

# INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY AND PROMOTION OF RACE AND CULTURE



## About ISPRC

The Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture (ISPRC) was founded in 2000 at Boston College (BC), under the direction of Dr. Janet E. Helms, to promote the assets and address the societal conflicts associated with race or culture in theory and research, mental health practice, education, business, and society at-large. The Institute

offers pragmatic information about teaching, conducting research, and applying interventions intended to promote the benefits of racial and ethnic cultural diversity and resolve related social problems. The Institute is unique in its emphasis on addressing psychological issues related to race and ethnic culture from an interdisciplinary perspective.

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## 15th Annual Diversity Challenge: Race, Culture, and Social Justice

On October 23-24, 2015, ISPRC hosted its fifteenth annual Diversity Challenge. The Challenge is a two-day interactive conference that brings together scholars, educators, mental health practitioners, and other parties interested in promoting social justice across racial and cultural groups. The theme of Diversity Challenge 2015 was “Race, Culture, and Social Justice.”

Over 160 presentations focused on the Challenge theme and nearly 475 people participated in the sessions, which included workshops, individual presentations, posters, symposia, structured discussions and panels. Invited speakers included Yveline Alexis, Angela Borges, Sylvia Chan-Malik, Crystal Emery, Chong-suk Han, Michelle Materre, Luis Rivera, and Roderick Watts.



This year’s 16th annual Diversity Challenge, “Race, Culture, and Educating Our Youths: Developing Whole People, Not Widgets,” will explore a variety of perspectives and address mutual concerns related to integrating health, mental health, and academic achievement of youths and the adults who foster their development. The conference will take place at Boston College on October 28-29, 2016.



# THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY AND PROMOTION OF RACE AND CULTURE

## A Message from the Director



Janet E. Helms, Ph.D.

As this 16th academic year of the Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture (ISPRC) comes to a close, the staff is pleased to offer an overview of our new and ongoing activities with a racial and ethnic cultural focus in the domains of theory, research, practice, and community activism. Many of these themes are covered in this issue of the newsletter. We provide our customary update on the six-year collaboration of ISPRC with the Jeremiah E. Burke School, but this year the Burke has had some exciting good news regarding special recognition of their work. Also, this year, ISPRC has formed a collaborative relationship with Dr. Lisa Goodman, a professor at Boston College, who founded a Domestic Violence Program Evaluation and Research Collaborative. You will be interested in reading about the joint recognition we received from Boston College to train mental health counseling advocates.

As usual, a highlight of this year’s accomplishments was Diversity Challenge. With over 400 attendees, this conference on Social Justice was a major success. If you missed it, perhaps our synopsis of events and festivities throughout the newsletter will encourage you to join us October 28-29, 2016, when our theme will be, “Race, Culture, and Educating Our Youths—Developing Whole People, Not Widgets.” Finally, many of the ISPRC team members are moving on to new professional roles at the end of this year. We congratulate and bid temporary farewell to them in this issue. Also, we are pleased to share and congratulate former team members for their accomplishments since leaving ISPRC, some of which they share in this issue.

~ Janet E. Helms

### 2015-2016 ISPRC Staff

#### Director

Janet E. Helms, Ph.D.

#### Administrative Associates

Kathleen Flaherty  
Susan Ginivisian



#### Research Assistants

Kimberly Ashby  
Christina Douyon  
Emily Joyner  
Stephanie Paulk  
Amanda Weber  
Eva Wilson



### Join, Follow, Friend

The ISPRC continues to use social media to share information about ISPRC research, community outreach, and resources and to engage in civil conversations about race and ethnic culture. We also use social media as a resource for discovering relevant new ideas and practices related to ISPRC’s mission. With a focus on cultivating an online community with shared interests in race and ethnic culture, the ISPRC has vastly increased its reach and influence as evidenced by our most recent record breaking attendance at Diversity Challenge.

Please join, follow and/or friend us on Twitter, Vine, Instagram and Facebook.

**Twitter:** ISPRC

**Vine:** ISPRC

**Instagram:** ISPRC\_BC

**Facebook:** The Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture

## Consultation Programs, Community Collaboration, Current Research Projects

### The Community Advocacy Project

As co-principal investigators, Drs. Lisa Goodman and Janet Helms received a two-year Collaborative Fellows grant from Boston College to evaluate the Community Advocacy Project (CAP). The purpose of the Collaborative Fellows grant is to evaluate the skills development of the Counseling Advocates in collaboration with the training sites.

CAP is a year-long service learning experience in which mental health counseling MA students spend the academic year working as advocates for individuals living in marginalized communities, including high school students who are struggling to be engaged in school, and low-income survivors of domestic violence and their families. The goals of CAP are to help budding clinicians (1) to recognize the extent to which context generally and systemic oppression specifically affect themselves and others, especially in terms of mental health and wellbeing; (2) to advocate effectively (with or for their partner) to reduce the negative effects of systemic oppression; (3) to integrate structural and advocacy competencies into their professional identity and future work in the realms of research, practice, and/or policy; and (4) to develop and strengthen a social justice orientation and commitment.

CAP is a joint community collaboration between the Jeremiah E. Burke High School and the Second Step, a domestic violence program. The Burke is an ongoing collaboration described elsewhere (pages 6-7). Lisa Goodman has been consulting with the Second Step for five years as part of a larger collaboration she founded called the Domestic Violence Program Evaluation and Research Collaborative (DVPERC).

### Diversity and Inclusion in Mental Health Counselor Training

The mission of the Mental Health Counselor (MHC) training program at Boston College is to teach counselors to implement a social justice perspective in their work with clients. The social justice mission is consistent with the philosophy of Boston College more generally. Yet the perspectives of students in social justice environments are rarely solicited directly. Consequently, little is known about the personal impact on students of such philosophies and/or how best to infuse race, culture, social class, community, and other conditions of potential disenfranchise-

ment into the professional identities of graduate students in training.

Two Latina ISPRC team members and first year MHC students, Kiara Manosalvas and Ammy Sena, have been invited to present a poster describing their training experiences at the First Diversity Summit on Inclusion, June 1, at Boston College. Using a case study approach, they will describe the strengths and weaknesses of both the program and the university in instilling a social justice orientation. In addition to describing the experiences of the two counselors-in-training, the presentation will provide practical advice for students who are being trained under a social justice lens while living in a society that does not always make cultural competence a priority. Practical advice for MHC training programs and institutions with a social justice philosophy will also be addressed.

### The Invisibility of Black girls

With the recent increase in media coverage of police violence towards Black boys and men in the US, one might conclude that Black people and the issues that they face are gaining more visibility in the public sphere. However, Black girls are being forgotten and ignored, experiencing both literal and figurative invisibility in many of the spaces they inhabit. Literal invisibility refers to the lack of statistical information pertaining to their life experiences and challenges, whereas figurative invisibility refers to myths and stereotypes that society uses to define them and which they must overcome. As a result, there are a lack of resources designed to address the specific interests of Black girls. To bring visibility to Black girls and the issues they face, it is important to identify gaps in the existing literature as it pertains to them specifically so that appropriate interventions may be developed and implemented to help them overcome the challenges of invisibility.

ISPRC is currently engaged in a content analysis of literature focused specifically on Black girls to discover common themes and patterns that pertain to the concept of invisibility. To date, Kimberly Ashby, Eva Wilson, Emily Joyner, and Amanda Weber have identified eleven domains that characterize the lives of Black girls, none of which portray them positively. They will be presenting this research as a poster at the 2016 American Psychological Association Convention in Denver, CO.



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### Research, (continued)

#### Social Interaction Model for Culturally Responsive Training

Stephanie Paulk was invited to speak at the 2015 American Psychological Association Convention in Toronto, Canada. She participated along with two other doctoral students in the Student Affiliates of Seventeen Symposium titled, "Social Identities and Intersectionality: Social Justice Perspectives." The presentation was a wonderful opportunity to share her findings on using Dr. Helms's Social Interaction Model to understand group dynamics in racially responsive counselor training. The Social Interaction Model integrates Racial Identity Theory and interpersonal power dynamics to guide therapists, supervisors, and race and culture educators in conceptualizing interpersonal processes and identifying strengths and areas of growth for their clients, supervisees, and students. Stephanie also presented these results to a Youth Services Training Collaborative for the towns of Needham, Dedham, Westwood, and Medfield.

#### Focusing on Structural Racism in Scholarship

Kimberly Ashby, an ISPRC team member, and Jonathon Barry, an alumnus of the Boston College master's program in social work, co-facilitated a participatory workshop for Dr. Patrick McQuillan's History Education course. The workshop focused on defining various forms of interpersonal and structural racism, identifying the ways in which these forms of racism are enacted at Boston College, as well as considering the political nature of teaching history.

### ISPRC Alumni Advisory Board

#### #racialtraumaisreal

Formed by former graduate student members of the ISPRC team who have moved on to professional roles, the Alumni Advisory Board views its mission as mentoring current students, particularly with respect to research and professional development, and distributing information about race and culture to aid the larger society.

In this era of having witnessed multiple police killings of African American boys and men and girls and women either directly or vicariously through media accounts, communities of Color may experience post trauma symptoms. The ISPRC Alumni Advisory Board has released a toolkit for managing symptoms at #racialtraumaisreal which is available to download on our website: [bc.edu/isprc](http://bc.edu/isprc).

An Infographic, created by ISPRC team member Kimberly Ashby can be found on the opposite page in this newsletter, as well as on our website. Some comments:

- *I received the pdf of your excellent racial trauma toolkit. It's very eye opening, to be sure.*
- *Thank you. As a Black academic preparing to go into my social problems course with 300 undergraduate students in one hour, I needed this now, just at this moment.*
- *Thank you for this resource. I shared it widely.*
- *Thanks you for sending this out, I have been writing and presenting on this issue since 1990, and finally it seems that everyone is realizing how traumatic it is to be marginalized and violated as if a Black person's life does not matter (re. current events).*
- *This toolkit is excellent...thank you so much for sending.*

### News from Our Affiliates/Associates

**Dana Collins** will be beginning her postdoctoral fellowship at Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Vallejo, CA.

**Alesha Harris** has accepted an Outreach Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Counseling and Psychological Services at University of California, Santa Cruz.

**Ethan Mereish** will be completing his postdoctoral fellowship at Brown University in July and will be starting a tenure-track Assistant Professor position in the Department of Health Studies at American University in Washington, DC.

**Natasha Torkelson**, a newly minted Ph.D., will return to Boston College as a postdoctoral fellow at the University Counseling Services

**Shatina Williams** starts a position as staff psychologist in Counseling Services at American University in Washington, DC.






**Qingyi Yu** will be moving on to upstate New York to be an Assistant Professor in Educational Psychology at State University of New York at Oneonta. She looks forward to starting a new career journey and continuing her teaching and research on race, culture, and immigration.

ISPRC Alumni Advisory Board - #racialtraumaisreal Infographic

# #RacialTraumaisReal



## Racism Recovery Plan Steps

<b>Racial Wellness Toolbox</b>	Describe what you are like when you are managing and responding to racism in a healthy manner.
<b>Daily Maintenance of Centeredness in the Face of Racism</b>	List connections or tools that help you maintain your centeredness in the face of racism. Such items can include, but are not limited to: a) Review Racial Identity Theory (see Helms); b) Connect with friends who are equally or better able to engage in conversations about racial awareness; c) Engage in prayer, spiritual practices or use of mantras; d) Engage in activism; and e) Practice self management, such as healthy eating, exercise, and favorite activities that help you feel centered. 
<b>Racial Trauma Triggers and Response Plan</b>	List items or experiences that tend to result in racial trauma symptoms (e.g., anger, isolation, sadness). After each item or experience identify a specific centeredness response (e.g., calling a friend, writing in your journal, activism). 
<b>Racial Trauma Early Warning Signs &amp; Response Plan</b>	List early warning signs that you are experiencing racial trauma (e.g., body aches, fatigue, anxiety, depression, difficulty sleeping) and related ways of coping from your Daily Maintenance of Centeredness (item N#2) coping skills list. 
<b>Acute Racial Trauma &amp; Response Plan</b>	List signs that you are experiencing acute racial trauma (e.g., hypervigilance; heightened emotional experiences, such as depression, anxiety, and anger, which compromise your ability to engage in chosen activities of work, sleep, or school). Identify an action plan for each item on your list.
<b>Crisis Planning</b>	Ask yourself how you would know if you were experiencing a crisis due to racism (e.g., thoughts of harm to others and/or self; inability to care for self and/or others; acute racial trauma symptoms that last longer than a specified duration). List a person(s) or additional resources to contact in the event you experience such a crisis. 
<b>Post Crisis Planning</b>	List ways of reconnecting with yourself and your communities to regain centeredness in the face of racism. 

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## THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY AND PROMOTION OF RACE AND CULTURE

### Burke School Initiative — Year Six

#### **Cara Feldberg: An Interview with the Burke School Advocate Supervisor**

*How would you describe your experience supervising counselors-in-training to become Advocates? What are the positives and challenges?*

I am thrilled to supervise BC students as Advocates in their work with the Burke high school students. This position integrates my two past major vocations and passions—community organizing and clinical psychology. Having a chance to examine and promote the importance of addressing systemic issues as a causal factor in the complicated lives of these high school students who are racially, ethnically and economically diverse is so important. Creating a safe space to learn about, discuss, and integrate into advocacy work critical identity issues—race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, immigration status, trauma, and systematic barriers—that perpetuate inequalities seems particularly relevant as our country becomes more divisive. I also find working with students who are dedicated to issues of social justice and committed to honing their clinical skills inspiring, and it provides me with a sense of hope for the next generation.

There have been many positives to this experience. Many authentic, caring relationships developed between BC Advocates and their Burke high school student partners. This might sound trite, but such relationships truly can have impact as the teens get the message that they matter, that their experiences and ideas are worthy, that they have strengths and potential. It is also gratifying when the advocacy works in concrete ways. This year small and significant gains have been made — improved teacher-student connections, writing applications for summer programs, better attendance, access to tutoring, testing, involvement in a sports team, and providing a space to grieve, for instance. BC students also grow so much through this process—their skill set becomes more nuanced and confident, their self-awareness deeper, their comprehension of the complexity of the high school students' lives heighten. They leave this experience with some practice with working with disenfranchised students and contending with issues of privilege and difference within a complicated institution.

Yes, there have been many challenges. Something I did not expect, perhaps naively, was the high degree of absenteeism. It is particularly frustrating because these are the students for whom advocacy might be the most helpful—and likely the students for whom the educational system has failed. Lack of resources is truly apparent despite the Burke's School's massive success in bringing in so many community partnerships. Additionally, there are some school policies that I found confusing and about which I need to understand more. Personally, this

year has been a steep learning curve in terms of learning the school's culture, its resources, and expectations, and the varied challenges that the students bring.

*What is it like with the trainees learning about race and culture in that setting?*

This year, I found that BC students initially were hesitant to talk directly and inquire about their partners' racial and cultural backgrounds, and other basic needs such as food. The bi-weekly trainings led by Christina Douyon, combined with an assessment tool, also facilitated opportunities for teaching, discussion and practicing via role playing. It is rewarding to build a sense of safety and curiosity among group members so that more candid discussions of race, culture, and poverty can develop. Yet, to witness the BC Advocates' sense of increased comfort with asking about and learning from their Burke partner about their race, culture, home life, native language, etc. and to see a deeper, more critical (in a positive way) analysis of how their own identities impact themselves, the student and the relationship is particularly rewarding. I get to learn a ton as well from my students and for that, I am deeply grateful.

*What have you learned about advocacy? Is it a helpful part of students' becoming counselors?*

I think it is critical for all therapists to appreciate the extent to which external systemic issues impact the client. It is my hope that such experiences counteract the frequent assumptions embedded in dominant, privileged society that tend to "blame the victim," and pathologize symptoms, which, I believe, often evolve as coping mechanisms to deal with systemic oppression. A skilled advocate-counselor, in my opinion, ultimately encourages and teaches self-advocacy, a significant piece of empowerment—one of the goals of most clinical situations. I also hope that the BC Advocates, more aware of systemic barriers, will continue to take action to find remedies.

#### **Jeremiah E. Burke High School Wins Award**

We would like to congratulate the Jeremiah E. Burke High School for receiving the city's School on the Move award. The \$100,000 award recognizes the most improved school and was accepted by Headmaster Lindsa McIntyre on behalf of the teachers, staff, and students at the Burke School. The Burke and ISPRC are in the sixth year of a collaborative relationship during which time the school moved from a turn-around school to a supportive environment.

## Burke School Initiative — Year Six

### Burke School Advocacy Program

ISPRC continues to provide advocacy services to the students at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School, a racially, ethnically and economically diverse high school in Dorchester, MA. Now in our 6th year, the ISPRC Advocates empower and provide a voice for the students in helping them advocate for their needs while connecting them to appropriate resources. Graduate students are paired with one or two students at The Burke and assess for emotional and social barriers to their students' school engagement while collaborating with their students to create goals and problem solving strategies. They also work with Burke faculty and staff to identify resources and collaborate with school and community agencies. Finally, Boston College Advocates are encouraged to help their students build awareness of how context affects their development, to co-navigate the school system with their students, and to identify opportunities to make systems-level change that will support their students. Advocates are also encouraged to evaluate their social location and how that might impact the relationships they develop with their students over the course of the year.



### What Being an Advocate Means to Me

- Being a Burke Advocate has helped me to learn so much this year. It has prepared me for my internship next year, has helped me apply what I have been learning in my classes, and has taught me about myself, other identities, and the systems and contexts that affect the lives of my students.  
~Nicole Cameron
- The most meaningful part of my experience as a Burke Advocate has been discovering all of the similarities that my students and I share. For all of the ways in which our lives are different, there are just as many, if not more, ways in which we are fundamentally similar. It has been finding those points of connection with my students, and being moved by their stories, that has been the most meaningful part of this experience for me.  
~Courtney Colgan
- Being an Advocate gave me the opportunity to apply the skills I've learned in the classroom, while allowing me to pursue my passion. My role as an Advocate motivates me to improve my abilities, in addition to providing services to those in need.  
~Yvonne Gonzale
- Being an Advocate at the Burke has been an enriching learning experience that has taught me how to be a more effective helper. Meeting with my students has been the highlight of my advocacy and having an impact on their lives is so rewarding.  
~Jessica Johnson

### An Advocate's Experience

By: Bella Shiro

Being an Advocate at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School has provided the opportunity to practice and apply the skills I learned in the Mental Health Counseling program and use a social justice framework in clinical and advocacy work. As an Advocate, I worked directly with my assigned students in multiple capacities as a mentor, coach, supporter, and motivator. This experience has exemplified to me the multiplicity of roles that a mental health professional can embody and use in the therapy process. Some of the most critical areas of my growth as an Advocate have involved building strong relationships with my students, using a phenomenological approach to understand students' subjective experiences, and exploring the institutional barriers and systemic oppression experienced by my students. This experience has also provided an opportunity for me to learn how to collaborate with clinical supervisors, school administrators, and teachers in order to determine an individual advocacy plan for each student. Finding the balance between addressing my students' concerns and goals and the school's hopes for the students' progress has been a central aspect of my advocacy work. Learning to be flexible, to be open to a collaborative approach, to address the multiple systems within which my students reside and to navigate the intersectionality of these systems has been a particularly challenging but educational aspect of my work.



This advocacy experience has also allowed me to work with students who inspire me to be a better Advocate and future mental health professional. I have learned so much about the resources that are needed and wanted by these students that could help them to succeed and work toward their goals. In addition to this educational perspective, my advocacy experience has also allowed me to work with students who inspire me to be a more sensitive Advocate, more informed individual, and better future mental health professional. Having the opportunity to work with my students at the Burke has pushed me to explore my own relationship with power and privilege and recognize the placement of these concepts in the lives of others. Working as an Advocate at the Burke has challenged me to learn to be flexible, to be open to a collaborative approach, to address the multiple systems of care within which my students reside, and to identify how to navigate the intersectionality of these systems. In addition, my work as an Advocate at the Burke has broadened by understanding of working with individuals who have experienced significant trauma, marginalization, and systemic oppression. My students' experiences demonstrate to me the power of resiliency and the importance of advocacy and self-advocacy. Being an Advocate at the Burke has impacted me in a way that was beyond my expectations. This experience has forever changed me, as a future clinician and as an individual, in the best way possible.

## Scenes from Diversity Challenge 2015



## ISPRC Staff Presentations and Publications

- Helms, J.E.** (2015, June) Webinar, "How Racial and Cultural Life Experiences Differentially Influence the Therapy Process," Hosted by the Society for the Study of Psychiatry and Culture, Toronto, ON.
- Helms, J.E.** (2015, June) Invited Talk, "Challenging Myths When Working in Other Cultures," Conference on Multicultural and Global Mental Health, William James College, Newton, MA.
- Helms, J.E.** (2015, August) Symposium, "International Students' and Immigrants' Acculturation, Identity and Mental Health," presented at the American Psychological Association, Toronto, ON.
- Helms, J.E.** (2015, August) Symposium, "Social Identities and Intersectionality-Social Justice Perspectives," presented at the 2015 Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, ON.
- Ashby, K.M., Collins, D.L., Helms, J.E. & Manlove, J.** (August, 2015) Poster, "Race Talk: Evaluating an Interracial Discussion Group on Race." presented at the 2015 Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, ON.
- Helms, J.E.** (2015, Sept.) Invited Talk, "Race is a Nice Thing to Have: Update on Helms's Racial Identity Model," Lesley University, Cambridge, MA.
- Collins Rawle, S., Weber, A., Popat-Jain, A., Zeko-Underwood, E., Balogun-Mwangi, O.** (2015, October) Individual Presentation, "The Myth of Meritocracy: Meaning Making and Microaggressions among Highly Educated Racial, Gender, and Sexual Minorities," presented at Diversity Challenge, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA.
- Helms, J.E.** (2016, February) Invited Talk, "Having a Conversation about Racial Trauma," Lunch and Learn Lecture Series, Office for Institutional Diversity, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA.
- Helms, J.E.,** (2016, April) Invited Talk, "Using White Racial Identity Theory to Avoid Re-Victimizing Survivors of Racial Trauma," California Psychological Association Convention, Irvine, CA.
- Helms, J.E.,** (2016, May) Keynote Speaker, "White Racial Identity Development," MetroHealth Medical Center, Cleveland, OH.
- Helms, J.E.,** (2016, May) Invited Talk, "Inclusion, Diversity, and Cultural Sensitivity in Our Schools" Middlesex Partnership for Youth Conference, Nashoba Valley Technical High School, Westford, MA.
- Paulk, S., Douyon, C., Collins, D.L., & Helms, J.E.** (2016) Let's talk about race: Evaluating a college interracial discussion group on race. *The Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development.*
- Gualdron Perez, L., & Helms, J.E.** (in press) A Longitudinal model of school climate, social justice orientation and academic outcomes among Latino/a students, teachers, *College Record.*
- Jernigan, M.M., Green, C.E., & Helms, J.E.** (in press) Identity models. In S. Kelley (Ed.), *Issues in Couple and Family Psychology: Across Socioeconomics, Ethnicities, and Sexualities* (Chapter 14). Praeger Publishers.
- Helms, J.E.** (in press) Counseling African American women. In M. Kopola & M. Keitel (Eds.), *Handbook of Counseling Women.*
- Mereish, E.H., N'Cho, H.S., Green, C.E., Jernigan, M.M., & Helms, J.E.** (in press) Discrimination and depressive symptoms among Black American men: Moderated mediated effects of ethnicity and self-esteem. *Behavioral Medicine.*