

# Diversity Fellowship at the Westchester Institute for Human Development

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## Background

The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD), a part of the Administration on Community Living (ACL), awarded National Training Initiative grants to 14 University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs) to develop diversity fellowship programs to support recruitment and retention of diverse trainees, and build cultural and linguistic competence within their Centers.

## Goal

To support fellow from diverse backgrounds (as defined by AIDD) to increase their knowledge, skills and values related to individual and institutional cultural and linguistic competency, fellow/workforce diversity, and community collaborations

## Objectives

- Become familiar with issues and strategies related to diversity, disparities, institutional and individual cultural competence, systems change, and leadership skills to promote systems change
- Develop a paper reflecting key aspects of their self-study
- Partner with community-based organizations in diverse communities to carry out projects in response to the needs and values of the community
- Enhance/promote cultural and linguistic competency at WIHD
- Share and disseminate efforts and completed projects.

**Project #1: Westchester County Department of Social Services (DSS)** hopes to better educate staff on areas of cultural and linguistic competence through a diversity awareness campaign focused on Westchester County's demographic information.

**WHAT DOES DIVERSITY MEAN TO YOU**

**DID YOU KNOW....**  
In Westchester County, The top 3 languages spoken after English are Spanish, Italian and Portuguese.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO... .**  
Become culturally competent. Take the time to learn about different cultures, races, religions and backgrounds represented by your colleagues.

**WHAT DOES DIVERSITY MEAN TO YOU?**

**DID YOU KNOW....**  
In Westchester County, 46% report being Catholic and almost 36% did not identify with a religious group.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?... .**  
Welcome ideas that are different from your own, and support fellow coworkers.

**Project #2: Open Door Family Medical Centers (ODFMC)** expressed an interest in furthering the linguistic and cultural competency of its employees in order to provide the most effective healthcare possible by expanding staff's knowledge about social determinants of health and how they influence a patient's engagement in a treatment plan.

**Title**  
Cultural and Linguistic Competency: Key Concepts for Healthcare Provision

**Goal**  
To increase cultural and linguistic competence in order to enhance services provided to patients

**Objectives:**  
Identify healthcare disparities  
Learn social determinants of health  
Learn ways to reduce healthcare disparities

**Social Stressors and Difficult Life Circumstances**

- Low income/multiple jobs
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Violent neighborhood
- Lack of access to healthy foods
- Low literacy
- Limited English proficiency
- Immigrant status, fear of discovery
- Food insecurity, hunger
- Homelessness
- Substandard housing
- Inadequate heat
- Inadequate transportation
- Domestic violence
- Lack of quality child care
- Substance abuse
- Mental health difficulties
- Single parent family
- Lack of family/support system
- Communication barrier i.e. no phone

How these might manifest in your encounters with children and families?

What you can do to address stressors and difficult life circumstances in families with whom you work?

Is it your responsibility to ask about stressors and difficult life circumstances? How do you do it?

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