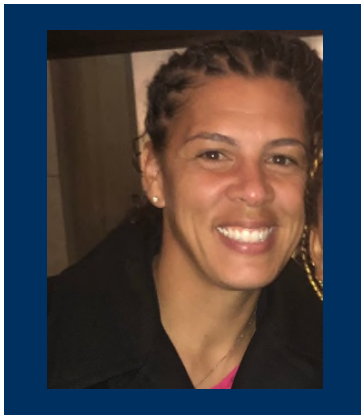


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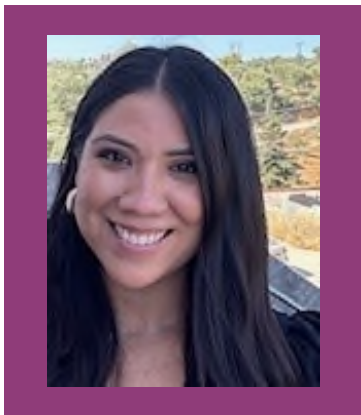
LASPN HERO AWARD WINNERS



DR. SAM CHAN AND DR. JAMES CUNNINGHAM HERO AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP

Honoring an outstanding champion in the suicide prevention field. Their direct actions have strengthened suicide prevention awareness, mental health and stigma reduction, help-seeking, resource delivery, and collective community support.

“Tracie the Trailblazer” 🙌🏽👉 **Tracie Andrews, LCSW** is a program manager for the Department of Mental Health and co-chair of LASPN. Tracie is beyond a doubt a beacon of leadership. As the first one in and the last one out, she is a true trailblazer who wears her heart on her sleeve. Her tenacity and unwavering passion to uplift others make her deserving of the highest honor possible. Tracie's dedication and commitment inspire everyone around her, setting a shining example of what it means to lead with integrity, compassion, and relentless drive. Her impact is profound and far-reaching, touching countless lives and fostering a community of support and empowerment. She is enthusiastic with the ability to energize others to give their very best.



HERO AWARDS FOR COLLABORATION

Honoring an individual or organization that prioritizes effective relationships and collaborations across disciplines to tackle difficult issues related to mental health and suicide prevention.

“Evelyn the Welcomer” 🧑🏻‍🌾🌿 **Evelyn Lemus, LCSW** is a Health Neighborhood Liaison at the Department of Mental Health and the lead for the Interfaith Roundtable Meeting in Service Area 3, which serves the San Gabriel Valley. This collective welcomes participation from all faith-based congregations and mental health providers that strive to recognize the connection between spirituality and mental health as an important component of recovery from mental illness. Evelyn is seen as a leader who is consistent, professional, empathetic, supportive, and “top shelf,” guiding and creating an intentional space with compassion and care. She is passionate about connecting with community and helping address and remove barriers to those seeking mental health services.



“VSRT the Gatherer” 🤝🚨! The **Veterans Suicide Review Team (VSRT)** is a collaboration between Los Angeles County departments (Medical Examiner, Public Health, Mental Health) as well as federal colleagues from Veterans Affairs. VSRT volunteers who contribute their time, resources and skills help decrease veteran suicides in LA County by conducting veteran suicide mortality reviews with the goal of providing recommendations at a county level to improve communication among systems of care. So far, the VSRT has brought together twenty-five critical partners who have participated in the case reviews, providing information on deceased veterans and contributing to improving the responses to address suicide among veterans. This is the first of its kind in the state of California and we have been providing technical assistance to other counties.

HERO AWARD FOR INNOVATION

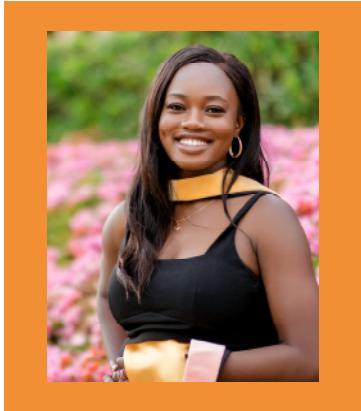
Honoring an individual who has implemented new, exciting, and innovative prevention strategies that are technology-driven, target inequities in communities, address emerging issues, foster previously unused methods of communication, and more.



“Sheri the Creative” 🚀🔧 **Sheri Koller, LCSW, LCSW-C, PPSC, NCSSW**, has over a decade of experience working in school settings as either a mental health clinician or school social worker and has pioneered and streamlined a universal suicide assessment to be utilized across the Long Beach Unified School District which previously did not exist. Ms. Koller is compassionate, kind, considerate of all humans, and is a humanist at heart. She has dedicated her life's work to the world of social work and specifically, the topic of suicide. She deep dives into systems of oppression, looking at barriers to health and overall wellbeing. She is a team player, go-getter, and fully comfortable leaning into the uncomfortable conversations needed to advocate for those in need. Sheri is compassionate, kind, leans into the uncomfortable, and considerate of all humans.

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LASPN HERO AWARD WINNERS



SAM & LOIS BLOOM HERO AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ADVOCACY

Honoring those who have been a dedicated advocate for a specific group or community, including attempt or loss survivors, youth, communities of color, LGBTQI groups, the disabled community, or others with diverse and unique needs.

“Nana the Visionary” 🌟🗺️ **Nana Sarkodee-Adoo** is the Community Capacity Building Specialist at the Office of Violence Prevention. Her ability to think outside the box and turn innovative ideas into tangible results is commendable. This year she spearheaded five Youth Mental Health Summits, authored a report on youth suicide trends, and co-led DPH’s Youth Suicide Rapid Reporting and Crisis Response pilot. Internally, she has been an empathetic leader and advisor to staff, community, and youth, educating on best practices for addressing and discussing suicide. She brings a dual public health and social work lens to healing and wellbeing and consistently centers the needs of others. Her commitment to the LASPN and the larger issue of normalizing discussion of suicide prevention and upstream youth development efforts is unwavering.



DR. ELAINE LEADER AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING YOUTH

The Hero Award for Outstanding Youth is for a young person, council, or youth organization that is advocating, providing outreach, and/or facilitating educational opportunities to enhance suicide prevention efforts.

“Cadee the Resilient” ⚡🏠 **Cadee Baird** is a Teen App volunteer, known by others for her leadership and advocacy among her peers and others impacted by mental health concerns. Cadee uses her empathy, grit, and natural counseling skills to help her reach diverse communities and people in need. Cadee has been a volunteer with the Teen App for over a year and has demonstrated active listening skills, natural intuition, and resiliency. In addition to this work, Cadee excels as a speaker and has presented to multiple graduate level courses at the University of Southern California.



HERO AWARD FOR INSPIRATIONAL MENTORSHIP

The Hero Award for Inspiration Mentor honors an individual within the greater Los Angeles for their heart, extraordinary leadership, perseverance, and advocacy in inspiring future generations of mental health advocates.

“Elisabeth the Nurturer” ❤️🍷 **Elisabeth Nails** is a genuine creative and uplifting mentor to both youth and her colleagues. Her innovative spirit and nurturing guidance have profoundly impacted those around her. Elisabeth’s ability to inspire and support others with her creativity and warmth makes her an invaluable asset to our community. Her dedication to fostering growth and development in others truly sets her apart, and she is wholeheartedly deserving of this recognition. Her vision and passion have made creative arts and wellbeing an integral part of our network and summits.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 HERO AWARD WINNERS!