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Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. Hosts 13th Annual Across the Lifespan Conference: Building a Trauma-Informed Community

Easton, MD (April 19th, 2024) - Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. (MSBH) successfully concluded its 13th Annual Across the Lifespan Conference (ATL), held at the Miles River Yacht Club in Easton, MD on Friday, April 19th, 2024. This year's conference, themed "Building a Trauma-Informed Community," brought together professionals and experts to explore the impact of trauma across different stages of life and explore strategies to address various forms of trauma.

With a diverse audience of 95 attendees, including clinicians, psychologists, social workers, and professionals from the behavioral health system, the conference featured speakers who provided personal testimonies and valuable insights into the effects of trauma on different age groups. Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. Executive Director, Katie Dillely provided insights on the history and impact of the ATL saying, "This year marks the 13th Anniversary of Mid Shore Behavioral Health's ATL conference. Each year, this conference has allowed MSBH to highlight topics that are relevant to the behavioral health field and supportive of the ever-changing and evolving best practices to enrich the community and individuals across the lifespan. This is a signature event for MSBH and continues to provide a space for our behavioral health community to convene annually. Building a Trauma Informed Community is a theme that is timely to the work of MSBH. Last summer, we embarked on a journey to strive to become a trauma-informed organization. MSBH is currently representing the mid-shore counties on The Building Healing System, a partnership between the Maryland Behavioral Health Administration, University of Maryland School of Medicine, and Bowie State University. The goal of this work is to support Maryland Public Behavioral Health Systems in aligning with best practices in trauma-informed and healing-centered care and culture. Out of this work, MSBH envisioned the theme of this year's ATL. This is a model that we have been focusing on and will be supporting local providers with embracing in practice and organizational culture. It is an exciting time in Maryland, as we move to hold trauma informed practices as a best practice model of care in meeting the behavioral health needs of the community."

The speaker lineup featured Latrice Gray, LCSW-C, RPT, CEO of Creative Space Child Therapy LLC, who discussed early childhood trauma and highlighted the importance of understanding the developmental needs of infants and toddlers to recognize early signs of trauma. Lesa Lee, LCSW-C, Chief Clinical Officer of For All Seasons, focused on trauma among children and young adults, exploring its complexities during crucial developmental stages. Kris Locus CPRS, CTRC, from On Our Own Maryland, provided an overview of the challenges faced by the LGBTQ population during the transition to adulthood. Christina Morris, LCSW-C, offered insights into the unique trauma experienced by military personnel, covering traumatic experiences during active duty and civilian life. Finally, Deborah Nicholson, Ombudsman of Upper Shore Aging, Inc., addressed the often overlooked and not talked about issue of trauma in older adult populations.

In addition to the wealth of information shared by the speakers, one of the highlights of the conference was of the opportunity for attendees to participate in tabletop discussions facilitated by each speaker, along with a MSBH Behavioral Health Coordinator, resulting in actionable takeaways and strategies to address the trauma experienced by individuals at different stages of life.

Reflecting on the event, Alisha Salisbury, LCSW-C, Forensic Mental Health Program Manager at MSBH stated, "The ATL conference highlighted how looking at people throughout the stages of life using a trauma-informed lens can mitigate negative effects of trauma, and abreactions. By increasing individual awareness, we can build stronger, trauma-informed organizations and communities. Society tends to be reactive vs. preventive. Information shared at trainings like the recent ATL breeds hope by promoting awareness, social support, resilience, and ultimately, proactive trauma-informed communities."

Participants were encouraged to take what they learned from the speakers and tabletop discussions to help build a better trauma-informed community, fostering understanding and support for individuals across all stages of life.

As the Core Service Agency for the mid-shore region, MSBH's mission is to continually improve the provision of behavioral health services for residents of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties through effective coordination of care in collaboration with consumers, their natural support systems, providers, and the community at large.

For more information about MSBH and its initiatives, visit www.midshorebehavioralhealth.org.



Latrice Gray, LCSW-C, RPT, kicks off the 13th Annual Across The Lifespan Conference by presenting on Trauma in Infants and Toddlers.



The speakers at the 13th ATL from left to right: Kris Locus, CPRS, CTCR, Christina Morris, LCSW-C, Lesa Lee, LCSW-C, Latrice Gray, LCSW-C, RPT, Deborah Nicholson, Ombudsman.



MSBH staff members Trish Todd, Shannon Joyce, and Tyaira Frazier lead a group of conference attendees in developing strategies to address trauma in older adult populations.



MSBH staff member Ahsley Strazza and speaker Kris Locus lead a group in discussing trauma in transitional age groups.