

TONICA ROBINSON, DBH

Behavioral Health in Context | Behavioral Health Systems | Health Policy | Person-Centered Care

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ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Practice-oriented educator, published research co-author, behavioral health executive, and practitioner-scholar with more than 20 years of leadership across public mental health, community health, healthcare administration, health policy, compliance, workforce development, nonprofit systems, and public communication. Doctor of Behavioral Health with a Management concentration from Arizona State University's College of Health Solutions and graduate legal training in health care compliance. Scholarly work examines behavioral health in context - how systems, policy, history, social conditions, and institutional practices shape behavior, access, experience, and outcomes. Experienced in translating research, policy, regulation, and complex health-system concepts into case-based learning, workforce education, applied tools, executive presentations, mentoring, and public-facing education.

TEACHING & SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

Behavioral Health Systems & Policy • Health Policy & Administration • Person-Centered Systems & Institutional Practice • Social Determinants & Context • Implementation & Systems Change • Healthcare Compliance & Ethics • Community & Population Health • Workforce Development • Program Design & Evaluation • Community-Engaged Research • Black American Behavioral Health • Research Translation

EDUCATION

Doctor of Behavioral Health (DBH), Management Concentration — Arizona State University, College of Health Solutions | 2022

Master of Studies in Law — University of Southern California, Gould School of Law | 2020

- Graduate Certificate in Health Care Compliance. Selected coursework included Health Law and Policy, Patient Privacy Law, Regulatory Compliance, and Health Care Law, Business and Finance.

Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science — University of Nevada, Las Vegas | 2002

TEACHING, CURRICULUM & MENTORING EXPERIENCE

Workforce Education, Curriculum Development & Mentoring — Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health | 2023-Present

- Lead learning and capacity-building initiatives for peer specialists, community health workers, substance use counselors, medical caseworkers, managers, analysts, providers, and community partners.
- Translate evidence, policy, legislation, regulatory requirements, and system priorities into training systems, implementation guidance, presentations, practical tools, and case-based learning materials.
- Developed a 12-module, mental-health-centered Community Health Worker curriculum incorporating core competencies, applied scenarios, skills practice, asynchronous learning, and on-the-job field experience.
- Create and facilitate executive, staff, provider, and community education on behavioral health services, workforce models, person-centered care, program implementation, quality, compliance, and systems transformation.
- Mentor managers, analysts, and emerging professionals through coaching, structured feedback, project guidance, and leadership development.

Executive Education, Workshops & Professional Development — Nonprofit, Public-Sector & Social-Impact Organizations | Ongoing

- Designed and delivered workshops, staff trainings, executive presentations, and facilitated learning on strategic planning, governance, program design, organizational development, compliance, adaptive leadership, communications, fundraising, and cross-sector partnerships.
- Tailored complex material for adult and professional learners using real-world examples, collaborative discussion, implementation exercises, and action-oriented takeaways.

Public Education, Research Translation & Community Engagement | National, Regional & Community Audiences

- Translate behavioral health systems, policy, social determinants, history, institutional practice, and community conditions into public-facing education and professional learning materials.
- Experienced presenter before commissions, public bodies, senior officials, providers, nonprofit leaders, media, funders, and community stakeholders, including people with lived experience.

RESEARCH & SCHOLARLY WORK

Peer-Reviewed Publication

van Eeghen, C., O'Rourke Lavoie, J., Kelley, K. S., Brown, G., Canin, B., Hitt, J., Paron, K., Robinson, T., Schweitzer, H., & Van Serke, H. (2025). Community case study of patient and clinician early engagement in research on multiple chronic conditions using an implementation guide. *Frontiers in Medicine*, 12, 1642655.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fmed.2025.1642655>

- PCORI-funded multidisciplinary project focused on engaging patients, caregivers, clinicians, and researchers in co-creating a health research agenda; author contribution included resources and manuscript review and editing.
- Developing independent scholarship under the Behavioral Health in Context umbrella, including the Black Behavioral Health Ecosystem as a population-specific application of broader systems, policy, historical, social, and institutional analysis.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS & RESEARCH TRANSLATION

- “Including All Voices in Partnering for Multiple Chronic Conditions Healthcare Research” - national healthcare research workshop/presentation, 2021.
- Regular presenter and facilitator on behavioral health systems, person-centered care, workforce models, implementation, quality, compliance, stakeholder engagement, and systems transformation.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chief of Allied Health and Peer Services (formerly Chief of Peer Services) — Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health | Los Angeles, CA | 2023-Present

- Lead countywide strategy, program development, workforce initiatives, and stakeholder engagement for peer services, community health workers, substance use counselors, medical caseworkers, Clubhouses, and related community-based behavioral health services.
- Advise executive leadership on organizational design, policy and legislative implementation, public funding, resource allocation, regulatory readiness, community engagement, and emerging behavioral health priorities.
- Direct multimillion-dollar budgets, contracts, provider oversight, certification readiness, performance improvement, risk management, and compliance with state and federal requirements.
- Build alignment among county leaders, universities, providers, advocates, community organizations, and people with lived experience to improve access, cultural responsiveness, quality, and continuity of care.

Behavioral Health Administrator & Innovation Leader — Riverside University Health System - Behavioral Health / Tri-City Mental Health | Southern California | 2017-2023

- Directed multimillion-dollar behavioral health, innovation, quality, and managed-care operations serving diverse Medi-Cal communities across county and municipal systems.
- Managed innovation portfolios from concept through implementation, including service-model design, stakeholder engagement, regulatory and funding alignment, performance measurement, evaluation, and continuous improvement.
- Secured and stewarded more than \$35 million for service expansion and systems transformation, including authoring the project plan for a technology-enabled mental wellness initiative awarded more than \$25 million.
- Led multidisciplinary teams and developed program plans, budgets, logic models, performance measures, evaluation processes, quality-improvement strategies, contracts, and state reports.
- Represented agencies before commissions, state officials, providers, community stakeholders, and public forums; developed strategies addressing disparities and barriers to care.

SELECTED NONPROFIT, PUBLIC HEALTH & SOCIAL-IMPACT LEADERSHIP

Earlier leadership includes Director of Communications and Development, Black AIDS Institute; Development Officer, Breathe California of Los Angeles County; Communications Director, Time for Change Foundation; Manager of Marketing and Development, Disability Rights Legal Center; Vice President of Communications, Coalition for Engaged Youth/New Visions Foundation; External Affairs Director, Crystal Stairs; Assistant Director of Membership Extension, Girl Scouts Council of Orange County; Business Accounts Director, Center for Employment Opportunities; State Director, Soldiers' Angels; Grants Director, Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education; and Strategy Associate, California Black Media.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & EXECUTIVE ADVISORY

- Founded and operated independent consulting practices serving nonprofit, healthcare, and social-impact organizations through outreach, communications and public relations, stakeholder engagement, fundraising, organizational strategy, and related advisory services.
- Provided direct consultation to executives and boards on strategic and business planning, program design, organizational development, compliance, grant strategy, crisis response, partnerships, and implementation.
- Broader entrepreneurial experience includes program development, community engagement, communications, grant strategy, and the design and implementation of new healthcare and behavioral health initiatives.

EARLIER PUBLIC LEADERSHIP & COMMUNICATION

Senior Public Information Officer — City of Las Vegas | Las Vegas, NV | 2003-2007

- Advised the City Manager's Office, Mayor, City Council, and departments on public communication, media relations, crisis communication, speeches, campaigns, and community engagement.
- Managed major civic events and portions of the city's centennial celebration; served as on-air talent for KCLV Channel 2.

CREDENTIALS, SERVICE & PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

- Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist - State of California.
- Appointed and elected service has included the California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission Fellowship Advisory Committee, Moreno Valley Community Services Commission, Tarzana Neighborhood Council, and Phi Alpha Delta chapter leadership.
- Professional and scholarly interests center on behavioral health in context, person-centered and community-responsive systems, implementation, health equity, workforce development, Black American behavioral health, and the relationship among policy, institutional practice, social conditions, and health outcomes.

SELECTED GRADUATE COURSEWORK

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| • Behavioral Health Management | • Cultural Diversity, Health & Illness |
| • Healthcare Systems: Organization, Delivery & Economics | • Global Integrated Health |
| • Population-Based Behavioral Health Management | • Health Law and Policy |
| • Quality & Performance Measurement/Improvement | • Patient Privacy Law |
| • Financial Management of Health Care | • Regulatory Compliance |
| • Health Informatics | • Health Care Law, Business and Finance |
| • Healthcare Legal, Ethical & Professional Issues | • Graduate Certificate in Health Care Compliance |
| • Models of Integrated Primary Care | |

ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Available for adjunct or practitioner faculty roles, guest lectures, visiting lectures, seminars, professional education, curriculum development, student mentoring, interdisciplinary collaboration, and applied research or scholarly partnerships.