

The Counselors for Social Justice Advocacy Committee intends to bring attention to the needs of diverse populations and their desire for Mental Health services specifically from individuals of a similar background.

The advocacy committee, through this project, seeks to disrupt the centering of dominant culture in the counseling profession by offering a directory of services provided by individuals of marginalized and minoritized identities. The committee recognizes that the mental health industrial complex is steeped in Eurocentric values that attributes systemic oppression to biopsychosocial symptoms and asks the question, **What would it mean to not pathologize cultural norms and increase representation and bring forward the voices of minoritized populations?**

We also recognize the value of destigmatizing mental health for individuals of marginalized identities and offering encouragement to seek treatment and wellness. As we reflect on the cultural norms of minoritized individuals, we offer the following: Seeking treatment is both valuable and sacred; the needs of your mental health are valid and not to be dismissed. We seek to provide this resource to remove feelings of fear, lack of access and concern of not seeing those similar to ourselves.

The committee offers the following evidentiary support:

1. Asian American/Pacific Islanders are least likely to seek mental health services than any other racial/ethnic group. They are also three times less likely to access mental health services than their white counterparts (Cathy Hu, 2019)
2. Only 33% of Blacks who need mental health services receive it (Dalencour et al., 2017).
3. Asian American/Pacific Islanders are least likely to seek mental health services than any other racial/ethnic group. They are also three times less likely to access mental health services than their white counterparts (Cathy Hu, 2019)
4. About one out of three asylum-seekers and refugees experience high rates of depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) (Turrini, Purgato, Ballette, Nose, Ostuzzi, and Barbui, 2017).
5. LGBTQ people are twice as likely to have a mental health disorder in their lifetime when compared to heterosexual men and women (Semlyen et al., 2016)