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**Professionals to Share Diversity Best Practices at Hodges Conference**

*Center for Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Competency builds bridges to wider community*

**NAPLES, Fla. – June 13, 2016** – Professionals in Southwest Florida will receive support and learn best diversity practices at Hodges University’s “The Importance of Cultural Competency in the Workplace” conference.

Fulfilling the diversity community initiative, which is “to build bridges to the larger community and to work with groups to bring a wider and more highlighted focus to the experiences of diversity,” the event will take place on July 22-23, 2016, in the John White Community Room on the Naples campus.

“We are hosting this conference to gather other professionals into a learning setting to focus on increasing cultural competence and develop a support group for sharing diversity best practices for community growth,” said Gail B. Williams, chief diversity officer at Hodges.

Beginning at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 22, guests will participate in a pre-conference social before delving into conference topics and strategies on Saturday, July 23 from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. The conference will include presentations, panel discussions and group activities.

James E. Wright, PHR, SHRM-CP, CDR Diversity and Inclusion strategist, will serve as the keynote speaker. Wright has 15 years of experience working with organizations to attract diverse talent while maximizing engagement and contribution.

All mental health counselors, licensed clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, human resources, diversity and organization-wide managers and administrators are invited to attend. Participants can earn six CEUs through Genesis Counseling of Fort Myers (Florida Board of Mental Health Counselors, Clinical Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists Provider #50-806, exp. 03/31/17).

The cost to attend the conference is \$100 for individuals, \$50 for Hodges University alumni, and Hodges employees and students may attend free of charge. Table and event sponsorships are also available.

To register online or become a sponsor, visit

[https://hu.formstack.com/forms/cultural\\_conference](https://hu.formstack.com/forms/cultural_conference). To learn more about James E. Wright, visit <http://www.jameswantstoknowyou.com/>. Guests may also contact Gail B. Williams, chief diversity office at Hodges University, at [gwilliams@hodges.edu](mailto:gwilliams@hodges.edu) for more information.

**About the Office of Diversity and Inclusion:**

Hodges University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion is dedicated to increasing diversity and promoting cultural competency among its students, faculty, staff and administration through education and activities. It builds bridges to the larger community by serving as the catalyst for social change and transformation as it relates to diversity and inclusion.

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