



Georgetown
University

The Presidents' Convening on College Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

March 20, 2023: Dinner and Presentation

US Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy, MD, MBA
Georgetown President John J. DeGioia

March 21, 2023: Convening Program

Three-part facilitated discussion following expert presentations
Lunch presentation highlights a new survey of recent graduates on mental health and transition into the workforce

I. Broadening Higher Education's Value Proposition to Include Student Wellbeing

The rising rates of mental distress being reported by college students has made this the top priority of college presidents. Given what we know about the onset of mental health issues during the college years, and what the data show about how the college experience influences our lifelong wellbeing, can we infuse student wellbeing into pedagogy? What long-held beliefs and policies need to be reconsidered? And how do we move mental health from an ancillary function to a primary goal of higher education?

Two examples precede the discussion:

1. The Bennington College Mental Health and Wellness Model

Bennington College is well known for its faculty-supported, self-directed curriculum and as part of its strategic planning process, is developing new ways to develop mental health and wellness services and exploring what curricular offerings it might offer. Research to support the Bennington College Mental Health and Wellness Model, a community approach to mental health and wellness, began in the fall semester of 2022. The student wellness plan, like the Bennington Academic Plan, is being designed to encourage students to take responsibility for their own growth and development as students assess their own wellness needs (both as individuals and as a community member); set goals;

identify the available services and resources; and monitor their progress in achieving their wellness and mental health goals over time. Planning of the curricular offering has begun as a major pillar of the strategic planning process and will be developed in a faculty-led process.

Speakers:

*Laura Walker, MBA
President, Bennington College*

*Michael Cohen, PhD
Director of Student Counseling, Disability Services Coordinator, and Thesis Advisor, Glasgow Caledonian New York College (GCNYC)
President, Michael Cohen Group, LLC (MCG)*

*Maurice L. Hall, PhD
Provost, Bennington College*

2. The Engelhard Project for Connecting Life and Learning, Georgetown University

The Engelhard Project represents an innovative approach to integrating student wellbeing issues into academic contexts. It builds on the principles of the whole person education by supporting faculty and campus resource professionals as partners in incorporating health and wellbeing issues into the classroom. This curricular approach enhances academic learning, encourages students to reflect on their attitudes and behaviors, and fosters faculty, staff, and student connections both in and out of the classroom that support students' engagement in their learning.

Speakers:

*Joselyn Schultz Lewis, MA
Director of Inclusive Pedagogy, Georgetown University*

*Jennifer Woolard, PhD
Professor and Chair, Psychology Department, Georgetown University*

Session I. Discussion Facilitator:

*Paula A. Johnson, MD, MPH
President, Wellesley College*

II. Behavioral Health, Engagement, and Retention:

National dialogues around retention in higher education and student mental health have been largely separate, siloed conversations. Given that the same students who have, on average, lower rates of college persistence and retention also have, on average, higher levels of unmet mental health needs – namely students of color and first generation, low-income students (Lipson et al., 2018) – there is an urgent need to bring together these two dialogues. Given the value of higher education degrees to overall success and equity, how can we bring mental health into focus as part of our retention and completion strategies? What policies need to be examined to retain and re-engage vulnerable students? Can community colleges and four-year schools unite around this issue? What are the barriers to doing so?

Speakers:

*Russell Lowery-Hart, PhD
President, Amarillo College*

*Sarah Ketchen Lipson, PhD, EdM
Assistant Professor, Department of Health Law Policy and Management, Boston
University School of Public Health
Co-Principal Investigator, Healthy Minds Study*

Session II. Discussion Facilitator:

*Ashley Finley, PhD
Vice President of Research & Senior Advisor to the President
American Association of Colleges and Universities*

Lunch Presentation: New survey findings on the experiences and expectations of recent graduates/young employees on mental health in college and the workplace: The Mary Christie Institute, the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), and the Healthy Minds Network.

Speakers:

*Corey Thomas, MBA
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Rapid7*

*Gloria Larson, JD
Chairwoman, Mary Christie Institute
President Emeritus, Bentley University*

III. Reframing the Campus Mental Health Crisis

Much is reported about the campus mental health crisis but the narrative itself is largely reactive, focused on demand for limited resources, dissatisfied students, and counseling staff at risk of burnout. Can we examine the service delivery challenge from a different lens by engaging students in their wellbeing, setting realistic expectations for families, and expanding the definition of what constitutes wellbeing for today's students? Can we move the narrative from what can't be done with limited capacity to what can be accomplished with innovation and campus-wide partnerships?

Panel:

Sylvia Burwell
President, American University

Zoe Ragouzeos, PhD, LCSW
Executive Director, Counseling and Wellness Services, New York University
Chief Clinical Officer, Mary Christie Institute

Eric Wood, PhD, LPC
Director of Counseling and Mental Health, Texas Christian University

Moderator: *Elizabeth H. Bradley, MBA, PhD, President, Vassar College*

Session III. Discussion Facilitator:

Elizabeth H. Bradley, MBA, PhD
President, Vassar College