

NEWS RELEASE

June 10, 2022

## FREE Virtual Conference to Explore Benefits of Resilience-Based Workplace Practices

*Registration Now Open for June 21 Online Event Supported by AT&T*

CHICAGO – The Workforce Resilience Enhancement Project (WREP) will host a free virtual conference to explore the benefits of resilience-based workplace practices on Tuesday, June 21, from 9 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. WREP is a collaboration between Chicago community-based workforce development organizations, University of Chicago Medicine’s Urban Health Initiative and the University of Chicago, supported by a grant from AT&T.

Anyone interested in resilience work, but especially human resources, workforce development, employee wellbeing and career development professionals, is invited to participate to learn the benefits of resilience-based workplace practices and ways to enhance systemic drivers of resilience.

Through this conference, which is titled “Resilient Employees Resilient Organizations: Trauma-Informed Workplace Practices that Meet Employees Needs and Help Organizations Excel,” WREP aims to strengthen work-readiness and development professionals’ understanding of and response to how the cognitive, psychological, emotional, and behavioral effects of trauma can impair an individual’s ability to develop the skills, attitudes, and habits needed for successful employment.

Co-sponsored by the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Chicago, The Kennedy Forum Illinois and UChicago Medicine’s Urban Health Initiative, with support from AT&T, the conference will feature three panel discussions on the following topics:

- Resilience on the Front Lines, moderated by Alexa James, CEO, NAMI Chicago. This panel will explore the skills, resources and needs of those working in first responder spaces from their own perspectives. The group will discuss the kinds of policies, practices, and supports needed to buoy the natural resilience of this amazing group of people.
- The Impact of Mental Health on Workplaces: Ending Stigma and Opening Up Access, moderated by Bernie Dyme, President and CEO, Perspectives Ltd. This session will focus on the importance of opening up conversations about mental health in the workplace. The panelists will each discuss, from their positions and viewpoints, how mental health stigma is not only harmful but not a good business decision.
- Using an Equity Lens to Amplify Impact of Resilience-Based Care Initiatives, moderated by Joel Jackson, Director of Inclusion and Equity Strategies, UChicago Medicine. Panelists will discuss the meaning of equity, define systematic wellness and identify actions that employers can take to create positive system-wide change that supports all employees.

“The widespread traumatic effects of COVID-19 mean that now, more than ever, workforce development and job readiness professionals must be prepared to attend to the ways that psychological

and emotional trauma can affect people's abilities to focus on education and training opportunities, muster the self-motivation needed to search for and gain employment, and engage in the self-regulation needed to maintain employment," said Brenda Battle, SVP, Community Health Transformation and Chief Equity Officer at University of Chicago Medicine.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for those involved or interested in resilience work to learn more about how these practices can have a positive impact on employees' success and wellbeing," said Eileen Mitchell, President, AT&T Illinois. "It's particularly great that one of the sessions will focus on first responders' health and wellness needs, as they face challenges every day that we can't begin to comprehend. Thank you, UChicago Medicine, the Kennedy Forum and NAMI Chicago for making this meaningful event happen."

To learn more about this virtual conference and WREP, visit <https://www.workforce-resilience.org/workplace-resilience-conference-2022>. Click [here](#) to register.

### **About Our Co-Sponsors**

**The Kennedy Forum Illinois's** mission is to end stigma and discrimination against people with mental health and addiction challenges. Since its official launch in 2014, The Kennedy Forum Illinois has conducted extensive outreach via public forums, workgroup convenings, community conversations, and partnerships.

**National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Chicago** has fought for families and individuals impacted by mental health conditions since 1979. The organization promotes community wellness, breaks down barriers to mental health care and provides support and expertise for families, professionals and individuals in Chicago and beyond.

Through our employee inspired Believe Chicago® initiative, **AT&T** is working to provide opportunity in 19 neighborhoods on the city's south and west sides. Since 2017, we hired more than 650 residents of these neighborhoods into AT&T jobs, opened a new AT&T retail store in Englewood, supported resiliency and trauma awareness for neighborhood organization leaders, and provided more than 40 AT&T internships.

**Urban Health Initiative (UHI)** is UChicago Medicine's community health division. It oversees population health management and community benefit programs, working with community health centers, community hospitals, community-based organizations, local schools, churches and other groups. The UHI's goal is to bring a shared community-based approach to solve the problems and meet the health and social needs of the South Side and Southland communities. UHI fosters strong, lasting relationships with civic leaders, community organizations, health care providers and residents to strategically improve health and access to quality care on the South Side of Chicago. Through our South Side healthcare transformation work, we are part of a collaborative of 13 care providers working to establish the South Side Healthy Community Organization, which is scoped to serve over 400,000 residents with more seamless and more accessible healthcare. The model will add 90 primary care providers and obstetric hires, access to nearly 50 priority specialists, 250 community healthcare workers, and a connected technology platform.