



Vibrant Emotional Health

Media Contact:

Divendra Jaffar, djaffar@vibrant.org

Vibrant Emotional Health to Host 3rd Annual Disaster Behavioral Health Symposium in Washington D.C.

The Power of Community and Connection in Disaster Behavioral Health Response

NEW YORK, NY (May 5, 2023) – [Vibrant Emotional Health \(Vibrant\)](#), one of the nation’s leading mental health organizations and the nonprofit administrator of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, the Disaster Distress Helpline and the 1,000-member strong Crisis Emotional Care Team, will host the third annual Disaster Behavioral Health Symposium from May 24-26 at American University in Washington, D.C. The 2023 symposium will meet in person to highlight the importance of collaboration, teamwork and connection among community partners who support people recovering from and responding to emergencies and other crises.

The symposium will allow disaster and crisis behavioral health community members to engage and share first-hand experiences with attendees and discuss concrete solutions, tools and approaches for creating positive change in their communities. The event will specifically focus on increasing the visibility of mental health care and finding ways to support responders.

“While we understand the challenges presented by crises, we can be more effective, innovative and productive by working with partners along the way,” said **Kimberly Williams, President and CEO at Vibrant Emotional Health**. “When reacting to natural disasters, mass violence or crises stemming from chronic, systemic and foundational issues, we must be intentional in our coordination and connection across sectors as disaster health providers, responders and community members. Vibrant’s 3rd Annual Disaster Behavioral Health Symposium will highlight the myriad of ways people collectively engage to navigate disaster or crisis.”

“These past few years have been full of incredibly challenging moments for all of us. It remains true that in the face of these difficulties, hope is still possible,” said **Amy Carol Dominguez, Program Director of the Crisis Emotional Care Team at Vibrant Emotional Health**. “We are excited to hear from innovators, thought leaders, clinicians and program leaders at this year’s symposium.”

“In the past five years, federally-declared natural disasters have increased by 50% in the U.S., and incidents of mass violence are occurring with alarming frequency in our country,” said **Christian Burgess, Director of Disaster Distress Helping at Vibrant Emotional Health**. “It’s imperative that key stakeholders in disaster mental health, crisis intervention and related fields come together for professional

development, networking and resource sharing, and the annual Vibrant Disaster Behavioral Health Symposium provides this needed opportunity.”

- **Wednesday, May 24** - Opening address from Vibrant’s leadership and a networking dinner.
- **Thursday, May 25 and Friday, May 26** - Dynamic presentations that will share lessons from the field and highlight the importance of collaboration across sectors, including government agencies, organizations and associations, when addressing disaster response.

This year’s program will also feature discussions on the impact of climate change, specific to disaster behavioral health, workforce protection and managing burnout.

Keynote Speakers:

- Marcus Coleman, Jr., Director of the Department of Homeland Security for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, a Center of the White House Office of Faith-Based & Neighborhood Partnerships
- Olivia Stein, Director of Videophone Crisis Line Services at DeafLEAD
- Dr. Joshua Morganstein, CAPT USPH, Deputy Director of the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress
- Dr. Agustina Boehringer, Chief Medical Officer and Acting Director of Emergency Response, Heart to Heart International

For more information about the event and ticket purchases, visit www.vibrantsymposium.info. For those interested in sponsoring this event or anyone with questions about the symposium, please email us at crisiseotionalcare@vibrant.org. To learn more about Vibrant Emotional Health, visit www.vibrant.org.

About Vibrant Emotional Health

For 50 years, Vibrant Emotional Health has been at the forefront of promoting emotional well-being for all people. As leaders, advocates, educators, and innovators in mental health, we have been raising awareness and offering support to everyone struggling. We work every single day to help save lives and assist people to get care anytime, anywhere and in any way that works for them. We are unwavering in our belief that everyone can achieve emotional wellness with the right care and support. As part of our work, we administer the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, funded by SAMHSA, which provides 24/7, free, and confidential support for people in emotional distress across the United States. For more information, please visit www.vibrant.org. Follow Vibrant on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

###