BUILDING BRIDGES AND TEARING DOWN WALLS: A MODEL FOR EMPIRICALLY-BASED STATE AND LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY ON IMMIGRATION
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Cristina Muñiz de la Peña, PhD Co-founder and Mental Health Director, Terra Firma Social Justice for Immigrant Children, Center for Child Health and Resiliency

Alfonso Mercado, PhD Licensed Psychologist/Assistant Professor, University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley, Department of Psychological Science, School of Medicine, Psychiatry and Neurology Department
Building Bridges and Tearing Down Walls: A Model for Empirically-Based State and Legislative Advocacy on Immigration

Lessons of Heart Mountain
2019 APA Practice Leadership Conference
Sunday, March 10, 2019, 11:00 AM–12:30 PM, Declaration AB

Shirley Ann Higuchi, JD, @HiguchiJD
• Associate Executive Director, Office of Legal & Regulatory Affairs, APA
• Chair, Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF)
Higuchi Family, California, c. 1930
Pearl Harbor
Dec. 7, 1941

Executive Order 9066
Feb. 19, 1942
James Higuchi, U.S. Army

Forced to sign papers selling the family farm
Heart Mountain Interpretive Center
www.heartmountain.org
A field trip to the site of Great Injustice
Forty American Judges in full robes
stand beneath the guard tower and barbed wire of the
Japanese American WWII Internment Center at Heart Mountain Wyoming - June 2014
Mayor apologizes for citing WWII internment of Japanese Americans in Syrian refugee context.

Parallels between Japanese Internment and Muslim ban?

Los Angeles Times

'What happened in World War II is happening again': Immigrant detention centers through the eyes of a therapist

Why Citing the Japanese Internment as a 'Precedent' for a Muslim Registry Is So Alarming

The Return of Korematsu

Seventy years after the mass internment of Japanese Americans was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, the ugly ideas at the core of its decision are resurfacing.
Trump needs to visit a Japanese American internment camp: Column

There is no racial or religious test for being an American. We should not start one now.

My parents, Dr. William Higuchi and Setsuko Saeki, first met in sixth grade at school. It wasn't as nose-tingling as it sounds. The school was at Heart Mountain, Wyo., one of the Japanese American internment camps created by Executive Order 9066 signed in 1942 by President Franklin Roosevelt.
Commentary: For-profit immigrant detention centers are an echo of a sad past

Then, as now, overly hyped claims of national security gave rise to our baser communal emotions.
Commentary: There is no test to becoming American

President Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally, Sunday, Nov. 4, 2018, in Macon, Ga. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

By Shirley Ann Higuchi | For The Tribune

Published: November 4, 2018
Updated: November 05, 2018
Japanese Americans know well the dangers of misused census data

If the question of national origin is reinstated on the 2020 Census, immigrants could be targeted and many could be deprived of the government services they need.

By Shirley Ann Higuchi
Special to The Times

My grandparents dutifully filled out their census forms in 1940, recording their residences, number of children and countries of origin and sending them back to the government. Less than two years later, the government used those forms to help send them to what has been euphemistically referred to as “internment camps.”

They were Japanese Americans, and the government used the census information that was supposed to remain confidential to force them and 120,000 individuals, the majority U.S. citizens, from their homes and into camps.
Commentary: Immigrants have long fought bravely for the United States

(Francisco Kjolseth | The Salt Lake Tribune) The Utah Museum of Fine Art hosts "Chiura Obata: An American Modern," major touring retrospective of Japanese-American artist (1885-1975), whose work captured Western landscapes and his time at the Topaz War Relocation Center (internment camp) during World War II. Pictured is "Arrivals Welcome to Topaz, October 1, 10:10 a.m.," 1942, Ink on paper.
Guest opinion: Bush helped right wrongs of Heart Mountain camp

By SHIRLEY ANN HIGUCHI  Dec 9, 2018

In this file photo, Heart Mountain towers over the only remaining barracks from the World War II camp where Japanese-Americans were detained in northern Wyoming.
BUILDING BRIDGES AND TEARING DOWN WALLS: A MODEL FOR EMPIRICALLY-BASED STATE AND LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY ON IMMIGRATION

Giselle A. Hass, Psy.D.
DCPA, CAPP
Child Migration Crisis

- **68,541** unaccompanied children arrived in FY14

- **39,970** Arrived in FY15 - 42% drop from last year but five times the historical average

- **32,952** Have arrived in FY16 (Oct-Apr), a 74% increase from the same time period last year and on pace to surpass FY15 arrivals
Thank you!

Giselle.Hass@gmail.com
The Power of Collaboration: How Interdisciplinary Partnerships can Support Immigrant Children

Manuel Paris, Psy.D.
Photography: Ruthie Abel, *Let It Be The Dream It Used To Be*, a collaborative photography project with unaccompanied children.
Thank You

manuel.paris@yale.edu
Stepping Out of the Box When Working with Immigrant Children and Families

Cristina Muñiz de la Peña, PhD
Who are we, where we come from?

The New York Children’s Health Project
Children’s Hospital at Montefiore
South Bronx, NY
Unaccompanied Alien Children Definition
The Homeland Security Act of 2002

- Under the age of 18
- Without legal immigration status
- Without a parent or guardian in the United States available to provide care and physical custody... at the time of apprehension
"The Surge"
Unaccompanied Immigrant Children Apprehended at Southwest Border by Country, 2012-2017

The Push: An Existential Threat

**Figure 1**
Homicide rate by country, Northern Triangle and United States
Homicides per 100,000 people*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Homicide Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>108.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The most recent data available for the United States are from 2014. Data for the Northern Triangle countries are from 2015.
The Journey
Step 1. Apprehension and Processing
Step 2: Transfer to Detention Shelters

Office Refugee Resettlement Shelters
- 72 shelters; 8,000 beds
  - US*
- Average LOS 34 days

**US Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Reunification, Cont’d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Sponsor Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Sibling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23%</td>
<td>Other adult relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Grandparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14%</td>
<td>Non-relative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ORR 2012 Annual Report to Congress (Via Grace & Roth, 2015)
The Court Process Begins
The Terra Firma model

- Reducing legal problems
- Promote legal relief
- Increased primary care for underserved populations
- Better access
- More efficient care
- Better compliance
- Coping
- Support
- Reduced legal problems
- Promote legal relief
- Improved Mental Health
- Improved Medical
- Improved Case Management Services
- Improved Provision of Legal Services

ADVOCACY
Terra Firma: Immigrant Youth Clinic

- Individual medical, mental health, legal visits
- Case management
- Enrichment – dance (Zumba), tutoring, job & school applications

4:00-7:00

- Group dinner:
  Youth, sponsors, staff

5:30-6:00

6:00-7:30

- Support group co-led by psychologist & pediatrician
  - Topics: Acculturation, resilience, adolescent health
  - Fun/Enrichment
  - Mindfulness Exercise
Terra Firma in the APA Monitor
Stepping out of our roles
Thank You

www.terrafirma.nyc
Trauma, Health, Evidence from the Texas/Mexico Border

Dr. Alfonso Mercado, Associate Professor, University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley, Department of Psychological Science, School of Medicine Department of Neurology and Psychiatry
Objectives

- South Texas/Mexico Border
- Trauma and Health in recent immigrants
- Family Separations
- Texas Psychological Association
- Diversity Division and Social Justice Division Advocacy Efforts
Humanitarian and Refugee Center
McAllen, TX
Exposure (Parents)
• Crime related (69.7%)
• Natural disaster (95.0%)
• Physical/Sexual (46.0%)

PTSD Symptoms (Parents) $M = 59.72, SD = 22.76$
• Clinical cut-off has varied but generally around 24

Children: $M = 12.30, SD = 13.01, Range = 0-51, Alpha = .95$
60% of the sample exceeded the clinical cutoff score of 11 (Foa et al., 2001)
### Why does this matter?

**Table 3**  
*Multivariate Summary Table of Associations Between Trauma Exposure and Trauma Symptoms with Parent-Reported Health*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>$F_{(1,86)}$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>$\text{Eta}^2$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SF-36 Physical Functioning Scale</td>
<td>10.37</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Role Limitations due to Physical Health Scale</td>
<td>13.78</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Role Limitations due to Emotional Problems Scale</td>
<td>13.46</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Energy/Fatigue Scale</td>
<td>23.30</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Emotional Well-Being Scale</td>
<td>36.29</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Social Functioning Scale</td>
<td>30.24</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Pain Scale</td>
<td>20.15</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.19</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>$F_{(1,86)}$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>$\text{Eta}^2$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SF-36 Physical Functioning Scale</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Role Limitations due to Physical Health Scale</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Role Limitations due to Emotional Problems Scale</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Energy/Fatigue Scale</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Emotional Well-Being Scale</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Social Functioning Scale</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF-36 Pain Scale</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Mercado, Venta, & Henderson (accepted)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Trauma Symptoms</th>
<th>Trauma Exposure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( F_{(1, 66)} )</td>
<td>( p )</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHQ Physical Functioning Scale Score</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>.025</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHQ Role/Social Limitations due to Emotional/Behavioral Difficulties Scale Score</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>.015</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHQ Role/Social Limitations due to Physical Health Scale Score</td>
<td>4.01</td>
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<td>CHQ Bodily Pain and Discomfort Scale Score</td>
<td>15.09</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHQ Behavior Scale Score</td>
<td>23.20</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
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<td>CHQ Global Behavior Scale Score</td>
<td>12.60</td>
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<td>CHQ Mental Health Scale Score</td>
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<td>CHQ Self-Esteem Scale Score</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>.045</td>
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<td>CHQ General Health Perceptions Scale Score</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.306</td>
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<td>CHQ Change in Health Scale Score</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>.798</td>
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<td>CHQ Emotional Health Scale Score</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>.087</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHQ Time Impact on Parent Scale Score</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHQ Family Activities Scale Score</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHQ Family Cohesion Scale Score</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>.365</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recent Studies Conclusions

Trauma exposure and symptoms are prevalent in children, teens, and caregivers from Central America who are entering the U.S.

Both trauma exposure and symptoms have serious consequences for
• Mental health
• Physical health
• Family relationships
• Adaptation following migration
Family Separations
McAllen, Texas
Texas Psychological Association

- Clear Public Statement on Family Separations
- Media Interviews (MSNBC, TIME, CNN, International platforms)
- TPA Diversity Division
  - DACA mental health initiative
  - United We Dream, Org. & National Latino Psychological Association
alfonso.mercado@utrgv.edu
@Dr_Mercado1
SPTA Involvement

- Advocacy
  - Individual Level
  - SPTA Level
- Promote Science/Facts to Media
- Volunteer
Individual Advocacy

• State/National-level advocacy is only as good as the individuals supporting it.
• Leading by example, walking the walk
  • Beyond the private practice setting
  • Beyond the institutional setting
• Socially Responsible Practitioners/Scholars
  • Positions of power
  • Use of relationships
  • Taking a chance despite opposing forces
• Professional relationships and BRIDGES for social justice
  • Partnerships are crucial
  • Even without monetary support!
SPTA Advocacy

• Create SPTA Diversity Initiatives
  • Texas Psychological Association

• Professional relationships and BRIDGES for social justice
  • Partnerships are crucial
  • Even without monetary support!

• Identification of stakeholders
  • Look at what it takes to get RxP passed – cannot go at it alone as an SPTA or APA
  • Partner with community agencies/nonprofits already doing this work
  • National Latinx Psychological Association
  • Non-psychology groups
Media and Facts Reporting

- **SPTAs help identify and collect contact information about the leading experts in their state**
  - Create a social policy statements and share WIDELY – not just on SPTA website
- **Create press releases and involve your diversity delegates**
- **Speak about what you know - use DATA/FACTS**
  - **Impact on psychological functioning overall**
    - For the children (development, trauma, attachment, etc.)
    - For the family (separation, trauma, etc.)
  - **Social discrimination based on race**
    - Exclusion and marginalization of undocumented people occur within a social and political context that privileges certain individuals’ human rights and well-being over those of others. (Glassgold, 2014; Horner et. al, 2014; Kamal & Lillian, 2015).
Volunteer

• All levels needed (students, faculty, psychologists, etc.)
  • www.Caraprobono.org
  • www.immigrationjustice.us/home
  • https://www.immigrationjustice.us/volunteeropportunities/dilley
  • www.raicestexas.org/volunteer/
• Karnes pro bono – connect through RIACES (Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services)
Questions