



**THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT and
THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING**

present

Men Leading Change: A Call to Action Against Domestic Violence

As we observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we must confront the heartbreaking reality that domestic violence continues to devastate countless lives in Brooklyn and beyond. This pervasive issue transcends gender, age, race, and economic background, affecting individuals across every demographic. Its ripple effect impacts entire families, neighborhoods, and communities. At SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, we are deeply committed to supporting survivors and breaking the cycle of violence.

Last year in Brooklyn, the NYPD received over 10,000 domestic violence reports—each one representing real people whose lives are shattered by abuse. While women are disproportionately affected, we must also recognize that men, too, are victims of domestic violence. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1 in 9 men in the U.S. has experienced severe physical violence from an intimate partner, with many suffering in silence due to stigma and shame.

It is time to engage all members of the community in the fight against domestic violence. We are proud to host our Domestic Violence Awareness Month program, “Men Leading Change,” a panel discussion focused on men’s vital role in ending domestic violence. This program will offer a platform for male leaders to speak out, inspire advocacy, influence meaningful change, ensure that men are passive bystanders and active participants in the solution, and provide resources for those requiring help.

Program Overview

The “**Men Leading Change**” program seeks to empower men to take leadership roles in challenging toxic behaviors, promoting healthy relationships, and advocating for a world free from domestic violence. It encourages accountability, empathy, and a commitment to ending all forms of abuse, creating a community where respect, care, and nonviolence are the norm.

Event Goals

Raise Awareness: Educate men about the profound impact domestic violence has on families and communities, and make it clear that domestic violence is not just a women’s issue but a societal one.

Empower Men: Provide participants with the tools, language, and skills they need to become effective advocates and role models in the fight to end domestic violence.

Change the Narrative: Help shift cultural norms that perpetuate toxic masculinity by encouraging men to lead with respect, care, and empathy, actively rejecting behaviors that contribute to domestic violence.

Promote Healthy Relationships: Offer education on fostering healthy relationships, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence, all crucial to preventing violence and building strong, respectful partnerships.

Support Survivors: Encourage men to become active allies, offering support to survivors and contributing to a culture that stands firmly against abuse in all its forms.

Domestic violence is an urgent issue that requires collective action from everyone. Men have a critical role in this effort, and “Men Leading Change” offers a powerful platform to raise awareness, promote advocacy, and create real, lasting change. By addressing domestic violence head-on and fostering a culture of respect and empathy, we can help end the cycle of abuse and create a safer, healthier future for all.

Join us for “**Men Leading Change**” on Thursday, October 10, 2024, from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM in Classroom 2B, and be part of the movement to lead change, support survivors, and build a community free from violence. Together, we can make a difference.



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MODERATOR BIO



Allen N. Lewis, Jr. Ph.D., CRC

Dean and Professor
School of Health Professions
SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University

Allen N. Lewis, Jr., Ph.D., CRC is professor and dean of the SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University School of Health Professions where he has served since January 2016. With over 40 years of experience, Dr. Lewis has held roles as a clinician, administrator, and educator. During the first 15 years of his career, he worked in public mental health, substance abuse services, and cancer epidemiology, holding significant positions such as Chief of Staff for the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Director of the Virginia State Cancer Registry.

Transitioning to academia, Dr. Lewis has been an educator for the past 25 years at institutions including Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Pittsburgh, Gallaudet University, and James Madison University. He has led as a division director and chaired two academic departments, amassing more than 25 years of administrative leadership.

Dr. Lewis, a nationally certified rehabilitation counselor, focuses his research on disability disparities and the outcomes of disability services. He has authored over 85 refereed journal articles, book chapters, and other scholarly contributions. Dr. Lewis has delivered over 150 invited presentations at various professional conferences and has served as a principal investigator for federally funded research projects totaling more than \$18 million.

Dr. Lewis authored the 2018 book *We Are All Racists: The Truth about Cultural Bias*, which examines race through the lens of cultural bias and offers data-driven solutions.

PANELIST BIOS



Quentin Walcott

Executive Director
CONNECT NYC

Quentin Walcott (he/him) known as “Q,” is a leading national and international anti-violence activist, educator and writer.

A hallmark of Quentin’s work over the past 22 years has been engaging men and boys as allies and activists in the movement to prevent intimate and gender-based violence. The foundation of Quentin’s work is a focus on the intersections of violence—race, class and gender—and its impact on marginalized communities.

Quentin was named a New York New Abolitionist in 2014. Prior to becoming the executive director of CONNECT, Quentin developed the CONNECT Training Institute (CTI), the leading anti-violence learning facility in NYC, and was director of CONNECT’s Community Empowerment Program.

Quentin was one of 100 U.S leaders selected by the NoVo Foundation to participate in its groundbreaking Move to End Violence initiative, a 10-year program to strengthen the movement to end gender-based violence in the United States. He’s also a member of the Resonance Network’s Navigator’s Circle and a member of Just Beginning Collaborative’s Strategic Committee. In 2018, Quentin was selected to serve on the NYC Domestic Violence

Task Force Steering Committee and was appointed to the NYC Mental Health Advisory Group.

He is co-founder and chief organizer of the Father’s Day Pledge Against Violence, which this June, NYC will have its 14th annual event, now observed in 50+ U.S. cities. Quentin was a speaker at the first White House United State of Women Summit (2016) on gender equality, and shared the dais with TV actor and activist Matt McGorry.

Quentin was awarded the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women Award in 2014. He was the first man to receive the NOW-NYC Susan B. Anthony Award (2012).

After graduating college, Mr. Walcott was mentored by Dr. John Aponte, the foremost leader in batterers’ intervention in New York City, and began his life work in 1996 facilitating batterers’ intervention programs and various other groups for men and youth throughout the five boroughs.

Quentin has partnered with Cornell University ILR School to create Men and Women as Allies, an in-depth training for corporations and labor unions to respond to and prevent Domestic Violence in the workplace violence, bullying behavior, and workplace violence.



Marlon Walker

Co-Director of Programs
CONNECT NYC

Marlon Walker, Co-Director of Programs, joined CONNECT in 2005. He is a full-time Trainer and Educator for CONNECT's Training Institute and Community Empowerment Program. With over two decades of experience working with families and youth affected by violence, Marlon leads trainings on domestic violence and facilitates the "Hombres Dialogando" support group for Spanish-speaking

men. He also leads workshops for high schools, fatherhood, job placement, and re-entry programs. Marlon has previously worked as an Early Head Start teacher, family worker, and Male Involvement Coordinator. Having grown up in Latin America, he is passionate about helping men understand their roles as fathers, partners, and role models.



Sam J. Young, LMSW

TH Social Worker II
Care Management – Social Work Department
SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University

With over a decade of experience, Sam J. Young, LMSW, is dedicated to serving diverse populations through impactful social work. Since earning his Master of Social Work from Adelphi University in 2013, Sam has worked in clinical settings, social service agencies, and educational institutions, leveraging his crisis intervention, advocacy, and care planning skills to improve outcomes for individuals and families.

As a TH Social Worker II at New York State University Hospital, Sam oversees social work services, supervises interns, and ensures compliance with regulatory standards. He works closely with interdisciplinary teams, addresses patient grievances, and builds community partnerships to ensure seamless discharge and follow-up care.

In previous roles, Sam served as a Local School Transition Coordinator with the New York State Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), supporting students with special needs in transitioning to adult services. He also worked as a Fee-for-Service Therapist at SCO Family of Services, providing individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, and referrals for higher levels of care.

Sam's extensive aftercare experience includes his role as an Aftercare Worker at SCO Family of Services, where he supported youth transitioning from institutional care to the community. He also worked as a Health Care Integrator at Little Flower Children and Family Services, coordinating care for foster children with complex needs, and as a Residential Manager at Family Residences and Essential Enterprises (FREE), overseeing care for individuals with disabilities.

Sam has remained committed to professional growth throughout his career, earning certifications in Suicide Prevention, Crisis Intervention, Disaster Response, and SIFI (Seminar in Field Education). He is licensed as an LMSW in New York and holds the New York State Screen Certification.

Sam is driven by a passion for advocacy and care, empowering individuals and families during their most challenging times with compassion and leadership



Nathaniel Tolbert, LCSW

Clinical Director,
Transformative Justice Collective
Urban Resource Institute

Nathaniel “Nate” Tolbert is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with extensive experience in school and community-based settings. Over the past decade, Nate has worked as a clinical social worker, professional development facilitator and restorative justice facilitator. He is currently the Clinical Director of The Transformative Justice Collective at Urban Resource Institute (URI).

Nate has a passion for community based-interventions and places emphasis on intimate partner violence and community healing. Nate received both his undergraduate degree and a M.A. in Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology from Boston College. Nate earned his Master of Social Work In Clinical Practice from Hunter College. Nate completed a clinical externship in family and couples therapy at Ackerman Institute.