

Oakland County Women's Commission Health and Wellness Committee – Progress Report 2008

Introduction

The Health and Wellness Committee of the Oakland County Women's Commission consists of four Commissioners: Chairperson, Dr. Jessica Jenkins, Secretary, Ms. Dianthia Spann, Ms. Cristina Broomfield and Ms. Carla Schwartz. In addition, in order to increase our community impact and productivity, the Health and Wellness Committee recruited members of the community to serve as members at large:

- Ms. Helaine Zack – Oakland County Commissioner and Beaumont Hospital Employee
- Dr. Sonia Pone – Licensed Psychologist and President of the Michigan Psychoanalytic Foundation
- Dr. Jan Tomakowsky – Licensed Psychologist and Chairperson of the Public Education Committee for Michigan Psychological Association
- Ms. Malkia Maisha Newman – Community Educator, Community Network Services
- Ms. Jacqueline Castine – Community Education Specialist, Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority

Additionally, the Health and Wellness Committee was pleased to collaborate with Dr. Judith Kovach, Executive Director of the Michigan Psychological Association and Chairperson of the Steering Committee of the Michigan Partners for Parity.

Accomplishments

The Health and Wellness Committee selected mental health issues as their primary focus. Specifically, the committee sought to address the topic of mental health parity: discrimination, restrictions and limitations on coverage for mental health care. To date, the Health and Wellness Committee has:

- Provided Women's Commission members and committee members with informational brochures (provided by the Michigan Partners for Parity) to promote knowledge and awareness of the mental health parity crisis in the State of Michigan.
- Organized a special topic presentation given by Dr. Kovach to the entire Women's Commission regarding mental health parity.
- Collaborated to draft a resolution to be presented to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners requesting support for mental health parity in Michigan.
- Received support from the Women's Commission for a recommendation for a resolution to be presented to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

Future Goals

Pending the renewal of the Oakland County Women's Commission, the Health and Wellness Committee plans to continue to focus on mental health and parity. Future goals include:

- Receive approval from the Oakland County Board of Commissioners for a resolution to support mental health parity in Michigan.
- Receive support for mental health parity from Oakland County government leaders.
- Continue to work with our community partners to develop a presentation for business leaders in the community to educate them on the need for mental health parity in benefit planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve Oakland County as members of the Women's Commission. We look forward to the opportunity for continued service in 2009.

Jessica Jenkins, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Health and Wellness Committee