

## Multicultural Corner

On February 25, 2016, PPAL celebrated **Black History Month** with a special event at the Grove Hall Public Library. The event featured well-known psychologist Dr. Omar Reid as the keynote speaker, who delivered an incredibly powerful message about the specific mental health needs of African Americans. Dr. Reid is a licensed educational psychologist and mental health counselor with over 30 years of experience. He is also the founder of the Black Mental Health Alliance of Massachusetts, Inc. (BMHAM). This organization is the first of its kind, with a mission of providing education and training for culturally competent mental health services. His speech focused on the mental health effects of racism and the need for mental health professionals to be appropriately trained to address these issues. He also touched on the necessity for good nutrition, as well as the importance of job creation by and for people of color. During his talk, Dr. Reid also highlighted PPAL's work in reaching out to diverse communities and bringing more awareness about mental illness through education, collaboration and advocacy.



In February, PPAL formed an important alliance designed to spread awareness of our organization's work with Native American families in our community. Outreach Coordinator Norma Mora and Multicultural Outreach Specialist Hanna Martinez attended an event hosted by the **North American Indian Center of Boston (NAICOB)**, which began with an opening prayer known as a "smudging." Director Joanne Dunn burned sage in an abalone shell, and touched each attendee's shoulders with a traditional fan meant to represent all human races. Hanna then presented information about PPAL, including our education, training and advocacy programs. PPAL is excited to collaborate with NAICOB and to ensure that the mental health needs of Native American families are met.

PPAL continued its community outreach with an event at the **Asian Community Development Corporation of Chinatown**. At this meeting, our staff presented a workshop about mental health and Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI) services and handed out CHBI brochures in the participants' native language.



Attendees included both traditional and contemporary Chinese mothers, as well as African American mothers. With the assistance of interpreter May Lui, the mothers learned more about mental health resources for their children and expressed interest in receiving CBHI services in their own languages or becoming family partners. We are pleased to be working with the Asian Community Development Corporation of Chinatown, and are looking forward to planning an event in the community in July 2016 for National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month.