

IN THAT NUMBER CHARRETTE ONE-PAGER

On Saturday December 8, 2018 the Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies IWES hosted an information sharing and listening session with community members to discuss the physical, mental, and cultural impact of trauma on community well-being. The event was a part of an initiative to relaunch the IWES *In That Number (ITN)* public will campaign with a renewed focus on creating actionable steps community members can take to make New Orleans a more trauma-informed and supportive city. The new phase of the campaign is being spearheaded by IWES staff members Dr. Lisa Richardson and Iman Shervington, and Times Picayune Deputy Opinions Editor & Columnist Jarvis DeBerry through funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as a strategic initiative to build a Culture of Health in New Orleans.

More than 50 people attended the half-day event which included a presentation on trauma, a panel discussion and an invitation for attendees to learn about their own experiences of adversity and trauma. The event culminated with a group exercise to identify community-driven priorities for developing trauma-informed solutions across multiple sectors. Major takeaways from the group exercise are highlighted below.

KEY THEMES

Adverse Community Experiences were a cornerstone of the discussion about sources and long-term impacts of community trauma. After comparing the original ACE screener with the expanded Philadelphia ACEs, participants highlighted that an individual-level understanding of trauma often overlooks the following:

- The chronic effects of structural racism and oppression
- The sociopolitical climate in which people live
- The ways that protective factors can mitigate the impact of trauma

Community members were especially reflective about the impact of intergenerational trauma on mental health. Many people made references to cycles of dysfunction and distress among adults that can be traced to childhood experiences, including drug addiction, community violence, chronic stress, poverty/low wages and involvement with the criminal justice system.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

When asked to identify the sectors that ITN should focus on to make New Orleans more trauma-informed, community members identified the following:

- Education (schools and day care facilities)
- Criminal Justice (law enforcement, courts, judges and public defenders)
- Policy/Governance (elected officials, planners, lawmakers)

The main themes from the recommendations for solutions in the **Policy/Governance** sector were **inclusive & more equitable budgeting, accountability measures and urban planning that prioritizes the most vulnerable**. In the **Criminal Justice** sector, the main themes that emerged were **compassionate criminal justice reform that endorses restorative practices, accountability for harmful police practices and mental health treatment for offenders**. The salient themes from the Education sector revolved around an **increase in the number of mental health professionals at schools, adoption of restorative practices and educators and practices that prioritize students' needs over test scores**. Participants also reiterated the need for **education and training on trauma and the impact of systemic racism** in *all* sectors.