

# MAY 3, 2023

TOWER THEATRE



**A Live Event Hosted by  
ABC 30's Amanda Aguilar**

**[StigmaFreeFresno.com](https://StigmaFreeFresno.com)**

# EVENT SCHEDULE

- 5:00 PM      Doors Open
- 5:30 PM      Welcome Remarks and Introduction from Host  
ABC30's Amanda Aguilar
- 5:40 PM      Screening of "Experiencing Hope: Stories of  
Resiliency in Fresno County"
- 7:20 PM      Remarks by Susan Holt, Director of the  
Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health
- 7:25 PM      Q&A Panel Discussion Hosted by  
ABC30's Amanda Aguilar  
Featuring panelists made up of the storytellers  
from the film.
- 7:45 PM      Raffle  
Participants must be present for the raffle  
to win prizes.
- 8:00 PM      Event Ends

## FEATURED STORIES



### **SUSANA ESPARZA DE PINAL**

Lead Community Health Worker,  
Every Neighborhood Partnership

Susana was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. She and her husband, Felipe, have been married 23 years and have four children. She has always had a passion to help people in any way that she can. Today she is able to serve, help and contribute to people's lives and finds reward in helping people become leaders in their community. As a community health worker, she gives 100% to educate, support, and train people in Fresno County. Susana knows that then it's not just that person but all the people around that person who will heal. To this day, Susana still brings the passion and desire from her childhood to help people become well.



## **ASHLEE S. HERNANDEZ, M.S.**

Fresno HOPE Pathways Community HUB

Ashlee Hernandez is a proud descendant of migrant farmworkers and the sixth generation born and raised in the Central Valley. As the Director of Fresno HOPE Pathways Community HUB, she leads the implementation of a Community Health Worker network to serve residents in zip codes with systemic and concentrated poverty. Ashlee's work in this area included a local production of an ACE's awareness video which then State Surgeon General Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris saw and asked to be included in! Ashlee earned a bachelor's degree in Sociology and then her masters of science degree in Higher Education Counseling and Student Affairs, both from California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo. She is also a proud wife to Martin and mother to Noah (six) and Makai (coming June 2023).



**JIM AND  
LYNN HORTON**

Founders, Zachary  
Horton Foundation

Sadly, Jim and Lynn have experienced a tragedy that is becoming too common in our community. Jim and Lynn have taken that experience and turned it into action to help prevent deaths by educating, advocating and supporting others through efforts to reduce stigma associated with addiction.



## **DR. SAMUEL E. MORGAN**

Associate Pastor, Westside Church of God

Dr. Morgan brings together the experience of mental health training and faith/spirituality. For years, Dr. Morgan's church, West Side Church of God, has been openly talking about mental health and promoting mental wellness. Dr. Morgan advocates for people of faith to be open to using professional mental health support to help them with challenges they may have and to reduce stigma around mental health. Dr. Morgan works with young people in college settings where he advocates for their needs. He is also a member of the clergy advocating for the community.



## **JAMAL JONES, LMFT**

**Practitioner, Motivational Speaker,  
and Business and Mindset Coach**

Jamal specializes in marriage counseling, therapy for men and people of color, by helping individuals, couples and organizations take inspired action with clarity, confidence and courage. Jamal works in private practice. He was also a former student athlete at Fresno State as a member of the Bulldogs Football program.



## **ANGELA CUEVAS-PEÑA**

**Program Supervisor,  
Central Valley Suicide Prevention Lifeline,  
Kings View**

Angela has been a part of the team for five years now, where she had the opportunity as a suicide intervention specialist on the lines. Angela is currently completing her master's degree in clinical counseling. She hopes to continue as a licensed clinician to use the opportunities she's presented with to help others through crisis, trauma, and other related mental health issues. Angela and her team save lives every day they come into work, through the 9-8-8 Lifeline.





## **ANDREA LEE**

**Mental Health Advocate**

Andrea is a current MBA candidate and is employed in the economic development field. She has been an advocate for people with a mental health condition after being diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 2020. Andrea went on to graduate from Fresno State with honors. She launched her advocacy work as a project while in college and started a podcast focused on mental health called the Hilow Podcast. Andrea seeks to show that, with support, one can overcome mental wellness challenges to achieve their goals in life.



## **JAMMY HARRIS**

Foster Youth Advocate and Youth Speaker

Jammy is a multitalented 20-year-old whose ultimate goal is to fulfill God's purpose for her. Jammy's been on a long journey; she wants to use her skills and talents to the best of her ability by standing in the gap like caring individuals did for her.



## **TREVOR BIRKHOLZ, LMFT**

Clinical Supervisor, Fresno County  
Department of Behavioral Health

Trevor sees himself first and foremost as a husband and father to three boys, now young men, and the grateful son of his parents, next as a public servant both as an active member of his church in our community and as an employee of the County of Fresno, serving the “neediest” (like me) and the “least of these.”



## **RODNEY LOWERY**

**CEO, The Resiliency Center of Fresno**

Rodney Lowery is a retired officer from the Fresno Police Department. An injury changed his career trajectory, allowing him to pursue his education. Rodney completed a four-year degree in Bible & Theology. He later graduated from Multnomah University (Portland, Oregon) with a Master of Divinity. He is currently working towards a Doctorate in Psychology through California Southern University. Rodney served as head of the Fresno Police Chaplaincy before leading a new project.

Rodney's passion is identifying and treating early childhood trauma. He was blessed to be a part of launching the Resiliency Center of Fresno, a behavioral health space in the community that focuses on primary prevention and early intervention for children. Working in law enforcement and being a parent have taught him that we cannot prevent bad things from happening to children but can ensure resiliency for those challenging moments of life.



## **JASON WILLIAMS**

**Co-Founder and Executive Director,  
Brain Wise Solutions, and President and CEO,  
Key Writing Concepts**

Jason Williams is a Fresno-born business owner who worked in Fresno County for over 20 years at community-based organizations and at the Fresno County Department of Social Services. Jason is passionate to help children and families experiencing mental health challenges and foster care. Jason believes that understanding how our brains work and how our earliest relationships were formed shapes our understanding of our behavior and relationships today.



## **BRIAN K. SEMSEM SR.**

**Executive Strategy Officer and  
Co-Founder, Brain Wise Solutions**

Brian is a husband to his best friend, Jessica, father and papa to eight children and eight grandchildren. He is co-founder of Brain Wise Solutions, a local non-profit organization whose mission is to empower systems change through human development and training, grounded in the principles of neuroscience, cultural humility, racial equity, and social justice.



## **OLGA CERVANTES**

**Mother & Parents Advocate**

Olga, like many parents, wants what is best for their child, and that means also working to protect their children from challenges. However, she was faced with her child's mental health challenge, something she couldn't control. So instead, she advocated and sought out support for her child and at the same time empowered her child in fighting stigma around mental wellness. Olga and her family are private people but she knew her family had to share their story to help so many other families who may have similar challenges.

# COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Three Digits. One Lifeline.

If you or someone you know is in suicidal crisis or emotional distress, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) is here for support 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Call or Text 988**

**Chat Online at [988Lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)**

Find Help. Find Hope.

If you or someone you know is not in a suicidal crisis or emotional distress but still feel the need to talk, there are other resources to help you through these tough times. Here's where to start:

- California Peer-Run Warm Line is a non-emergency resource for any individual in the state that's seeking mental or emotional support.
  - Call or Text 855-845-7415
  - Chat Online at [MentalHealthSF.org/peer-run-warmline/](https://MentalHealthSF.org/peer-run-warmline/)
- CalHOPE delivers crisis support for people impacted by a natural disaster through free outreach, crisis counseling, and other services.
  - Call 833-317-HOPE (4673)
  - Chat Online at [CalHope.org](https://CalHope.org)
- For services or the crisis line, call the Behavioral Health's 24/7 Access Line at 1-800-654-3937
- Learn more about the Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health at [HopeFresnoCounty.com](https://HopeFresnoCounty.com)

**StigmaFreeFresno.com**



Department of  
Behavioral Health