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### **Governors State Counseling Professor Receives Human Rights Award**

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...

**Dr. Patricia Robey, Division Chair of Psychology and Counseling**

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University Park, IL,  
December  
02,  
2020

# Governors State Counseling Professor Receives Human Rights Award



Adding to her

growing collection of awards, [Governors State University Counseling](#) Professor [Tamekia Bell](#) (she/her/hers) was recently awarded the Illinois Counseling Association Bea Wherly Human Rights Award for her outstanding service to the Mental Health profession through her roles as educator and as an advocate for Human Rights as part of various organizations that support the development of mental health.

Dr. Patricia Robey, Division Chair of [Psychology and Counseling](#), and [College of Education](#) Dean Shannon Dermer nominated Dr. Bell.

"Dr. Bell is a leader who quietly and humbly works to improve the lives of others and doesn't seek recognition for herself. However, her work does not go unnoticed by others, which is why Dean Dermer and I nominated her," Dr. Robey said.

She pointed to Bell's numerous leadership roles, including those in chapter, committee, division, and executive councils. Bell is President of the Illinois Counselor Education and Supervision, Secretary for the Illinois Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Issues in Counseling (IALGBTIC), Chair of the Illinois Counseling Association Professional Development Committee, Treasurer of the Illinois Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling, and from July 2018 to May 2019, she was the President-Elect of the Illinois Counselor Education and Supervision.

Bell has also made significant contributions to Illinois and other communities through volunteer activities, including her work at Governors State where she is currently serving as co-chair for the GSU Student Disability Advisory Board. Bell and Professor Maria Valgoi are working on research as well at Governors State to assess how a

history of trauma influences success at the university and what resources are helpful for students.

Bell has also been advancing the field of professional counseling through presentations and writings. These include her current work in progress, four chapters for "The SAGE Encyclopedia of Multicultural Counseling, Social Justice, and Advocacy;" three manuscripts in progress which focus on topics related to learning disabilities, the LGBTQI+ community: and reflections from a black, cisgender, heterosexual woman; and two manuscripts on diversity currently in review for journal publication.

Bell said the award is a reminder that she's working in the right direction.

"I am beyond honored and humbled to receive the Bea Wherly Human Rights Award! This award signifies my commitment and dedication to continuing to eradicate all systems of oppression. This is my constant reminder to always do the work I am doing because it is the right thing to do," she said.

In 2002, the Human Rights Committee established the Bea Wehrly Human Rights Award to "honor an outstanding human rights activist in Illinois who has distinguished herself as a leader in supporting the growth and development of all people."

Last year, Bell was awarded the Illinois Mental Health Counselors Association Distinguished Service Award for her service and significant contributions toward raising professional counseling standards for all counselors in Illinois.