

2023



LIBHI

Lipscomb Initiative
for Behavioral
Health Integration

Annual
Report

A Message from Dr. Ribeiro



Douglas Ribeiro, Ph.D.

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am delighted to present the annual director's report for the Lipscomb Initiative for Behavioral Health Integration (LIBHI). We have worked diligently over the last year to facilitate the integration of mental health services into primary care health centers in Middle Tennessee.

In this report you will be introduced to a few of the new providers we have trained in our program. You will hear about Rachel's awareness and passion to ameliorate our community's needs, Michael's story of resilience and purpose, Misha's triumph over life's challenges and Jaime's inspiring journey.

2023 has been a wonderful year for our program. The 2023 LIBHI conference, featuring international integration expert Dr. Alexander Blount, was a resounding success. The conference's impact was felt nationwide, expanding the reach of our integration message.

We were also able to encourage students to engage in non-traditional internship placements, increasing opportunities for students and underserved communities. The 21 students trained in the 2022-2023 academic year collectively provided 6,300 contact hours in primary care settings, 12,600 contact hours in medically underserved communities, 1,200 contact hours in rural settings and 820 contact hours in telehealth services.

The 2022-23 student cohort's diversity is a testament to our commitment to inclusivity. Comprising 14% male and 86% female students, with 10% identifying as Hispanic or Latino and 90% as White, the cohort also includes individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, veterans and those from rural backgrounds.

In conclusion, this report encapsulates LIBHI's dedication to advancing mental health integration. We extend our sincere gratitude to our partners, supporters and the students who contribute to our mission. As we look toward the future, we remain steadfast in our commitment to be a beacon of positive change in the behavioral health landscape.

Sincerely,

Douglas Ribeiro, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology, Counseling and Family Science
Lead Faculty, Lipscomb Initiative for Behavioral Health Integration

Mission

The core mission of the Lipscomb Initiative for Behavioral Health Integration (LIBHI) is to facilitate the integration of mental health services into primary care health centers in the Middle Tennessee area. We hope to be a catalyst for behavioral health innovations through training, research, advocacy and practice.

Student Spotlight

Rachael Mark

“My decision to become a mental health provider was driven by the need that can’t be missed in our society,” said Rachael Mark (’22). “My original plan was to attend PA school to provide care on the medical side, but once I got a deep understanding of the disparities many face when it comes to mental health care, there was no way that I could ignore that calling. From my own experiences to the experiences of those who I had only known of through lectures and textbooks, becoming a therapist was the next best step I could take to impact change.”

Before starting at Lipscomb, Mark had never heard of Integrated Behavioral Health (IBH). “I remember our first semester of the program when Dr. Ribeiro gave his spiel to the class about the IBH program, and before he even finished explaining it, I knew in my gut that it would be where I ended up in my career. Integrated Behavioral Health is the intersection of public health and mental health counseling, and I knew that was where I belonged.”

Mark chose to attend Lipscomb for her graduate degree for a myriad of reasons, but topping that list is the Lipscomb faculty. “The reputation that the mental health counseling program has made for itself was quite impressive. Great education taught by great professors who create great clinicians. I was surprised, in a great way, by just how much the faculty cared to see you succeed. Of course, it helps when almost all of your professors are therapists, but it really was a breath of fresh air to be taught by professors who know your name and genuinely care how you are.”

The HRSA-provided grant stipend was integral to Mark’s success in the program. She received a living-expense stipend each of the semesters she participated in the program-mandated internship. “Receiving the grant made it possible for me to focus on school without worrying about finances. I was able to step away from my job and spend time studying and gaining experiences, knowing that I would be able to cover my living expenses. I have no idea how my experience would have turned out if I didn’t have the financial support, or even the opportunity itself.”

Becoming a counselor was a life-changing event for Mark, and the Lipscomb program guided her transformation. “The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program prepared me for my work life by modeling what it looked like to be a humble, healthy clinician and take the posture of a servant-leader--always curious, always compassionate, always ready to do the next right thing. My goal is to bring some sort of hope, warmth and light to the room to show people that darkness does not get the final say. I was not expecting to be so touched by the patients who trusted me with their stories and experiences. I did not expect to be shown the picture of resilience in living flesh.”



Michael Corbeil

When Michael Corbeil graduated with a master's degree from Lipscomb in the spring of 2023, it was the culmination of a life's journey that had been refining and shaping him for that moment.

After working in the financial sector for several years, Corbeil found himself unhappy in his career and knew he wanted to make a change. He decided to return to college to pursue a graduate degree to become an addictions counselor inspired by his own struggle with chronic addiction.

“During my growing years, from the outside looking in, it appeared that I was happy, successful and had everything going for me,” says Corbeil. “I played college sports at the highest level and when I graduated with an MBA in 2015, I was accepted into one of the premier banking programs in the country. On paper, I should have been perfectly happy.”

But the material happiness soon unfolded into a “nightmare” for Corbeil that had begun at the age of 12 when he began experiencing periods of uncontrollable obsessions and compulsions. He was concerned for his sanity but felt that he couldn't tell anyone what was going on in his head. He discovered alcohol in high school which provided him with a “magic elixir” to help relieve his obsessive compulsive disorder symptoms. Corbeil soon fell into chronic addiction, which lasted until he was 29.

“At this point in my life I hit rock bottom and entered into addiction treatment,” he recalls. “It was during this time that I found my purpose in life — to help walk other people who are suffering into the light of freedom. And, after two-and-a-half years of studying and years of sobriety, I finally get to give back and help others through their own journey of recovery.”

The BHWET grant was also integral in his success. “The grant was a lifesaver when it came to finances as a student,” said Corbeil. “I was able to better balance going through clinicals and supporting my wife and three children. It graced me with peace of mind. It also provided me the opportunity to work in an interdisciplinary setting that gave me the confidence to work in a hospital.”

Corbeil credits his time in graduate school at Lipscomb as transforming him into the person he is today. “The program at Lipscomb gave me the tools to be an effective therapist from day one. When transitioning to being a full-time postgrad, I have the confidence to see clients no matter what they are presenting with. On a daily basis I work with clients with mood disorders, schizophrenia, SUD and anxiety disorders -- diagnoses that the program at Lipscomb prepares you to address. Not all days are easy, but having the opportunity to walk with individuals seeking well-being is a privilege.”



Misha Laster



Misha Laster has had to navigate a few of life's more difficult challenges, raising a child with autism spectrum disorder, a full-time job and typical adult responsibilities, at an early age. She experienced a time of homelessness and the impact of family members struggling with addiction. These life complications would have derailed most other students, yet Laster has made her educational dream a reality and her story one that encourages others from similar backgrounds to pursue their dreams.

"This accomplishment means everything to me and my family because I have overcome so many barriers and set an example for my younger siblings," said Laster. "It shows them they can pursue any career they want without the limitations of what they feel society or their environment tells them they have to be."

The BHWET grant was integral to her success. "Receiving the grant allowed me the ability to take care of and be present for my son who was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder during my time in graduate school," said Laster. "The grant allowed me the freedom to be able to focus on growing my clinical skills and be able

to identify the type of counselor, as well as person, that I want to be in the next phase of my life."

Laster was drawn to addiction counseling because of her interest in its effect on mental health. She grew up with several family members addicted to substances and knows firsthand the devastating long-term impact on children raised in that environment. It often creates a cycle of trauma for all whom it touches.

"I want people to know to always put your mental health first because if you aren't taking care of yourself, you won't be in a position to help anyone else," Laster said. "I also want people to know that no matter what stands in your way, you should never give up. It's not about where you come from but where you are going."

Laster has passed the National Counselor Exam and works as a counselor at Cumberland Heights. She is also continuing her work as a pre-licensed counselor at Ubuntu Counseling and Wellness for the hours required to obtain a Licensed Professional Counseling with a Mental Health Services Provider credential.

"I appreciate Lipscomb for all that they have done for me because without them I wouldn't be the clinician that I am today. I am someone that is knowledgeable, resilient, optimistic and willing to always go the extra mile for my clients. I hope that my story can inspire other people of color to pursue the counseling field and help remove the stigma around mental health," said Laster. "I always told my mom that I wanted to change the world, but I could never imagine that I would actually be doing it."

Jamie Harper

Jaime Harper knows that each new statistic he reads about the increasing opioid epidemic is more than a number. Those numbers represent people -- people like him. To Harper, every statistic has a story and a life attached to it. He has been one of those statistics and lived to tell his story.

Harper's journey with substance use began at age 11. He experienced "a lot of trauma" in his childhood, which led to experimentation with, and eventual addiction to, various substances, particularly alcohol and cocaine. During his childhood, he and his family moved frequently. When he was 17, Harper's father was killed and he eventually dropped out of high school.

Harper continued his substance abuse until age 30 when his wife, Emily, told him she was pregnant with their first child. "I knew I couldn't allow the environment that I had created to continue. My wife was the key component in getting me out. She allowed me a safe place and suggested that we start going to church," says Harper.

He resisted at first, but he now credits his faith community with helping him to change his life. "Those whom I thought were 'those hypocrites' actually became the community that I needed," he admits. "They introduced me not just to sobriety, but to recovery."

Today he uses his experience to help others as the Director of the Office of Faith-Based Initiatives in Tennessee's Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (MHSAS). "My job responsibilities consist of the oversight of our office and 25 coordinators, each with lived experience with behavioral health challenges and now in long-term recovery," said Harper. "We provide education and access to recovery resources across the state of Tennessee."

After dropping out of high school, Harper returned to school earning an Associate of Science degree in electronics engineering technology and a Bachelor of Science in psychology. Harper wanted to be able to "provide a deeper level of care" and decided to enroll in Lipscomb's graduate Clinical Mental Health Counseling addiction specialization program.

"I knew that I wanted to be able to provide a deeper level of care, and I came to Lipscomb to enhance the knowledge and experience that I had," explains Harper. "I believe the integrated health care aspect of this grant was one of the most impactful parts of my education that is utilized every day. What we do doesn't just impact the patient. It impacts generations. The work and care for each individual assists in the improvement of livelihood and well-being. That spreads quickly and creates healing for everyone associated with the client."

Although the statistics may indicate an impossible problem, Harper is a living testimony that there is hope for making a difference. "There's always hope," he says. "Until there's no breath left, there's always hope."



Behavioral Health Integration Conference



Alexander Blount, Ed.D.

Since 2019 LIBHI has hosted an annual conference, bringing in local and national experts in integrated behavioral health to educate students, faculty, site supervisors and service providers. The 2023 conference featured international integration expert Alexander Blount, Ed.D. His impressive credentials are too numerous to list, but his expertise is highlighted by his status as Professor Emeritus of Family Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School where he founded the Center for Integrated Primary Care. His online training program in Primary Care Behavioral Health at the Center has trained over 4,000 clinicians around the country and abroad. He is President of Integrated Primary Care, Inc., a firm that provides training and consultation in behavioral health integration, patient-centered care and team telemedicine. Dr. Blount's international reputation brought in participants from California to New York to the country of Oman allowing an expanded reach of the conference's integration message.

Dr. Blount's presentations, *Why Integrate?*, *What Works Best?* and *Partnership with Patients* highlighted Day 1 of the conference. Case studies and participant input were hallmarks of the day. His expertise and interactive sessions were highly regarded by all participants.

Day 2 of the conference featured former Lipscomb student and grant participant Abigail Spilburg who presented her research study on *COVID and Integrated Care*. Cynthia Jackson, Ph.D., Behavioral Health Manager at Matthew Walker Comprehensive Health Center, presented two sessions which addressed Substance Use Disorder in an Integrated Setting -- *Strategizing Success* and *Motivating Change*. The conference wrapped up with a panel presentation by integration experts, Laura Schwent Shultz, Psy.D., ABPP, Danielle King, Psy.D., Matthew Tolliver, Ph.D., and Jesse Malott, Psy.D., M.Div., who addressed *The Future of Integrated Care in Tennessee*. 100% of attendees indicated that the conference met their professional expectations and that they would attend again!

By the Numbers

Through the provided funding, the LIBHI program encourages students to go into settings that are not traditional internship placements for clinical mental health students. Ultimately, the program increases opportunities for students upon graduation. Each student must complete a minimum of 600 hours of supervised clinical work with patients in community clinics who otherwise would not have access to mental health services. The students are learning valuable skills, knowledge and training while serving an under-served community, forming an integrated relationship with the city's mental health care landscape.

Patient Care

The 21 students who received training in the 2022-2023 academic year provided the following:

- 6,300 contact hours in primary care settings
- 12,600 contact hours in medically under-served communities
- 1,200 contact hours in rural settings
- 820 contact hours in telehealth services

Student Demographics

The 2022-23 student cohort is represented as follows:

- 14% Male
- 86% Female
- 10% Hispanic or Latino
- 90% White
- 24% from Disadvantaged Backgrounds
- 5% Veterans



LIBHI

Lipscomb Initiative
for Behavioral
Health Integration



This publication was supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Grant Number: M01HP31308. This information or content and conclusions are those of the program developers and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.