



# minding our businesses

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Approximately one third to one half of all Americans will experience a mental or behavioral health challenge in their lifetime. Since most of life is spent in the working years, the workplace is an ideal setting to promote public health-informed initiatives to prevent and treat these illnesses.

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# our vision

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We envision a society where mental health is as important as physical health. Where depression, anxiety, addiction, and other mental health challenges occur rarely, and when they do, they are openly addressed to minimize their effects on our lives. How could such a world be achieved without involving the workplaces where we spend such a significant portion of our days?

The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/The Luv u Project Center for Mental Health in the Workplace will provide the first ever academic home for research and development housed in the only school of public health with a department of mental health. Through collaboration with businesses, professional organizations, providers, and government organizations, our academic center will help foster a world with:

- **increased** awareness and acceptance of mental illness;
  - **decreased** prevalence of mental illness;
  - **increased** employee wellness;
  - **decreased** absenteeism;
  - **increased** prevention and treatment services; and
  - **decreased** stigma and consequences of disclosing a mental illness.
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# To turn an unacceptable tragedy into a quantifiable agenda and a set of responsible actions that advance the understanding of, and treatments for, mental health issues.

On September 30, 2014, an employee of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation brutally murdered Carolyn Mattingly at her home in nearby Potomac, Maryland after being confronted by organization officials regarding the theft of Foundation property. Richard Mattingly, the Foundation's executive vice president and chief operating officer, was Carolyn's husband.



From left: Alex Lewis, Christin Lewis, and C. Richard Mattingly

Instead of descending into lifelong grief and despair, Rich and his daughter Christin and her husband Alex formed The Luv u Project, named after Carolyn's iconic signature "luv u," which she regularly included in her notes to family members and friends. The family made the difficult and important decision to honor Carolyn by mobilizing into action.

From the onset, the mission of The Luv u Project was "to turn an unacceptable tragedy into a quantifiable agenda and a set of responsible actions that advance the understanding of, and treatments for, mental health issues." The Luv u Project, through its research and expanding dialogue with mental health experts, became increasingly aware of the dire need for attention to mental health in this country and the opportunity to make a real impact by focusing on mental health in the workplace.

After considering multiple institutions, The Luv u Project has chosen to partner with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to change the landscape of mental health through workplace engagement. As the oldest school of public health in the world and the only one with a stand-alone department of mental health, the Bloomberg School is an ideal partner to take on this important challenge. The Bloomberg School has a deep and impressive history of excellence and leadership in prevention science, specifically mental and behavioral health science, policy, and advocacy.

Together, the Luv u Project and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health have identified common goals and current barriers to population-level impact. They have discerned a critical need for an academic home for research, translation, evaluation, and dissemination of workplace mental health programs. Their joint vision is to change the landscape of mental health in this country by reaching people where they spend the majority of their adult time and where many of the stressful risk factors and debilitating consequences of mental health challenges exist.

# When building a quantifiable and responsible agenda for mental health in America, how can we possibly afford not to make the workplace a top priority?

For most of us, the ability to work is one of the fundamental aspects of survival. Not only is work a means of generating income to sustain the basics of living, employment is often a critical component of our social development and personal evolution. Our jobs serve as the “battery” for our individual world. On average, for a period exceeding four decades of adult life, the “workplace”—however that space might be defined—is where we spend an abundance of our wakened time.

The cost burden of mental health disorders is enormous. The overall cost to society is estimated well above \$200 billion per year. Separate evidence estimates the costs to American businesses alone as much as \$186 billion annually.

Costs for treating people with both physical and mental health disorders can be two to three times as high as those without such conditions. Economic models suggest that by integrating medical and behavioral health services, business could realize a savings approaching \$65 billion annually.

Beyond the cost in dollars is the cost to the human condition—one’s quality of life. Improvements in workplace mental health transcend work life and positively affect our home life, our family, and our friends. If we fail to act when the findings of sound science, logic, and economics intersect, then what

does the future hold? Prevention, the cornerstone of public health, is not only a noun; it is a word with action inherent in its most basic definition.

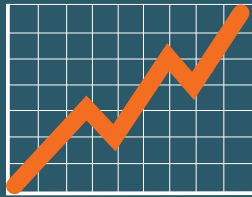
The need for workplace mental health solutions is profound. Empirical facts validate that statement. Why, then, are there not more serious collective actions underway? Efforts in workplace mental health need a home—an environment where evidence-based, collaborative research can be nurtured and guided under the watchful eye of a passionate and credentialed leader, with the untiring support of a world-class institution. A home where the brightest minds come together from all disciplines: academia, government, non-profits, and industry, including all shapes and sizes of businesses. A place where facts, figures, and data from a wealth of sources can be mined, analyzed, and shared. Such a hub for this activity can facilitate population-level changes that reduce workplace conflict, rates of depression, suicide, anxiety, violence, and substance abuse among adults, and, in turn, increase individual, corporate, and community wellness as well as productivity. The ultimate goal is to take a public health partnership approach to spare employees and their families undue personal anguish and ultimately, to save lives.

The time has come to take action.



MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS AFFLICT **1 IN 5** AMERICANS.

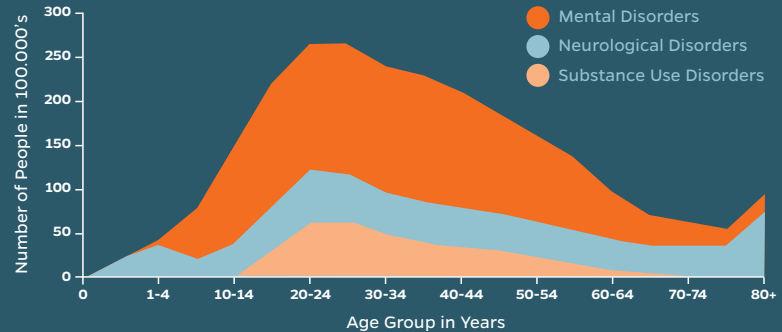
MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS TOP THE LIST OF THE MOST BURDENSOME AND COSTLY ILLNESSES IN THE UNITED STATES AT OVER **\$200 BILLION PER YEAR**. EXCEEDING THAT OF HEART DISEASE, STROKE, CANCER AND OBESITY.



RESEARCH SHOWS THAT A **\$1 INVESTMENT** IN MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION HAS A **\$3 TO \$5 RETURN**

FEW EMPLOYERS ARE AWARE OF THE EXTENT AND DETAILS OF ABSENTEEISM/PRESENTEEISM/MEDICAL COSTS, DUE TO **UNDERREPORTING, STIGMA, AND COMPLEX OR UNCLEAR DATA.**

MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS HAVE THEIR **PEAK DISABILITY BETWEEN AGES 20 AND 60**, THE TYPICAL AGES WE SPEND WORKING.



**FACTS SPECIFIC TO DEPRESSION AMONG EMPLOYEES**

DEPRESSED EMPLOYEES MISS BETWEEN **6 TO 25 MORE DAYS PER YEAR** AND SUFFER FROM IMPAIRED PERFORMANCE BETWEEN **13% TO 29% OF THE TIME** AT WORK.



APPROPRIATE CARE FOR DEPRESSION RESULTS IN A **40-60%** REDUCTION IN ABSENTEEISM/PRESENTEEISM (BEING PRESENT, BUT UNPRODUCTIVE AT WORK).

**ATTENTION TO MENTAL HEALTH IS CRITICAL TO PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF PHYSICAL HEALTH.** DEPRESSION INCREASES THE DIFFICULTY AND COST OF TREATING PHYSICAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS.

DEPRESSED INDIVIDUALS HAVE A **58%** GREATER RISK OF DEVELOPING OBESITY.



DEPRESSION IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF DISABILITY FOR PEOPLE **AGED 15-44** IN THE U.S.

DIABETICS WITH DEPRESSION HAVE AVERAGE HEALTHCARE COSTS BETWEEN **\$2000 TO \$5000 HIGHER** THAN DIABETICS WITHOUT DEPRESSION.



Our unique department of mental health, housed within the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, is ideally positioned to establish and sustain such a center, given the Department's history and expertise in public mental health.

There are very few efforts in the United States to ignite broad workplace mental health action. This is despite the evidence and recognition of the value of the workplace in supporting the public's health and the benefits to employers and employees resulting from the promotion of mental health.

Surprisingly, there currently is no academic home dedicated specifically to mental and behavioral health issues through workplace partnerships. The few existing academic initiatives are more broadly focused on employee wellness and general health. An academic center specifically dedicated to workplace mental health is greatly needed, given the special issues related to mental



From left: Daniele Fallin, Chair, Department of Mental Health, Ellen MacKenzie, Dean, Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Rich Mattingly, Founder, The Luv u Project

and behavioral health, including the very high frequency of problems, the very real barriers due to stigma and privacy concerns, and the hidden costs due to presenteeism versus absenteeism.

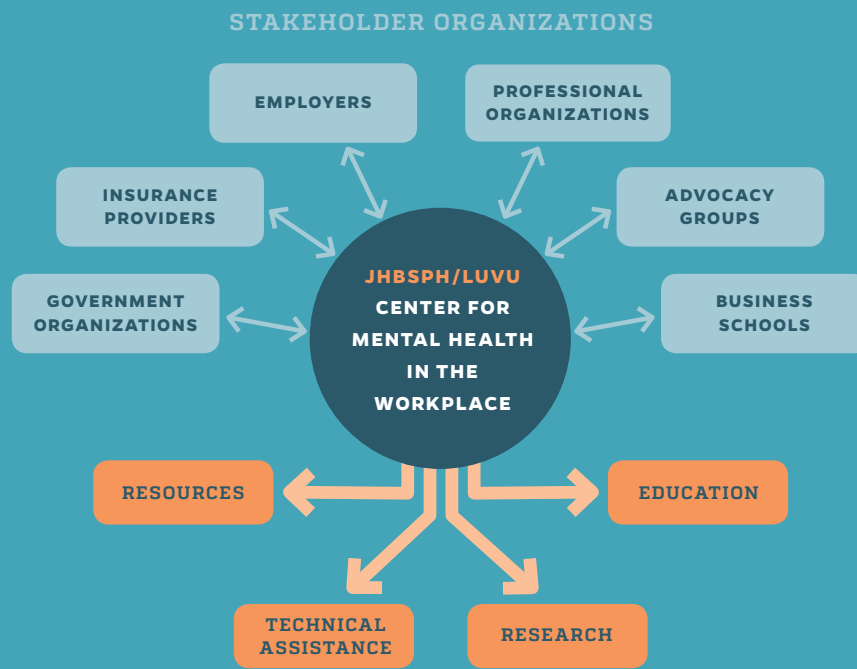


#### A BRIEF HISTORY

**1876** Johns Hopkins University is founded in Baltimore and is the first university in the western hemisphere to be based on a model of the European research institution – where research and the advancement of knowledge are intertwined with teaching.

**1916** The Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health is established through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Ranked #1 by U.S. News & World Report since 1994, today's Bloomberg School of Public Health is the world's oldest and largest school of its kind, with faculty and alumni recognized as leaders in research, education and practice.

**1963** The Bloomberg School establishes the first – and still only – department dedicated to mental health in a school of public health, allowing for the specific study of mental health and substance use as critical components of the public's health.



Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/The Luv u Project  
Center for Mental Health in the Workplace will be a hub for science  
and practice regarding workplace mental health

An effective strategy must engage employers, employees, insurers, and legislative stakeholders to identify common problems and find mutually beneficial solutions, then bring evidence to bear to make a substantial impact.

With this strategy in mind, the Center will be:

- a hub for basic and translational science regarding workplace mental health;
- a data hub for facts and progress on workplace mental health;
- a recognized convener of multiple sectors engaged in workplace mental health, including annual meetings held jointly with other stakeholder organizations, particularly corporations and policy makers;
- a repository of resources for employers regarding workplace mental health;

- a provider of sustainable contracts with corporations for evaluation and/or technical assistance;
- a creator of commercialized programs in partnership with workplace leaders.

Johns Hopkins has been a leader in improving health and saving lives for generations. The Bloomberg School has a sustained commitment to rigorous design, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of prevention and treatment programs. The Johns Hopkins expertise also recognizes that the critical components of solutions must include meaningful and long-lasting partnerships with stakeholders. The Center for Mental Health in the Workplace will build on existing relationships that the university and the Bloomberg School have with internal and external entities as well as create new collaborations.

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“Mental health touches each and every one of us. Yet most are uncomfortable with publicly addressing mental health in their personal lives the way they do other medical concerns. Unless the culture of mental health changes and it is made a public health priority in America, generations of people will continue to struggle, with incalculable consequences. Through our alliance, we are giving this vital agenda a fundamental necessity—a home.”

— **C. RICHARD MATTINGLY**, *Founder & President, The Luv u Project*

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“Employers that recognize their responsibility to lead in the mental health arena at work, go beyond services and programs to have a lasting impact on their employees, businesses and communities.”

— **K. ANDREW CRIGHTON, MD**, *Chief Medical Officer  
Prudential Financial, Inc.*

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“Mental health is a critical component to our overall health and to our ability to thrive as individuals and as a society. The majority of the years of our lives are spent working, with a significant portion spent at the workplace. So if we truly want to make an impact on individual and population health, partnerships with employers to enhance and sustain the mental health of their employees make perfect sense. As the only department in a school of public health that is dedicated to mental health, I believe we have to lead the way.”

— **DANIELE FALLIN**, *Chair, Department of Mental Health,  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health*

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“Rich Mattingly and his family suffered an unimaginable tragedy. But instead of reacting in anger and hatred, they drew on a reservoir of love to provide help for those with mental anguish. As someone who has suffered from and been hospitalized for bipolar depression, I understand how easy it is to get detached from reality and how hard it is to get help when most needed. The Luv u Project has just made that easier.”

— **MICHAEL BRAGA**, *Investigations Editor, Sarasota Herald-Tribune*

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“The younger generations are leading the wave of change on how we talk about mental health in our society. With this movement, we see a brighter future for those dealing with mental illness and also for those who love them. They will pave the way in our approach to mental health as a society.”

— **CHRISTIN M. LEWIS**, *Founder & Director, The Luv u Project*

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## The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/The Luv u Project collaboration has already set the groundwork for an academic center of excellence in workplace mental health.

Since 2016, efforts have resulted in:

- **A NATIONAL SUMMIT** with experts from government, business, public health, journalism, and foundations to explore the current state of the field, the needs, and missed opportunities as well as to begin crafting a roadmap for moving forward. Videos and transcripts of “Mental Health in the Workplace: A Public Health Summit” are available online. <http://www.jhsph.edu/departments/mental-health/events/mental-health-in-the-workplace.html>
- **THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT OF AN ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH** consisting of leaders in business, education, public health, policy, and workplace safety. Several members of the Advisory Council were keynote speakers at the summit. All members attended the summit and a next-day Council meeting to develop a roadmap for short-term projects and long-term goals advancing public mental health through workplace partnerships. This deliberation, and follow-up webinars with the full Council, resulted in a prioritized list of seven achievable and impactful projects to reach short-term goals and build a foundation for longer-term initiatives.
- **SPECIFIC PROPOSALS, INCLUDING BUDGETS, WERE DEVELOPED FOR SEVEN HIGH-PRIORITY PROJECTS:**
  - Develop Mental Health in the Workplace Scorecard
  - Establish Workplace Employer Recognition Program
  - Publish an Employer Guide to Evaluating Mental Health in the Workplace Programs
  - Develop Online Courses Focused on Mental Health in the Workplace
  - Partner with a Business School to Develop Business Case Studies Focused on Mental Health
  - Establish Research Agenda for Conducting “Real World” Studies on Innovative Mental Health in the Workplace Programs
  - Implement Training Programs for Incarcerated individuals and/or Employers regarding re-entry and work
- **A PEER-REVIEWED MANUSCRIPT** calling for action on workplace mental health and describing the prioritized projects developed by the Advisory Council has been published in The Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29280775>]. This was a collaborative effort co-authored by all Advisory Council members.
- **A FREE EMPLOYER TOOLKIT DEVELOPED BY WELCOA.** With input from the Johns Hopkins/The Luv u Project, Advisory Council member Sara Rauch of WELCOA created and disseminated a free employer toolkit on workplace mental health. <https://www.welcoa.org/resources/infographic-mental-health-workplace/>
- **PRESENTATIONS ON THE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKPLACE PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH** including talks presented at the National Institute of Health and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. <https://www.jhsph.edu/mental-health-workplace>

## Prevention, the cornerstone of public health, is not only a noun; it is a word with action inherent in its most basic definition.

As someone concerned about workplace mental health challenges, you know how debilitating mental disorders and co-occurring drug and alcohol dependency can drastically affect the quality of life of a company's most important asset — its employees. The promise of a public health approach to mental health — particularly within a workplace environment — can help prevent illness and limit associated disabilities when illness does happen. The Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and The Luv u Project have the demonstrated background, expertise, and passion to take on this approach successfully, and we hope that you will be a partner in our efforts.

The Luv u Project has made a significant philanthropic commitment to making the Center for Workplace Mental Health a reality, and we are looking to enlist a select group of organizations that can be collaborators, advisors, and supporters. Their varied perspectives, insights, and experiences will be invaluable as we continue our research and develop and implement programs of immediate and tangible use in the workplace. We firmly believe that we can improve health, reduce the economic and community burden of illness, and minimize the risk to affected individuals and others through rigorous research, feasible translation of evidence, and critical partnerships with stakeholders.

On behalf of all those affected by mental and substance abuse disorders, we invite your interest and look forward to discussing the Center for Mental Health in the Workplace with you.

INNAUGURAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

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**Michael Braga**

*Investigations Editor*  
Sarasota Herald-Tribune  
*Winner of a 2016 Pulitzer Prize and Carolyn C. Mattingly Award for Mental Health Reporting*

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*Vice President for Human Resources*  
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*Owner, President and CEO*  
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**THELUVUPROJECT™**

*In Memory of Carolyn C. Mattingly*

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**<https://www.jhsph.edu/mental-health-workplace>**