

CUCS Academy News

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To: Rita Cronise <rmc277@shp.rutgers.edu>

CUCS Academy Newsletter | January 2019

What Have We Been up To?

Happy 2019 to our community of learners and stakeholders! We're off to an excellent start this year as we continue to offer you quality training that supports your professional development and enhances your work with the clients you serve! We look forward to our continued collaboration and connection throughout the year. Here's what we've been up to.

CIT Speakers Bureau

Since our last update, the Academy has expanded our training collaboration with the NYPD to deliver [Crisis Intervention Training \(CIT\)](#) to officers across the department. Currently, the Academy employs 5 full-time trainers to deliver CIT alongside our NYPD training partners, reaching nearly 4000 officers a year!

This past year, we incorporated a CIT Speaker's Bureau into the program, consisting of 20+ peers with lived experience in the mental health system who are paid to deliver training through a weekly panel presentation. This panel is incorporated into each CIT class, and is an essential element of every learner's training.

Through the panel, peers provide officers with a powerful portrayal of their crisis moments and their interactions with the police, as well as their ongoing journey of recovery. In their role, panelists break down the stereotypes and stigma associated with mental illness and create an opportunity for officers to develop empathy, insight and new perspectives.

To become a panelist, participants engage in a 2-day training to help them craft their personal stories. How does one relay a difficult experience with the police in a way that won't cause their audience to shut down, but instead will move them to a new way of thinking? How can one use their story to offer recommendations and suggestions? And how does one relay traumatic experiences in front of a large group of officers, while also protecting one's emotional well-being. This is at the heart of our Speaker's Bureau training.

We are thrilled to report that NYPD class participants trainees have responded very positively to the panel members, often reporting that this is among one the most powerful part of the 4-day training! These evaluation comments are representative:

"It was good insight on how to handle someone in crisis..."

"...cops would never hear such insight in any other capacity..."

"I got to see another side of someone with a ...mental illness."

We applaud the members of our CIT Speaker's Bureau and their courage to relay their difficult and always inspiring stories to advance change within the NYPD.

Academy Online Training

Over the past year, the Academy has been hard at work, expanding our training reach by developing online versions of our [Behavioral Health/Criminal Justice Certificate Program](#) classes. Working in collaboration with the [Center for Practice Innovations](#), educational designers and videographers, we have successfully adapted our SPECTRM training to an online format which is now available for [enrollment](#). In addition, we have two more trainings in works, which will be available online within the next few months. And, all of our online trainings will offer social work continuing education credit hours -- an added benefit!

This means that our community of learners can participate in a blended approach to completing the Certificate Program, taking some classes in person at our training center in East Harlem, and others online when they become available. To complete the Certificate Program, all learners must still complete the [8 course modules](#) associated with this program but now and going forward, there will be greater choice!

We are proud of the fact that these online trainings are interactive and incorporate the voices of people with lived experience as well as providers and stakeholders. [Check it out](#) and let us know what you think! We look forward to bringing you more online options!

Partnering with Common Justice to Plan the Center for Trauma Innovation (CTI)

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., has awarded a planning grant to [Common Justice](#) to develop plans for the creation of a Center for Trauma Innovation (CTI) in New York City. We are pleased to announce that the CUCS Academy is partnering with Common Justice and selected stakeholders to participate in this project.

The goal for the CTI, which is part of DA Vance's [Criminal Justice Investment Initiative](#), is to address gaps and challenges in the existing system of services for people exposed to trauma. Throughout the planning process, Common Justice, the CUCS Academy and a diverse group of stakeholders will work together to develop a plan that will expand and strengthen the response to populations exposed to trauma. Together we will create plans for the delivery of direct service interventions, training and technical assistance to agencies to expand existing services, and the creation of a learning community to share and advance best practice approaches to treating trauma and supporting resilience. We are excited about this partnership and look forward to the challenging and exciting work ahead.

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