the valence of an individual's self-regulation and emotional capacity. Mr. Alvarez has developed a Right Brain restorative cartography that supports students through a restorative experience. Mr. Alvarez is also the Founder of the Los Angeles Institute for Restorative Practices LAIRP. LAIRP is a research consulting institute designed to help Los Angeles's high-risk vulnerable populations, educate school administrators, law enforcement, mental health paraprofessionals, and Policy officials on right brain restorative practices. Mr. Alvarez is working to transform a system of punishment and discipline into a system of healing and empowerment. His work and research have added evidence to the field of restorative practices. [www.lairp.org](http://www.lairp.org)

**Closing Remarks**

**Cheryl Karp Eskin** is the Program Director at Teen Line, a teen to teen hotline where teenagers can talk to a trained teen listener about any problem, no matter how big or small. She is also the co-chair of the Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Network. Cheryl started her mental health career at the age of 14 as a Teen Line listener. She has been licensed as a marriage and family therapist since 2002.



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She has worked with adolescents in a variety of settings, including nonpublic school, private practice, and community mental health.

Cheryl is passionate around decreasing the stigma around mental health and depression, and educating parents how to best help their teens. She helped develop an iPhone app (Teen Talk-Helping Teens) to address a need for more support for teens who are struggling. Cheryl regularly speaks with parents and educators on knowing the warning signs of a teen who is struggling, as well as improving communication with teens. Cheryl is a member of the AAS Youth Suicide Prevention Committee, and parent of a teen and tween.

**SESSION FOUR-7:00 P.M.-8:30 P.M.**

**Youth & Suicide-  
“The Kids Are Alright?”  
Exploring the impact of  
pandemic and learning lessons  
in youth resilience**



**Youth Panel Moderator**

**Dr. Daisy Gomez** is the lead trainer for the DMH-UCLA Prevention Center of Excellence within the Division of Population Behavioral Health and Nathanson Family Resilience Center at the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior. A native of Los Angeles, Dr. Gomez received her Master's in Forensic Psychology and Doctor of Education in Counseling Psychology. Dr. Gomez specializes in restorative practices, working with high risk population, adults and families affected by trauma, gang-involvement, the criminal justice system, the foster care system, substance abuse, racial injustice and those affected by incarceration. Dr. Gomez has collaborated with community-based organizations, national organizations, and law enforcement agencies in creating and implementing reformative initiatives to increase education and access to mental health within underserved populations.

**Youth Panel Members**



**Rosa Murillo** is 17 years old and is currently a rising senior at John Marshall High School. She has been actively involved in work centered around reducing the stigma towards mental health. As well as advocating on campus, she also volunteers for Teen Line

with hopes to bring resources back to her community. In the future she hopes to pursue a career in the medical field and eventually open her own private practice.



**Shailen Dawkins** is 19 years old and has just completed his freshman year at San Francisco State University where he is studying Film and Political Science. He has been actively involved in programs

promoting anti-racism and health equity. He aspires to be a social activist through different forms of media and civic education.

**Chris(opher) Anthony** is 18 years old and beginning his sophomore year of university studying Public Health/Public Policy. He has actively contributed to community health initiatives and youth empowerment programs throughout Los Angeles County. His goal is to use his background in community work to tackle health equity deficits.



**Julia Song** is a 19-year-old filmmaker and student from Los Angeles. She began filmmaking in 2016 when she became a Ghetto Film School LA Fellow, where she spent 30 months learning about film and storytelling. Julia is part of Marlborough School's graduating class of 2020, and will continue her studies at the Kanbar Institute of Film & Television at NYU Tisch in the fall of 2021 after electing to take a gap year. Through filmmaking, Julia hopes to voice the narratives of underrepresented stories with authenticity.



**Special thank you for the technical assistance:**

**John Flynn**



**Jullo Miranda**



**National Suicide Hotline  
(800)273-8255**



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**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH**  
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