



Path to a Healthy Mind International Gathering

[INSERT DATE]

[INSERT NAME]

[INSERT TITLE]

Office of the [Mayor, City of (XX)/ Governor, State of (XX)]

Re: [Mayoral/Gubernatorial] Proclamation for July as National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

Dear [NAME]:

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) [CITY/STATE] celebrates National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, designated in July, as a time to increase public awareness of mental illness among diverse communities. Established in 2008 by the U.S. House of Representatives, it honors Bebe Moore Campbell, distinguished author and NAMI advocate of mental health education and support. A short bio of Ms. Campbell appears below.

National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month brings to the forefront the devastating impact of mental illness on the lives of undiagnosed individuals in minority communities, their family and friends. During July, individuals and families can raise awareness of mental illness, treatment and research in diverse communities during this month by hosting special events and partnering with local businesses and organizations.

By informing the residents of [CITY/STATE] about mental illness and reaching out to our diverse community members, our goal is to reduce suicide, incarceration, substance abuse and other harmful consequences associated with undiagnosed mental illness and eliminate the stigma that too often prevents individuals and families from seeking much-needed mental health care.

With this in mind, we urge [CITY/STATE] to proclaim July as National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, thereby encouraging citizens of [CITY/STATE] to better educate themselves about mental illness, undergo free mental health and depression screenings and, if necessary, seek successful treatment for themselves or family members.

Following is a sample city proclamation. For more information on National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI and cultural community-specific mental health facts, please go to www.nami.org/minoritymentalhealthmonth. We hope [CITY/STATE] will participate in and support the area's residents with mental illness.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

President of NAMI [CITY/STATE]

NAMI Sacramento | 3440 Viking Drive, Suite 104A | Sacramento, CA 95827 |
www.namisacramento.org



Steps to a Healthy Mind International Gathering

About Bebe Moore Campbell

Bebe Moore Campbell was an accomplished author, advocate, co-founder of NAMI Urban Los Angeles and national spokesperson, who passed away in November 2006.

She received NAMI's 2003 Outstanding Media Award for Literature for the book *Sometimes My Mommy Gets Angry*, written especially for children, about a young girl who learns how to cope with her mother's bipolar illness. In 2005, her novel *72-Hour Hold* focused on an adult daughter and a family's experience with the onset of mental illness. It helped educate Americans that the struggle often is not just with the illness, but with the healthcare system as well.



Campbell advocated for mental health education and support among individuals with mental illness and their families. National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month was created in her honor to carry out the goal of creating mental health awareness and eliminating stigma among diverse communities.



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SAMPLE MAYORAL/GUBERNATORIAL PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, mental health is essential to health: Every individual and family within a community must understand that mental health is an essential part of overall health. We must increase suicide prevention by reducing the stigma of seeking mental health care through the advancement and implementation of national strategies;

WHEREAS, it is essential to eliminate disparities in mental health by promoting well-being for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, place of residence or age and ensure equity of access, delivery of services and improvement of outcomes. Through public and private partnership, we must develop and implement policy which reduces barriers to access, improves community outreach and engagement and ensures culturally and linguistically competent care to diverse communities;

WHEREAS, individuals with mental illness and their families must have the necessary information and the opportunity to exercise choice over their care decisions. We must create an integrated state plan for treatment support, including individualized plans of care, expanded supported employment, enhanced rights protections, better criminal and juvenile justice diversion and re-entry programs, improve access to housing, end chronic homelessness and increase mental health services;

WHEREAS, every individual must have the opportunity for early and appropriate mental health screening, assessment and referral to treatment. We must screen for mental disorders in child welfare, criminal justice, mental health, substance abuse and primary care settings;

WHEREAS, adults and children with mental illness must have ready access to best treatments, services and supports leading to recovery. We must support evidence-based practice interventions, escalate research, increase a diverse mental health workforce and expand knowledge base to inform policy.

WHEREAS, the mental health system must inform individuals with mental illness, providers and public policy with quality, accessible and accountable information. We must use information technology to improve care and information dissemination among the diverse cultural groups within our community.

NOW, THEREFORE RESOLVED, I (Mayor/Governor's NAME), (TITLE) of the city/state of (NAME OF CITY/ STATE) do hereby proclaim July as Minority Mental Health Awareness Month in (NAME OF CITY/ STATE) to increase public awareness of severe mental illness and to promote the wellness of our diverse community members.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the city-state of (NAME OF CITY/STATE) on (DATE).