



## *Moving beyond Labels*

# *Newsletter*

December 2015

Volume 2, Issue 4

---

### *The Latest from Loretta...*

One of my favorite parts of growing B Stigma-Free has been getting to know so many people from across the country who also spend their days working to make the world a more kind and accepting place. Building these relationships, many of which have grown into friendships, has been so gratifying.

Last month we were able to share this benefit with others. We invited our Partners to join B Stigma-Free's Board, Advisory Council and staff for some after-hours social time while we were in Washington DC. It was a great way to deepen our connections and establish a foundation for future collaboration.

I'm grateful to have made these associations, as knowing that we have invested partners to work with gives me comfort and confidence that we'll be able to achieve success on our long and difficult path ahead. Negative attitudes and divisive language toward any group is never okay. Hearing fellow Americans - especially government leaders and presidential candidates - openly calling for sanctioned discriminatory policies based on a group's religion is alarming. While saddened, I am even more resolved to use our networks to help others overcome their fear and return to the values that this country was founded on. I hope that we can continue to count on each of you to help us reach our goals.

---

### *Highlights*

- Welcome to our new partners, [American Medical Women's Association](#) (AMWA), [American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee](#) (AMC), [Mission: Launch, Inc.](#) and California's [Each Mind Matters!](#) We look forward to collaborating with each to collectively spread our message of acceptance and inclusion.
- We had lots of fun presenting about *Cross-Identity Collaboration*<sup>™</sup> at Wesleyan University's Social Justice conference! Here Connecticut college students convened to learn how to put social change theory to the real-life test.
- B Stigma-Free coordinated a moderated panel discussion between several of our Partner organizations at Howard University's International Conference on Stigma. Read more about this exciting event below, in our Spotlight.
- In November our Board of Directors met and formerly adopted [our mission statement!](#)
- Did you miss our latest blog articles? Chris Wagner, President of the National Association of the Deaf [wrote about Deaf Culture](#) ; and Gary Arnold, President of Little People of America shared [his memorable middle school experience](#).

- It's official! B Stigma-Free is a certified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. This means that all donations to support our mission are tax deductible as permitted by law. We hope that you will consider making a gift to support our work as part of your end-of-year giving. [You may contribute here](#). And if you have already done so, we thank you!

---

## Spotlight

We were thrilled to coordinate a panel discussion at [Howard University's 6th International Conference on Stigma](#) on November 20th. The conference was standing room only, with thought-provoking presentations focused on stigma related to HIV and AIDS, and the intersection with other identities. B Stigma-Free was honored to hold our inaugural event at this prestigious event. Here we brought together some of our Partners for a dialogue about the commonalities between our groups and how we can collaborate to combat stigma, and it was a hit!

This was the first time that a group of national leaders representing stigmatized identities collaborated to strategize a solution about stigma to create social change. Garland Nixon did an excellent job moderating the discussion between Mental Health America, Obesity Action Coalition, CenterLink, Mission: Launch and B Stigma-Free. [Read about the panelists and conference here](#). Described by one panelist as a "wonderful experience," we're excited to continue the discussion and build upon this foundation. Stay tuned for more follow up.

---

## On the Horizon

This December we are [Spotlighting stigma related to religion](#). In addition to our regular features, we are exploring a public campaign in response to the overt discrimination toward people who are Muslim. Faced with hostile rhetoric from political leaders, presidential candidates and public personalities, there is an urgent need for a coordinated response to combat Islamophobia. We're beginning to work with the ADC to develop an effective plan.

***We wish each of you, our friends and colleagues, a Healthy and Happy Holiday Season,  
and a safe and stigma-free New Year!***

**Peace. Shalom. Salam. Paz. Santi. K'e. Paix.**



Stay Connected



Donate Today