

“RAISE Awareness: Outreach Initiatives in Marginalized Communities”

by: Dr. Megan Schwalm, Executive Director

Previous Initiative: Outreach Manager Position (7/2021)

- Funding from TDMHSAS
- Focused on BIPOC Communities

New Initiative: Bilingual Respite Coordinator Position (9/2024)

- Funding from ACL/Lifespan Respite Care
- Focused on Latinx/Immigrant Communities



Hire Diverse Staff with Authentic Representation

- **Authentic Representation:** Ensure that staff members conducting outreach activities authentically represent the communities they are engaging with. This goes beyond tokenism and prioritizes individuals who genuinely understand the experiences, cultures, and challenges of marginalized communities.
- **Community Insider Perspective:** Prioritize hiring individuals from within the targeted communities who possess an insider perspective. Their lived experiences and deep understanding of community dynamics will foster trust, rapport, and effective communication.
- **Empowerment and Leadership:** Empower staff members from marginalized communities by providing opportunities for leadership and professional development. Foster an inclusive work environment where their voices are valued, respected, and given space to influence decision-making processes.

Additional Key Principles

1. Listen to understand
2. Educate yourself
3. Engage and Collaborate
4. Respect and Empower
5. Transparency and Accountability
6. Consistency and Long-Term Commitment
7. Prioritize Diversity and Inclusion
8. Take Action and Support