

## CBHA Recognized by National Behavioral Health Organizations & Congressional MH Caucus for Leadership in the BH Community

Dear Colleagues,

CBHA continues to work to represent the interests of its members and the behavioral health community at large. As an organization that represents behavioral organizations serving over 750 thousand Californians, CBHA has become a resource and authority legislators look to at the federal, state and local level. We are proud to announce that early this week, we were informed by our national affiliate, the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, that CBHA is invited to speak at a bipartisan informational briefing hosted by Cities Thrive Coalition in conjunction with the Congressional Mental Health Caucus on "Building Mental Health Equity in the Wake of COVID-19".



CBHA is also proud to be highlighted in a white paper released by NEXUS (Neuroscience Experts and Cross-Sector Unconventional Stakeholders), which explores the roles of language in the many ways that mental health is understood, experienced, and cared for. Please see below for more information about how CBHA is helping to lead the dialogue about behavioral health in California and beyond.

CBHA is proud to be a part of the behavioral health community and work with our partners to advance the mission of strengthening care for all. There is so much work to do, and CBHA is honored to continue to be at the table to help shape behavioral health policy.

In Service,



Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

## Bipartisan informational briefing hosted by Cities Thrive Coalition in conjunction with the Congressional Mental Health Caucus on "Building Mental Health Equity in the Wake of COVID-19"

In recognition of Minority Mental Health Month, the Cities Thrive Coalition led by NYC First Lady Chirlane McCray will host a bipartisan informational briefing in conjunction with the Mental Health Caucus led by Co-Chair Congresswoman Grace Napolitano (CA-32) on "Building Mental Health Equity in the Wake of COVID-19".



The COVID-19 pandemic has hit communities of color the hardest and has only exacerbated the lack of access to behavioral health care services. City, County, and national leaders will discuss the current mental health needs of communities of color, steps they have taken to increase access to behavioral health services, and why it's critical for local, state, and federal governments to ensure early access and the deliverability of behavioral health services to long underserved communities. CBHA is proud to announce that our Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Le Ondra Clark Harvey has been invited to present at the briefing.

The agenda is as follows:

## Agenda

### - Opening Remarks

- o Congresswoman Grace Napolitano (CA-32), Co-Chair, Congressional Mental Health Caucus
- o NYC First Lady Chirlane McCray, Founder, Cities Thrive Coalition

### - Guest Speakers

- o *Dr. Le Ondra Clark Harvey* – Association Executive for the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Chief Executive Officer of the California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies, and Executive Director of the California Access Coalition
- o Mayor Chokwe Lumumba – Jackson, MS
- o County Manager Julie Morgas Baca – Bernalillo County, NM
- o Young Elder Morris – Healing Youth Ambassador, Baltimore, MD

### - Q&A

### - Closing

The briefing will take place on **Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at 11:00am-12:00pm (PST)**.

Please click the button below to **register**. NOTE: A link to the virtual briefing will be shared after you RSVP.

Briefing  
Registration

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## NEXUS (Neuroscience Experts and Cross-Sector Unconventional Stakeholders) releases this white paper titled "The Language of Mental Health", featuring CBHA's Chief Executive Officer

NEXUS (Neuroscience Experts and Cross-Sector Unconventional Stakeholders) released this white paper titled "The Language of Mental Health" to explore the roles of language in the many ways that mental health is understood, experienced, and cared for. It is not the goal of this paper to advocate for certain language choices but to seek to understand how different people, communities, and stakeholder groups are making critical language decisions. Our belief is that the language of mental health will always remain dynamic and complex, and the best path forward is to commit ourselves to the task of understanding how, why, and to what ends others are selecting terminology. We frame this paper around a series of questions that, based on a wide range of expert interviews, we believe all people should ask themselves as they engage in conversations about mental health.



This paper has been created to capture contributions from NEXUS partners and colleagues. In particular, it reflects conversations, research, and ideas from:

- *Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Ph.d.*
- Jessica Edwards, MPS
- Rakesh Jain, MD, MPH
- Debbie F. Plotnick, MSS, MLSP
- Eric Riddle, MBA and
- Hannah Zeller, MSW

Please click the button below to download the white paper!

NEXUS White  
Paper

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*Press Release from Senator Portantino's Office:*

## Senator Portantino Receives Behavioral Health Champion Award for Steadfast Leadership on Mental Health Policies

On Friday, June 16th, 2021, CBHA presented our annual awards for exemplary service in the behavioral health field to Secretary of State Shirley Weber, Senator Portantino, and Senator Wiener. Please read Senator Anthony Portantino's press release below accepting our recognition.

**Sacramento, California** – Today, Senator Anthony J. Portantino (La Canada – Flintridge) was recognized by the California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA) as a Behavioral Health Champion for his steadfast leadership and advocacy on mental health policies.



**“I see myself as just a dad who has the privilege to advocate for comprehensive mental health policies for families. So, it’s humbling to receive this honor,”** stated Senator Portantino. **“CBHA has been working hard for decades to provide resources and services that improve the mental health of those in need. I am proud to work alongside them to push forward policies that are critical to improving mental health outcomes and positively impact the lives of all our young people.”**

The Behavioral Health Champion Award honors federal and state legislators who have been champions of behavioral health policies across the state and those who have demonstrated a willingness to use their position to fight for the behavioral health needs of Californians by introducing legislation and advancing policy change.

Senator Portantino has a strong record of advocating for mental health policies and has been dedicated to improving youth mental health outcomes during his time in public office. The Senator previously authored SB 972, which required schools to print the suicide hotline on student identification cards. He dedicated three years to pass SB 328, a policy which pushes back start times for middle and high schools. Scientific data and research show that later school start times lead to improved mental health for kids, with reductions in instances of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. For his past work, Senator Portantino received the Children’s Hero Award from the California Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and was recently recognized by Family Services Agency in Burbank.

This year, Senator Portantino authored multiple bills aimed at improving mental health outcomes for youth. SB 224 requires local educational agencies, which currently offer one or more courses in health education to middle or high school students, to include mental health content in those courses. It would also require that the California Department of Education develop a plan to expand mental health instruction in California public schools on or before January 1, 2024. SB 14, also introduced earlier this year by the Senator, requires the California Department of Education to recommend best practices and identify training programs to address youth behavioral health, including but not limited to, staff and pupil training. Additionally, the bill ensures that youth absences from school for mental health issues will be treated as an excused absence in the same way any other health issues are treated.

**“This year’s awardees were no brainers for CBHA,”** stated Dr. Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Chief Executive Officer for CBHA. **“Senator Portantino in particular has been a staunch advocate for promoting prevention, early intervention and treatment of behavioral health disorders. He has been a leader in partnering with local school districts to ensure they have access to training that will enable school personnel and students to recognize the signs and symptoms of a behavioral health issue. He has successfully changed the start time of schools to ensure that students are mentally and physically ready to learn. He has led efforts to ensure that behavioral health excuses from school are dealt with at par with physical health excuses. The list could go on and on, but suffice it to say, he is our champion, and we could not be more proud and supportive of his work. Senator Portantino has consistently showed up for his constituents to push forward legislation that is innovative and beneficial to so many lives. For that, we honor him,”** she added.

The California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies was founded in 1985 and is a statewide association of non-profit agencies dedicated to providing mental health and substance use disorder programs and services to those in need across the state. CBHA promotes comprehensive and integrated service systems by enhancing the ability of nonprofit member agencies to provide behavioral health services that empower the people they serve to lead full and productive lives.

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## Minority Mental Health Awareness Month Resources

Throughout Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, we’re sharing resources, tools and learning opportunities to keep you informed. Here are a few:

- Join California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN) on Tuesday, July 27th at 11 am for a webinar on **access to the Medi-Cal mental health benefit for diverse consumers** enrolled in a

Medi-Cal managed care plan.

- Discover how we can create a unified front against inequity during “**Partnering with Communities of Color to Mitigate COVID-19**” on July 28.
- Explore the relevance of the U.S. education system to the needs of the Black community during “**Live at the Virtual Barbershop: Supporting Black Students in the Classroom**” on August 27.

Learn how you can make a difference this month and every month by visiting the “**Health Equity & Racial Justice**” resource directory.

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*We appreciate UST, long-time **Affinity Member**, for their partnerships that both provide our members exceptional services and sponsor our advocacy efforts.*



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*We appreciate our **Business Associates** for their partnerships that both provide our members exceptional services and sponsor our advocacy efforts.*



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**California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies**

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