
Mayor Garcetti speaks with LA's leading therapist Michelle Cauley to discuss mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic

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***Michelle Cauley, LCSW, BCD Licensed
Therapist (cauley associates)***

Tuesday, April 21. Mayor Eric Garcetti provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic surrounding the Los Angeles region. The L.A. City Mayor was joined by licensed therapist, Michelle Cauley to share news regarding the response to coronavirus. COVID-19 has played a major role in the increase of mental strain. Loss of jobs, death, isolation, and worry of what is to come has all contributed to the cases of stress that are escalating.

The Los Angeles City Mayor Eric Garcetti began the briefing with data surrounding coronavirus in Los Angeles. As of April 21. there were 46 additional deaths, 33 of these individuals were between

the ages of 65 and over, with underlining health conditions. This brings the total COVID-19 related deaths in the L.A. County to 663. Over 89,000 people have been tested for COVID-19. There are 1,400 new coronavirus reports. The jump in number of reports is due to backlogged cases and delayed lab results.

Founder and President of *Cauley Associates*, Michelle Cauley earned her Masters of Social Work from the University of Southern California. She also obtained the Pupil Personnel Services Credential with Child Welfare & Attendance, Administrative Services Credential, and Certificate in Applied Gerontology. Cauley is a member of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

Michelle Cauley joined Mayor Garcetti to discuss mental health. COVID-19 has made a strong impact on everyone's mental state; Cauley explained anticipatory stress, depression, and anxiety that is on the rise. External symptoms such as weight gain/loss, tiredness, or irritability can be signs of a deeper issue. Michelle Cauley mentioned communication can be the starting point to begin working towards healing.

Cauley provided information surrounding mental wellbeing. She disclosed ways individuals can recover from anxiety, stress, and depression that coronavirus has caused during this time. Mayor Garcetti acknowledged the fear working families and small businesses are facing during this pandemic, he is coordinating more requests for federal programs and assistance to help all Angelenos.



R-L : Michelle Cauley, LCSW, BCD Licensed Therapist and City of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti at the Los Angeles City COVID-19 Briefing April 21. (Sceenshot)

Garcetti discussed the assistance from the federal government. Mayor Garcetti is looking into protection for displaced workers. Currently, California Public Utilities Commission made \$30 million available, to help school districts have Internet access and technological devices for distance learning. Governor Gavin Newsom developed a state *Task Force* on business and job recovery. The California state invested \$75 million in Disaster Relief Assistance to provide financial support for immigrant workers affected by COVID-19. Small businesses can apply for \$349 billion in loans from the federal Paycheck Protection Program.

Many Angelenos are facing anxiety and depression, Los Angeles County has resources from the city's mental health department. There are programs and services that help manage the mental struggles COVID-19 has caused. The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH.) assists with concerns about the wellbeing of the Los Angeles County. Their 24/7 Help line is (800) 854-7771, LACDMH is available to provide mental health support and referrals.

Within the Department of Mental Health, there are sub-divisions that prioritized underserved cultural communities. Subcommittees of the Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC) collaborate with community leaders to increase the accessibility to the public mental health system and to develop culturally coherent policies and services. Their programs look to assist African Americans, Latino, LGBTQ, Asian-Pacific Islander, and Middle eastern communities.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) also provides information on how to assist with digesting the information surrounding COVID-19. It is important to keep a strong mental state while facing times of adversity, collectively the county of Los Angeles is looking to assist in all aspects affected by COVID-19, including mental health.



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