COVID-19 and Mental Health in the Workplace:
Solutions for Employers and Employees

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES
(In order of appearance on the program)

Cait Ellis, MPA is a Program Manager for the National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM) Foundation in Washington, D.C. In this role, Ms. Ellis conducts research and analysis to inform and improve management strategies for health care leaders in the public and private sector. She also provides support for NIHCM’s broad programming portfolio, including webinars, data visualizations, events, grants and awards. Ms. Ellis works across a wide range of topics, including the opioid crisis and mental health, rural health, and maternal and child health.

Prior to joining NIHCM, Ms. Ellis held several political and nonprofit internships and fellowships. Originally from California, Ms. Ellis received her Master’s in Public Affairs with a concentration in Policy Analysis from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University, Bloomington, and she holds a BA in Politics from Willamette University.

Kathleen M. Pike, PhD is Professor of Psychology at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. She serves as Director of the Columbia-WHO Center for Global Mental Health and Chair of the Faculty Steering Committee for the Global Mental Health Programs at Columbia. She is Deputy Director of the Health and Aging Policy Fellows Program. She is also Senior Supervising Psychologist in the Center for Eating Disorders at CUIMC.

Dr. Pike is recognized internationally for her work in the area of women’s health, particularly eating disorders. Dr. Pike has served as consultant to the American Psychiatric Association DSM-5 task force on cultural factors associated with the clinical presentation and risk factors of eating disorders and is on the scientific leadership team that supports the World Health Organization in the revision, implementation and training of the International Classification of Diseases, which is used by all WHO member nations to report public health data.

A long-time advocate for increasing access to care, Dr. Pike has over three decades of experience focused on mental health advocacy, policy, research and training. Kathy has provided consultation on mental health policy in the United States and Japan, where she resided for over a decade. She has worked with The Kennedy Forum to advance mental health parity, and the health policy fellowship that she codirects now has over 140 Fellows who are working around the country focused on improving health and aging and mental health.

Dr. Pike has experience designing and delivering mental health services in fragile and post-disaster settings. She provided extensive community services to the international
community in Japan following 9/11, and she directed a community-based mental health program following the 2011 Japanese earthquake/tsunami/nuclear disaster. She currently directs work in Lebanon addressing the mental health needs of the Syrian refugee community, and she serves on the Board of Trustees for the International Rescue Committee providing counsel regarding the delivery of mental health and social support services in post-disaster settings. The central mission of the Columbia-WHO Center for Global Mental Health is capacity building in under resourced communities globally.

With increased corporate recognition of the need to address mental health in the workplace, Dr. Pike has consulted to numerous business leaders and corporations in the US and globally to assist them in applying research evidence and best practices to develop and integrate programs that support employee mental health and wellbeing in today’s rapidly changing workplace.

She serves as Vice Chair of the Advisory Board for the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, is a Trustee of the Jewish Board in NYC, and is a Trustee of the International Rescue Committee.

Kathy is also a passionate beekeeper who marvels at the innate wisdom of honeybees and what their colonies teach us about work, health, productivity and community.

Brad Lerner is the Health Policy Director for Behavioral Health for Anthem. Previously he worked at Beacon as VP Government Affairs/Associate General Counsel. In his new role, Brad analyzes state behavioral health legislation and regulations and works closely with Federal government relations teams to support strategy and advocacy. In addition, he liaises with key national advocacy groups and professional groups. He also serves as enterprise subject matter expert on policy positions related to the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008. Brad currently serves in leadership positions for the American Health Lawyers Association’s Behavioral Health Task Force

Yolo Akili Robinson is an award-winning writer, healing justice worker, yogi and the founder and executive director of BEAM (The Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective). BEAM is a national training, movement building and grant making organization dedicated to the healing, wellness and liberation of Black communities. Yolo has worked primarily in three areas: Batterers intervention/family counseling with Black men and boys, HIV/AIDS, and healing justice/wellness work. In 2018, Yolo was awarded the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation "Health Equity Award" for his work. He was also featured at the 2020 BET Awards for an "Empowerful spotlight", highlighting his work facilitating the vision of BEAM. His writings and work have appeared on Shondaland, GQ, Women's Health, USA Today, Vice, B.E.T, Huffington Post, Cassius, Ebony, Everyday Feminisms and much more.