



**Rwenshaun Miller**

218 Baldwin Ave • Charlotte, NC 28262  
Phone: 919-624-9954 • E-Mail: [Rwenshaun@EustressInc.org](mailto:Rwenshaun@EustressInc.org)  
Web: [EustressInc.org](http://EustressInc.org)

Date: March 30, 2018

Clifford W. Beers Award Committee  
Mental Health America

Greetings,

My life changed when the gun didn't discharge when I pulled the trigger as the barrel touched my temple during this third attempt. I was diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder 7 years prior and did not know how to handle it. I did not understand what it meant and did not stick to the help that I was receiving. This led to self-medication with alcohol and multiple suicide attempts. My name is Rwenshaun Miller and I would like to be considered for the Clifford W. Beers Award. I am the Founder and Executive Director of Eustress, Inc., a nonprofit built on the principles of raising mental health awareness through conversation and various activities to break the stigma associated with mental health and mental illness in black and brown communities. I understand that many people live in a state of ignorance, fear, and denial instead of seeking the help that they actually need. My passion has been to help people understand that it's okay to not be okay, and it's okay to get help when it's needed.

My work with Eustress, Inc. is community-oriented and directly impacts individuals who may not understand mental health challenges. Since 2013, I have engaged in community and online events with my campaign "Let's Talk About It". As a speaker before audiences at universities, athletic and government organizations, corporations, churches, professional conferences and more, I create safe spaces for open and honest dialogue about mental illness. The primary goal of the campaign is to break down barriers associated with mental health by helping individuals understand what mental health challenges are, how to seek help and provide support, and highlight the fact that mental illness is not exclusive to one race, social class, or gender. Of equal importance, I strive to help individuals understand that even if diagnosed with a mental illness you can survive and lead a fulfilling life. This is especially important for my community and Black males who continuously suffer in silence.

In November 2015, I planned and executed the first annual [“Let’s Talk About It Mental Health Awareness Walk”](#). The walk took place during the UNC Chapel Hill homecoming weekend and served as an opportunity for UNC undergraduate students and alumni to engage in service while simultaneously creating dialogue and awareness on the topic of college mental health. The success of this walk was unprecedented and has led to inaugural walks in Charlotte, NC and my rural hometown in Bertie County, NC. Currently, Eustress hosts three annual walks (Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Bertie County) with over 500 participants in the past with our reach constantly increasing as we create spaces for people to feel comfortable.

In addition to this, I started a men’s yoga class with my friend, Danielle Terrell, to teach men how to do yoga and how it benefits your mental health. Similar to my community work, I realize that there is a gap in mental health services for men of color. This is due to a lack of male mental health professionals and a lack of men of color seeking services. Therefore, I completed my master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and became a Licensed Professional Counselor. I am currently a Ph.D. candidate of International Psychology at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology.

As an added resource for men of color, I host a weekly conference call, Locker Room Talk. We discuss various things, including relationships, work, and whatever else, that can affect our mental health but we rarely discuss them in any other setting. I have expanded this idea and partnered with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to create a half-day workshop to address the major issues that play a key role in a lack of success with male students of color.

I also dedicate time to the development of my blog, [Rwenshaun.com](#), where I share some of my personal stories living with a mental illness in hopes of inspiring others to talk about mental health. Written from my first hand experiences, I put aside my fear of being judged, insecurities, and the perception of others to let people who may suffer from a mental illness know that they are not the only ones; that they are not alone. Through my blog, I help break the stigma and promote wellness for everyone. This also led to my self published book *Injured Reserve: A Black Man’s Playbook To Manage Being Sidelined By Mental Illness*. I have been featured on various media platforms, including Huffington Post being listed as “15 Black Male Therapist You Should Know” and “17 Top Black Influencers You

Should Partner With In 2018". I was also a guest on Power 105.1FM's nationally syndicated radio show "The Breakfast Club," discussing mental health in the Hip-Hop community.

It is honor to submit this nomination statement and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rwenshaun Miller