

MD | B.I.T. AFFINITY



ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

Maryland Behavioral Intervention Team Affinity Group

Officer Slate June 2020 - May 2021:

Co-Chairpersons: Stephanie Will, Montgomery College and Pavan Purswani, The University of Baltimore

Secretary: Courtney Hart, Community College of Baltimore County

Technology Coordinator: Marcus Peanort, Montgomery College

Affiliate Liaison: Allison Leventhal, Johns Hopkins University

During 2020-2021 the BIT Affinity Group focused on continuing to provide opportunities to share professional development opportunities among the member institutions. The group has also continued to welcome local 4-year institutions into our meetings so the community colleges can share the knowledge gained about BIT/CARES with others who are just beginning their journeys as well as benefit from the perspective added by the additional institutions.

Achievements for 2020-2021:

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the BIT Affinity group held 8 meetings. Three meetings were dedicated to conference planning, wrap-up, and planning for the new academic year. At each of our 5 other meetings throughout the year, we dedicated time to professional development. We were very fortunate to have some experts give 1 ½ -hour presentations on a number of particularly relevant topics.

- “Keeping Students Safe in the Age of COVID-19” -Jay Coughlin, Psy.D., Director, Counseling and Career Services, Howard Community College
- “Substance Use as the Canary in the Coal Mine: Ideas on Community and Student Intervention” -Ford Brooks, ED, LPC, NCC, CADC, Professor and Department Chair Counseling and College Student Personnel Shippensburg University
- “Implicit Bias: From Head to Heart” -Tyrone Russell, MS, Chief Executive Officer, Faces International Marketing and Development, LLC
- “BIT Basics” -Jay Coughlin, Director, Counseling and Career Services, Howard Community College; Pavan Purswani, Associate Director for Student Support, University of Baltimore; Lori Meehan, Student Conduct Administrator/Campus Assessment Response and Education (C.A.R.E.) Case Manager, The Community College of Baltimore County; Michele Richardson, Student Success and Engagement Program Director, Wellness Center, Prince Georges Community College
- “The New Title IX Regulations: A Discussion of Current Requirements and What’s Next” -David Tiscione, Director of Student Conduct, Loyola University Maryland

This academic year presented many challenges and opportunities for the group. By moving meetings and professional development sessions to a strictly virtual platform, we widened the reach of the group, seeing participation from community colleges that don't often make in-person meetings and increasing the participation of 4-year institutions. However, many missed the in-person camaraderie and look forward to having both an in-person and virtual option for business meetings and professional development as the COVID-19 pandemic dissipates.

Aside from professional development and conference planning, the group took up a number of initiatives over the last year. This year began the creation of a professional development library, allowing members to go back and view previously recorded presentations from conferences and meetings. We also leave space during each meeting for individuals to share information about best practices being utilized successfully at their institutions and to discuss challenging BIT cases that benefit from consultation. This group allows its members to keep up with assessment updates as well, most recently discussing the Non-Clinical Suicide Assessment Tool from NaBITA. We also successfully developed and approved our first set of Bylaws in our June 2020 meeting.

We held our 6th Annual BIT conference- "**BIT in a Digital World**"- via Zoom on April 16, 2021. After learning more about how to have a successful virtual event this year, we felt more confident and prepared going into this year's conference. The group as a whole was instrumental in planning the conference in the absence of a host institution and Conference Chair.

This year, we expanded our live offerings for the conference, having an opening panel, featured presentation, and keynote. During breaks in the live session we played short infomercials provided by local non-profit organizations that community college students across Maryland could benefit from. After the full day of live content, we also offered a number of pre-recorded breakout sessions for attendees that were available to watch up to two weeks following the conference, allowing attendees to give themselves mental breaks from their computers and watch the content at their leisure. Conference topics included:

Opening Panel- "Post-Pandemic Stress: Managing the Unseen Perils that Potentially Compromise Our Well-Being"

Featured Presentation- "Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) in Higher Education" by Dr. Monica Neel

Keynote- "Working Hand-in-Hand: Law Enforcement and Counseling Response to a Mental Health Crisis" by Mackenzie Schiemann of NaBITA and Captain Thomas Calucci

Pre-recorded Presentations:

- "The Implications and Responses of Covid-19 in Higher Education"
- "Title IX/BIT Communication Crossroads"
- "BIT Basics"
- "Caring for Students Over Break"
- "Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) on College Campuses"
- "Gallows Humor and Behavioral Intervention Teams"
- "The University of Baltimore Student Emergency Assistance Fund"
- "Transitioning from BIT to CARE"
- "Managing Anxiety in the Workplace: Good Self Care and Good Boundaries"
- "Breaching Silos: How the University of Baltimore Strengthened Relationships"
- "USM Benefit Concert"
- "What Faculty Can Contribute to Your Behavioral Intervention Team"
- "Counselor Self-Care in a Digital World"

We were very excited to continue our long standing relationship with NaBITA by welcoming Mackenzie Schiemann to present our keynote for the day. We were equally thrilled to continue our positive relationship with Dr. Brian Van Brunt of Looking Glass Consulting, who offered to do a pre-conference training on Thursday, April 15th entitled "Venting, Trolling, or Violent? Assessing Social Media, Email and Student Writing."

One hundred thirty one attendees joined us for our live content on the 16th. Registrants represented all 16 MACC institutions and many Maryland four year schools. We also had representatives from colleges and universities from across the country in attendance, including Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington DC, New York, Florida, North and South Carolina, Ohio, Iowa, Texas and California.

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE ATTENDEES 2021



The Affinity Group awarded the 3rd annual MD BIT Affinity Award for Excellence in the Field to Debra Bright of Montgomery College. The 2nd annual Up and Coming Professional in the Field Award was given to Tony DuLaney of The University of Baltimore and the 2nd annual Best/Promising Practice in the Field Award was given to the Community College of Baltimore County's College and Community Outreach Program.

The Affinity Group continues to effectively utilize technology to support our mission. Our website contains information about all of our meetings and training opportunities for the coming year as we develop our programs, and it has become the official platform for our conference and Professional Development Library.

- www.bitaffinity.org
- Marylandbit@gmail.com

Future Goals for 2021-2022

For the coming year we have already established meeting dates and a professional development framework for fall (all via Zoom). We also established committee membership including Professional Development, Awards, ByLaws, and a potential creation of a Technology Committee (in the case we do not fill the Tech Coordinator vacancy). We have temporarily suspended planning the 7th annual BIT Affinity Conference, including selecting a location, until we can more accurately predict where we'll be in April of 2022. Regardless of whether we are on campus or not, we are planning to integrate the use of Zoom and other technologies in our conference and regular meetings to be more inclusive of institutions that struggle to travel and professionals that aren't able to take an entire day to meet for professional development and conference planning.

The BIT Affinity Group has been developing formal By-laws to govern business and operating procedures. Especially with the onset of Covid, we have continued to discuss potential changes (IE - option of Zoom for all meetings and events, discussion of recording Zoom sessions).

After such a successful year of reaching new and returning institutions, we will continue to place an emphasis on increased membership to ensure a broader perspective on best practices and to help sustain the BIT

Affinity Group's mission. While our conference saw attendees from all 16 MACC institutions, our group did not represent that for the majority of this past year and we hope to change that in 2021/2022.

Officer Slate June 2021 - May 2022:

Co-Chairperson: Courtney Hart, Community College of Baltimore County

Co-Chairperson: Alice Boatman, Montgomery College

Secretary: Tiffany Arrington, Salisbury University

Technology Coordinator: TBD

Affiliate Liaison: Karyn Schulz, The University of Baltimore

Conference Chair (2022): TBD

The BIT Affinity Group

Submitted June 1, 2021 by:

Stephanie Will, Co-chairperson MD BIT Affinity Group

Pavan Purswani, Co-chairperson MD BIT Affinity Group