

**Tricia Monroe, MEd, CHES**  
**Medical College of Wisconsin's Division of**  
**Suicide Research and Healing**

At present, Tricia manages a program within the Medical College of Wisconsin's Division of Suicide Research and Health that is focused on providing support to survivors of suicide loss in Milwaukee County. Experiencing a suicide loss is a traumatic experience that often involves guilt, stigma, and shame. As such, there is a dire need for resources for suicide loss survivors, not only to help manage the complicated grief that is often experienced in a suicide loss, but also to reduce the suicide risk of loss survivors themselves. Tricia built, from the ground up, an active suicide postvention program, MKE L.O.S.S. (Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors) that involves outreach to loss survivors in Milwaukee County, linkage to appropriate resources in the community, and active follow-up for up to a year following the suicide. Over the past 18 months of the program, over 300 loss survivors have been reached through MKE L.O.S.S., and nearly 70 individuals have been enrolled in long-term follow-up through the program. As part of this work, Tricia collects data on the effect of postvention outreach in the lives of suicide loss survivors. One survivor told her that the program is, "like magic," and that the support Tricia provided was very supportive in her recovery. Tricia also facilitates a statewide Postvention Community of Practice which regularly engages 48 participants in pertinent education, shared learning, and discussion.



Through her work with MKE L.O.S.S., Tricia identified a lack of suicide bereavement support services for culturally diverse groups. This led Tricia to reach out to community organizations, including Black Space, HIR Wellness, and the Milwaukee Hmong Health Consortium, to identify and build capacity for diverse loss survivors. The result of this work has been more meaningful connections for loss survivors to organizations able to serve them in a more culturally competent manner. This is critical for the recovery journey of these survivors. However, there continues to be a lack of capacity locally to support diverse loss survivors, particularly those in the Hmong community. This led Tricia to lead the development of a grant application, in partnership with the Milwaukee Hmong Health Consortium, which will fund training and development of Hmong practitioners in suicide bereavement support. This project will also allow for in-depth conversations with Hmong suicide loss survivors about what services would be most helpful for them. The trust and rapport that Tricia built with the Milwaukee Hmong Health Consortium has made this

collaboration possible. Additionally, Tricia has led the planning of two training events for health care providers on Hmong mental health. One event was held in 2023 and another will be led at the MCW Central Wisconsin campus in May 2024. Through her work with MKE L.O.S.S., Tricia also identified a lack of suicide bereavement trained clinicians. This led Tricia to organize a suicide bereavement training for clinicians in collaboration with the Portland Institute, which will be held in September 2024.

Through her learnings, Tricia enthusiastically promoted the development of a Community Advisory Board within our Division of Suicide Research and Healing which advances the division's suicide prevention efforts. She developed the foundational documents for this board, including a member expectations document, a document outlining principles of community engagement, and a member commitment document. Tricia also worked to actively recruit board members from a number of sectors, including youth and suicide loss survivors. Because of Tricia's support, our division now has a functioning community advisory board, which meets quarterly, with 11 members. This board guides the research and programming of the Division of Suicide Research and Healing, which has strengthened our efforts and has deepened our relationships with community members. Tricia has also been actively involved in other community outreach activities including staffing resource tables at community events, such as the Milwaukee Pride Festival. Additionally, Tricia has shared her expertise through presenting at conferences such as Prevent Suicide Wisconsin and Kevin's Song.

*Tricia was nominated by Sara Kohlbeck, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine; Director, Division of Suicide Research and Healing, Comprehensive Injury Center, Medical College of Wisconsin*