

PETTIS RECOGNIZED FOR WORK TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND REDUCE DISPARITIES

Albuquerque, NM, April 10, 2013



Jackie is pictured with Clarence Jordan, vice president, ValueOptions, who introduced her.

On April 4 ACMHA: The College of Behavioral Health Leadership recognized exemplary leaders in behavioral health. During a luncheon ceremony at its annual summit in Tampa, FL, the College recognized **Jacquelyn Pettis, RN, MSN** with the *King Davis Award for Emerging Leadership in Promoting Diversity and Reducing Disparities*, which recognizes emerging leaders who have directly impacted the quality of care or access to care for populations of color at the local, state, or national level. Established in 2009, the award is made in honor of Dr. King Davis, the Robert Lee Sutherland Chair in Mental Health and Social Policy at the University of Texas at Austin and former ACMHA board member, for his exceptional contributions to the field.

Jacquelyn Pettis, RN, MSN has improved the lives of individuals and their families dealing with serious mental illness and addictions utilizing advocacy, education, support, and direct care. She made a conscious decision early in life to focus her professional career on helping people receiving services in the public mental health system to recover and create meaningful lives, a passion borne from personal experiences and observations of family members and others in her community struggling to

overcome stigma and fear of discrimination that served as barriers to seeking behavioral health treatment. As a woman of color, she is particularly sensitive to the challenges and cultural issues that influence health-seeking behaviors of this population.

Jackie has been an advisor to the American Psychiatric Association (APA) Office of Minority and National Affairs for eight years. She has been an excellent collaborator, reviewer and focus group leader for development of the *In Living Color* curriculum for primary care practitioners focused on diagnosis and treatment of depression in diverse and underserved populations. She provided critical guidance in the development of the culturally-specific educational DVD and guidebook, *Mental Health: A Guide for African Americans and their Families*. Jackie was a guiding light from the

inception of the Psychiatry Recovery to Practice Project (RTP). The project is collaboration between the APA and the American Association of Community Psychiatrists (AACP) to develop a curriculum for psychiatrists on recovery-oriented care. As a member of the RTP Psychiatry Advisory Board, her knowledge and insight has allowed APA and AACP to make progress in the curriculum development process with the confidence that they are incorporating cutting edge concepts in the delivery of recovery-oriented care that is culturally- competent and person-centered. During her tenure as Director of Quality Management at the mental health authority in Baltimore, MD, she participated in the research and evaluation of a culturally-tailored education video *Black and Blue: Depression in the African American Community*. The video was developed to increase awareness of depression as a treatable illness and to decrease stigma.

She has been a strong family advocate for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Maryland at the local and state levels. Jackie served as a volunteer speaker for NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore and NAMI Howard County. She served as a NAMI Walk Team captain since the first walk was organized in 2003. Jackie has fostered the strengthening of relationships between NAMI and African American and other faith-based organizations. She is board president of On Our Own of Howard County Inc. Wellness and Recovery Center (OOOHC), a peer run non-profit organization that provides peer support, advocacy education and social connectedness to people with behavioral health challenges.

Jackie is currently employed by ValueOptions Maryland. She is a peer representative for individuals and families receiving public mental health services. Ms. Pettis provide statewide outreach to consumers, families, and the community, advocating and providing education, training, behavioral health resources, and information about accessing services.

The Board of Directors extends its congratulations to Ms. Pettis and its gratitude for her important contributions to the field. ACMHA: The College for Behavioral Health Leadership has a proven record of demonstrating the vision to pinpoint cutting edge issues and support the development of innovative strategies to progress the field. ACMHA accomplishes this by connecting a diverse group of behavioral health stakeholders and nurturing their leadership. Now in its 34th year, ACMHA is focused on equipping behavioral health leaders for a field that is rapidly changing in extraordinary times. For more information, visit www.acmha.org.