

Speaker Profiles



Maria Bembridge

Maria Bembridge is a registered nurse for over 15 years and has held several healthcare positions. Ms. Bembridge recognizes the gap between medical and psychiatric care, and how the mind/body connection is often ignored. These gaps in care encouraged Maria to pursue psychiatric-mental health nursing at the Molloy University, Rockville Centre where she acquired her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Since graduating she has volunteered in many medical activities in the community. Currently she is a supervisor of a nursing team that reviews

medical charts on behalf of New York and Rhode Island Medicaid.

Maria believes that every life matters and so ensures that every day she handles her profession with great, careful attention. Over the years she has managed the care and nursing services to psychiatric patients to identify and monitor their needs, consult with physicians, including counseling to assist patients to manage their illnesses and the potential to achieve improved outcomes.



Amy Eng

Amy Eng is a licensed social worker at the Chinese American Planning Council providing mental health workshops and short-term supportive counseling to adults ages 18 and over. Amy has been serving the NYC area for the past 6 years with low-income communities. She has a range of experience in early childhood mental health. She has provided numerous mental health workshops on early childhood education for teachers and families.

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Evelyn Graham-Nyaasi

Evelyn Graham-Nyaasi is a graduate of City College of New York, The Borough of Manhattan Community College and she is a graduate of Howie T. Harp Advocacy Center. Evelyn is also finishing her graduate degree from St. John’s University Graduate School of Education majoring in Adolescent Education. She currently works as an Advocacy Specialist at Community Access and has several certificates in mental health with a special focus on training and creating curriculums for peers, people with lived experience. To help make a difference in how mental health is perceived, she is a Steering Committee member of the Rotary Club District Governor’s Mental Health Initiative Committee. Evelyn is also a NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Ambassador, and an Executive member and trainer for The Justice Peer Initiative where she teaches peers and employers how to assist persons with mental illness in the criminal Justice System. She is also a Co- Regional Coordinator for The Alliance for Rights and Recovery (NYAPRS) NYC Region. With 32 years of lived experience, this topic is near to her heart. Evelyn’s goal is to bring about change in the mental health system and show that recovery is possible.



Dr. Evelyn Isaacs

Dr. Evelyn Isaacs is a professional Nurse and Community Psychiatric Nurse Clinician. She emphasizes on family health education and training. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Hunter College and a master’s degree in public health from Columbia University, and later obtained a Doctorate degree in Education from the Nova Southeastern University. She has worked with US and International Agencies in Africa, accumulating 26 years of international experience. As a Public Health specialist, Dr. Isaacs developed Community Public Health prevention curricula, education and training materials and gave mentorship to health personnel. She specializes on adaptation of international policies for easier understanding of

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specific country needs, cultural practices, and sensitivities, integrating the important ingredients for achieving success in Public Health Programs such as Mental Health.

Her background experience and collaboration with Esther Yip working and understanding businesses and cultural sensitivities in Chinatown has enabled her to make appreciable contribution to the COVID-19 community Saliva testing programme, supported by Rotary of Chinatown of New York in collaboration with MIRIMUS, a local laboratory.



Dr. Vanessa Li

Dr. Li is committed to advocating against and dispelling mental health stigma as well as increasing access to mental health care through her private clinic, community work and research. She currently practices as a clinical psychologist at her private group practice of more than 10 colleagues; her experience and interests working with clients include anxiety, self-doubt, procrastination, negative intrusive thoughts, life transitions and various types of relationship difficulties. She has been working in NYC's Asian community since she moved here 14 years ago. Her work included designing and running youth programs and stigma interventions for recovering adults.

Having lived in Hong Kong and England, Dr. Li also speaks Chinese, and is especially sensitive to cultural issues. Further, she trained in some of the most challenging environments in NYC, including Bellevue Hospital Center for 2 years.

Currently, besides seeing her clients (primarily-Asian and Asian international students) and mentoring clinical trainees in her practice, she also runs staff wellness and parenting groups at a NYC non-profit. Dr. Li is also on the Board of Directors of Center for All Abilities and Coalition of Asian American Children and Families.

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