

MOVEMBER EXTENDS FUNDING FOR MAKING CONNECTIONS INITIATIVE INTO 2022  
CONTINUING ITS COMMITMENT TO MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

*The leading global men's health charity is also hosting a multi-day panel tackling mental health challenges within BIPOC communities*

LOS ANGELES, CA – (September 14, 2020) – Movember, the leading men's health charity, has announced it will extend funding for five of the Making Connections program sites. The Making Connections initiative aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Men and Boys of Color and Veterans in the US. Originally developed and coordinated by Prevention Institute, the Movember-funded Making Connections work leverages the power of social connections to develop and implement actionable, community-level prevention plans to improve mental health across the country. As mental health challenges continue to increase nation-wide, Movember is committed to finding ways to help improve the lives of men and their families. Making Connections takes a community approach to building coalitions that focus on the role that social, economic, and environmental factors play in shaping mental health and wellbeing for men and boys. This is designed to reduce the incidence and severity of mental health challenges by taking on issues like community safety, stable and affordable housing, access to educational and economic opportunities, and social connection—all of which are foundational to mental health and wellbeing.

The Making Connections initiative is guided by the Movember-funded landscape report on the state of mental health titled [\*Making Connections for Mental Health and Wellbeing Among Men and Boys in the US\*](#). Written by Prevention Institute, the report confirms that mental health problems are pervasive and extensive in the US and building resilience is a critical protective factor for mental wellbeing.

“When we first developed this program, we knew there were many challenges these communities faced especially as it relates to mental health. Those challenges have only grown and become more complex. We're dedicated to tackling these issues from an early intervention and prevention perspective. There's a dire need to address this public health crisis, and Making Connections allows us to foster conversations and positive changes with men and boys where they are, in their community” says US Executive Director of Movember, Mark Hedstrom.

The following program sites will receive an extension in funding to continue their programmatic work: Sinai Health System (Chicago, IL), United Women of East Africa (San Diego, CA), Kokua Kalihi Valley (Honolulu, HI), Southern Plains Tribal Health Board (Oklahoma City, OK), and Farmington Valley Health District (Canton, CT).

Movember is also hosting a number of complimentary panel discussions around men's mental health within BIPOC communities. Currently, the US has a crisis surrounding mental health, and Movember is uniquely positioned with a focus area in men's mental health and suicide prevention, to host a dialogue about the unique challenges for Black, Indigenous and Men of Color when it comes to mental health and wellbeing. The events kick off on September

15<sup>th</sup> and will include three days of virtual panel discussions with notable guests and experts including New York Times contributor, Wilbert Cooper, Newark's West Side High School Principal, Akbar Cook, Founder and Executive Director of the Ever Forward Club, Ashanti Branch, Miguel Quiroga, CEO of Visible, Garen Staglin, Co-Founder of One Mind, Miguel Estevez, PLMHP, PLADC, The Friendship House Counseling Clinic and many more. As more and more communities are working to address issues around diversity, equity and inclusion as it relates to the overall mental well-being within these communities, the goal of these sessions is to help better understand these issues and discuss the road to providing tangible solutions.

Conversation topics will include:

- *BIPOC communities and mental health - what are the current and ongoing challenges?*
- *BIPOC communities on mental health and wellbeing - how are communities of color driving change and finding solutions?*
- *Diversity and mental health in the workplace. How to create safe and inclusive environments.*

The interactive conversations are open to the public and will be held live via [www.facebook.com/MovemberUSA/](http://www.facebook.com/MovemberUSA/). To learn more visit [Movember.com](http://Movember.com)

About Movember:

Movember is the leading charity changing the face of men's health on a global scale, focusing on mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer.

The charity raises funds to deliver innovative, breakthrough research and support programs that enable men to live happier, healthier and longer lives. Committed to disrupting the status quo, millions have joined the movement, helping fund over 1,250 projects around the world.

In addition to tackling key health issues faced by men, Movember is working to encourage men to stay healthy in all areas of their life, with a focus on men staying socially connected and becoming more open to discussing their health and significant moments in their lives.

The charity's vision is to have an everlasting impact on the face of men's health. To donate or learn more, please visit [Movember.com](http://Movember.com).

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