

“Faith, Family and Mental Health” Conference

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2009

Sponsored by  Faith Works



Branko Radulovacki, MD

Dr. Branko Radulovacki is an Atlanta psychiatrist in private practice. He is the Founder of FaithWorks (www.FaithWorksGA.com) and host of today's event. He is Board certified in both psychiatry and addiction medicine. His practice specializes in the care of adults and adolescents with depression, bipolar illness, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and various forms of addiction.

Dr. Radulovacki has received numerous awards for the quality of his patient care and his community activism. These include "Exemplary Psychiatrist – 2009" from both NAMI/GA and NAMI/National, "Hero in the Fight – 2009" from MHA/GA, and "Top Doc" (2009 and 2007) from Atlanta magazine.

Dear Faith Leader,

Welcome to today's conference!

The faith community has always played a central role in helping those in need. Today, you will learn about numerous resources which can help you better address the needs of those with mental and addictive illness—in your congregation and your community.

Whether you are serving others from the pulpit, the counseling office, or across a cup of coffee, as a person of faith, you are uniquely qualified to provide compassionate care that instills hope in those who need it most. Today's program – with its focus on education, awareness, and prayerful action – will equip you to transform your faith community into a safety net for those with mental and addictive illness, and their families.

My sincere hope, and that of the leaders of Peachtree Presbyterian Church, is that today's conference will inspire you to make a passionate commitment to serve the people of God who are struggling with mental or addictive illness.

Thank you for joining us!

Sincerely,

Branko Radulovacki, MD

Sponsored By...

This conference is being underwritten in part by the Mary Howard Brown Memorial Fund, and a gift from NAMI/Northside.

Lunch donated by the Chick-fil-A Corporation.



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AGENDA

TIME	SPEAKER & TOPIC
8:00-8:50am	Conference Registration
8:50-9:00am	Welcome – Dr. Branko Radulovacki
9:00-10:30am	Ministry Models
9:00-9:20am	Natalie Flake, "Surviving a Suicide"
9:20-9:30am	Todd Sandel, "Healing Broken Families"
9:30-9:40am	Rev. Vicki Franch, "Crisis Intervention"
9:40-10:00am	Rev. Jim Milner, "Mental Illness Among Homeless"
10:00-10:30am	Q&A
10:30-12:00pm	Mental Health Advocates
10:30-10:50am	Lisa Roberts, "Faith in Time of Family Crisis"
10:50-11:10am	Sarah Schwartz, "Mental Health America/GA"
11:10-11:30am	Eric Spencer, "National Alliance on Mental Illness/GA"
11:30-12:00pm	Q&A
12:00-12:50pm	Lunch
12:50-1:00pm	Afternoon Session Introduction – Dr. Branko Radulovacki
1:00-2:30pm	U.S. Military & Mental Health
1:00-1:20pm	Hyland Justice, "Life with a Mentally Ill Parent"
1:20-1:40pm	Rev. Leland Jones, "Helping Recovering Veterans"
1:40-2:00pm	Major General Mark Graham, "Mental Illness in the Military"
2:00-2:30pm	Q&A
2:30pm-4:00pm	State Resources for Mental Health
2:30-2:50pm	Judge Winston Bethel, "Therapeutic Jurisprudence"
2:50-3:10pm	Audrey Sumner, "GA's new Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities"
3:10-3:30pm	Jewel Norman, "GA's newly appointed Mental Health Ombudsman"
4:00-4:10pm	Closing Remarks – Dr. Branko Radulovacki

SPEAKER PROFILES

In order of appearance...



Natalie Flake

Natalie Flake is the Director of Catalyst Christian Learning Center and owner of The Integrity Project for Northeast Georgia. She has a Bachelors of Arts from Mercer University, a Masters of Religion from Reformed Theological Seminary, and is currently pursuing a PhD in Professional Counseling from Liberty University. Natalie has an eight-year-old daughter named Jorjanne.



Todd Sandel

Todd Sandel is the Executive Director of LifeGate Counseling Center in Atlanta, where he is also a marriage and family therapist. Todd and his wife, Beverly, currently serve on the adjunct faculty for Winshape Marriage Retreat in Rome, GA as keynote speakers for marriage conferences. They have been married for 9 years and have four adorable children all under the age of 7.



Vicki Franch

Reverend Vicki Harrington Franch graduated from Princeton Seminary and has led Pastoral Care at Peachtree Presbyterian Church since 2001. She works closely with all those who share in the care of Peachtree's 9,500-member congregation, including: Stephen ministers, pastoral care teams, elders, support group leaders, and Peachtree's LifeGate Center. She is married to Dr. Hal Franch and they have three children.



J. Allen Milner

Reverend Dr. Milner is the Senior Pastor of the Chapel of Christian Love, and Executive Director/CEO of Community Concerns, Inc. In addition, he currently serves as Commissioner for the Regional Commission on Homelessness. Reverend Milner is a past President of Concerned Black Clergy. He has earned numerous awards and recognitions including "Outstanding Citizen and Goodwill Ambassador" (from Georgia's Secretary of State).



Lisa Roberts

Lisa Roberts served as President of NAMI/Cobb from 2008-2009. She is an Atlanta native who grew up in Marietta and is married to Bill Roberts. They have three children and one grandchild. Lisa works as a payroll administrator, and is a member of North Metro Church in Marietta.



Sarah Schwartz

Sarah Schwartz is the Executive Director of Mental Health America of Georgia (MHA). Sarah has more than 16 years experience in the healthcare industry. She earned her MBA and Master of Healthcare Administration from Georgia State University. She also holds a Master of Social Work from the University of Georgia.



Eric Spencer

Eric Spencer currently serves as the Executive Director of National Alliance on Mental Illness of Georgia (NAMI). Prior to joining NAMI's staff, he worked as an engineer in the chemical, fire protection and electrical fields. While operating his consulting firm, he served as a NAMI Affiliate President and on NAMI/Georgia's Board of Directors.



Hyland Justice

Hyland Justice is an elder at Peachtree Presbyterian Church. She is part of the leadership team for "Word Before Work," a ministry for working women. Hyland also owns and runs a home and web-based antique gift and accessory business. Hyland and her husband, Hal, have been married for 32 years and have three grown children.



Leland Jones

Reverend Dr. Leland L. Jones, Sr. is the Senior Pastor of the Greater New Light Missionary Baptist Church in Southwest Atlanta. Having served as a Marine, and most recently in the Army, he has been deployed to Kuwait, Iraq, and Africa. His experiences—here and abroad—along with the transitioning process, give Dr. Jones unique insights into how best to help veterans regain purpose, peace, and healing.



Mark Graham

Major General Mark Graham serves as Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Forces Command at Fort McPherson in Atlanta. He earned an MBA from Oklahoma City University, and a Masters in National Security and Strategic Studies from the National Defense University. Major General Graham has served in command and staff positions throughout the Army, in the United States and overseas. He is the recipient of numerous awards and decorations including the Meritorious Service Medal (Five Oak Leaf Clusters) and Humanitarian Service Medal.



Winston Bethel

The Honorable Winston P. Bethel, J.D., LL.M., received his Doctor of Jurisprudence Degree from John Marshall Law School and his Master of Laws Degree from Woodrow Wilson College of Law. He has served as the Chief Magistrate for DeKalb County since 1998 and founded the DeKalb Mental Health Court (now called the Dekalb Diversion Treatment Court) in 2001. It has received national recognition. In 2006, he received the Debra J. Blum Mental Health Advocate of the Year award.



Audrey Sumner

Audrey Sumner is Director of Community Mental Health for the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. She is responsible for the design and implementation of Adult, Child, and Adolescent Community Mental Health Services provided through the department. Ms. Sumner has an MSW from the University of Tennessee and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.



Jewel Norman

Jewel Norman currently serves as Georgia's State Disability Services Ombudsman for mental health. She has served as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer of a private, for-profit residential treatment facility. She has also served as Regional Vice President of a psychiatric hospital corporation, and as interim CEO for a number of large, comprehensive psychiatric hospitals. She received her Master's degree in Education and Counseling Psychology from the University of Virginia.

PETITION TO GOVERNOR PERDUE

We, the undersigned clergy and nonprofit faith leaders, are gravely concerned about the circumstances facing people with mental and addictive illnesses who are under the state's care. We believe that all problems have a moral and just solution. We, therefore, petition Georgia's legislative leaders to do their utmost to enact these solutions with respect to the state mental health crisis.

Specifically, we support – and urge immediate action on -- the following:

1. Rejection of for-profit privatization of state psychiatric hospitals. The current plan will put profits ahead of quality care, which is a moral dead end and not God's way. Instead, we need a plan based on the proven model of private, non-profit hospitals which can reap the benefits of a true private-public partnership. **DONE**

2. Stable-to-increased funding for state mental health services. Inadequate funding for community mental health will compound existing pressure on the state's psychiatric hospital system, worsening the current crisis. At a minimum, there should be no budget cuts for community mental health services or the state's psychiatric hospitals. **PENDING**

3. Sufficient funding for a mental health Ombudsman. Our state owes patients (and their families) safety and accountability. The Ombudsman tangibly manifests our state's ongoing commitment to both. To offer anything less is to deny the right to quality care, leaving the helpless to suffer in silence. **DONE**

4. Overt compassion for families whose loved ones died in state psychiatric hospitals. At least 136 families have suffered a tremendous personal loss at the hands of the state. Extending compassion is a moral obligation and a spiritual imperative. We encourage you to meet with and console each family, both to extend God's love and to enable healing.

Governor Perdue, we understand you are under tremendous pressure to resolve this crisis. However, as a man who is guided spiritually and ethically by his faith, we hope you will agree that only moral and just solutions can have real meaning and value and make a lasting difference in the lives of Georgia citizens.

Our faith traditions teach us that we are each created in God's image, and that we are compelled to love and care for one another. We ask that you prayerfully consider this petition for compassionate and decisive action on behalf of those in our state who suffer from mental and addictive illnesses.

RESOURCES

Winston P. Bethel
Chief Magistrate
DeKalb County, Georgia
556 N. McDonough Street
Decatur, GA 30030
wpbethel@co.dekalb.ga.us
404-371-4766

Thomas Bornemann
Director
The Carter Center
Mental Health Program
453 Freedom Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30307
ccmhp@emory.edu
404-420-5165

Ethel Ware Carter
Associate Director
Regional Council of
Churches of Atlanta
100 Edgewood Ave, Suite 812
Atlanta, GA 30303
ecarter@rccatl.org
404-523-5554 ext. 231

Reverend Darrell D. Elligan
President
Concerned Black Clergy of
Metropolitan Atlanta, Inc.
1065 Ralph Abernathy Blvd. S.W.,
Suite 101-103
Atlanta, GA 30310
cbcatl@bellsouth.net
404-755-4900

Alan Harris
The Coalition for Homeless People
With A Mental Illness
2026 Dellwood Dr.
Atlanta, GA 30309
alanmharris@juno.com
404-351-3225

Jewel Norman
Georgia State Disability Services
Ombudsman
55 Park Place, Suite 410
Atlanta, GA 30303.
jewel.norman@gov.state.ga.us
404-656-4261

Reverend J. Allen Milner
Executive Director/CEO
Community Concerns, Inc.
276 Decatur Street
Atlanta, GA 30312
revjmilner@aol.com
404-659-3390

Todd Sandel
Executive Director
LifeGate Counseling Center
3434 Roswell Rd, NW
Atlanta, GA 30305
tsandel@lifegatecenter.org.
404-842-3150

Sarah Schwartz
Executive Director
Mental Health America of Georgia
100 Edgewood Avenue, Suite 502
Atlanta, GA 30303
sarah@mhageorgia.org
404-527-7175

Eric Spencer
Executive Director
NAMI Georgia
3050 Presidential Parkway, Suite 202
Atlanta, GA 30340
espencher@nami.org
770-234-0855

Sue Smith
Director
Georgia Parent Support Network, Inc.
1381 Metropolitan Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30310
suesmith@mindspring.com
404-758-4500

Audrey Sumner
Director of Community
Mental Health
GA Department of Behavioral Health
and Developmental Disabilities
Two Peachtree Street, N.W.,
22nd Floor
Atlanta, GA 30303
acsumner@dhr.state.ga.us
404-657-2273

Craig Torrell
Fountain Gate Counseling Center
2829 Dallas Street
Kennesaw, GA 30144
ctorell@fountaingate.com
770-861-2083

Sherry Jenkins Tucker
Executive Director
Georgia Mental Health
Consumers Network
246 Sycamore Street, Suite 100
Decatur, GA 30330
office@gmhcn.org
404-687-9487

