

# STRIVING FOR ZERO EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Striving  
for  
Zero

## INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

### Bridging the Gap Between Spirituality and Suicide Prevention

*Riverside County:*

*Riverside University Health System Behavioral Health & Public Health*

This year, the Riverside County Suicide Prevention Coalition hosted its second full-day, in-person conference. This year's theme was "Bridging the Gap between Spirituality and Suicide Prevention." We believe that faith communities are a natural setting for suicide prevention. Faith communities can serve as a protective factor for individuals and communities by instilling messages of hope and promoting connection with other like-minded individuals. The goal of this year's conference was to enhance public knowledge about the role that faith communities can play in preventing, intervening, and responding to suicide. The event consisted of one keynote presentation focused on the essentials of suicide prevention in faith communities, as well as, two panels of 11 faith leaders representing various faith communities to discuss the role that faith communities can play in stigma reduction and suicide prevention efforts. The 11 panelists not only collaborated with the coalition for this event but are now members of our county's Interfaith and Spiritualities Subcommittee where they will continue the work of integrating mental health awareness and suicide prevention into their communities. Together, the coalition and the Interfaith and Spiritualities subcommittee are planning to bring suicide prevention gatekeeper trainings to these faith communities free of charge. We are also discussing opportunities to develop long-standing mental health support systems ("mental health ministry") within their places of worship. This aligns with the coalition's goals of increasing knowledge and awareness of suicide prevention efforts as well as stigma reduction around mental health and suicide.



#### THE ESSENTIALS OF SUICIDE PREVENTION

Karen Mason, Ph.D.  
Professor of Counseling and Psychology



**Creating Hope Through Action:**  
Bridging the Gap Between Spirituality and  
Suicide Prevention



SCAN ME TO PLAY  
SHORT EVENT VIDEO!