

Life Worth Living: Overcome Silent Mental Health Challenges

Howard County Horizon Foundation and Chinese American Parent Association

October 18, 2021, 7 pm to 8 pm (Eastern Standard Time)

Panel Synopsis:

According to official sources, suicide is the second leading cause of death among people ages 10-24 and has intensified every year since 2007. During COVID-19 lockdowns, teen suicide attempts spiked. Suicide has also been the main cause of mortality amid Asians or Pacific Islanders, ages 15 to 24. The documentary, *Each and Every Day*, explores youth mental health through the eyes of nine participants who have attempted suicide or have struggled with suicidal thoughts. They share not only challenges, but also convalescence and arduous wisdom about what has made their life worth living. Their experience is akin to our young panelist who is courageous to unveil hers for helping others go through silent mental health challenges.

Panelists:

Emily Her is a management consultant and recent graduate from the University of Chicago championing the need to have mental health conversations in professional and Asian-American communities. She grew up in the Bay Area of California and was her high school's graduation speaker, an early graduate from university, and employed by prestigious firms like Goldman Sachs. However, Emily has been diagnosed with 5 mental disorders since a young age and was hospitalized on various occasions. Because she did not feel supported by her community throughout her challenges, she is now writing a book to share her experiences to start conversations with others about mental health.

Dawn Duignan, LCSW-C, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW-C) with a successful mental health outpatient practice based in Howard County, Maryland. For the past 20 years, Dawn has been working with families and children in the mental health setting. She has been providing mental health services and consultation in the community, daycare centers, schools, and churches. Dawn also works with Howard County Office of Children and Families as a clinical supervisor for staff and a mental health consultant for the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Program. In addition, Dawn is a member of the Howard County Local Children's Board and the Howard County Mental Health Advisory Council.

Shobhit Negi, M.D. is Board certified in child and adolescent, adult and forensic psychiatry. Dr. Negi is Clinical director for the juvenile section at the Circuit Court of Baltimore City and private practice. Dr. Negi completed his residency in psychiatry from Howard University Hospital. He achieved his fellowship in child & adolescent psychiatry from the University of Maryland Medical Center and then in forensic psychiatry from the University of Pennsylvania.