Although racial and ethnic minorities as a whole comprise approximately 30 percent of the U.S. population (U.S. Census, 2010), and comprise a similar percentage of those receiving mental health services according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2012), this diversity is not reflected in the behavioral health workforce. According to another report by SAMHSA (2012a), racial minorities account for only: 19.2% of all psychiatrists; 5.1% of psychologists; 17.5% of social workers; 10.3% of counselors; and 7.8% of marriage and family therapists. The field of art therapy faces a similar homogenous demographic, with only 12.2% of participating art therapists identifying as ethnic or racial minorities in a 2013 survey (Elkins et al., 2013).

Practicing cultural competence is critically important for clinicians’ work with clients in order to minimize bias in practice. Below is a selection of articles from the Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association in which authors offer insight into practicing art therapy with cultural competence, investigating historical and personal accounts related to identity and diversity in the profession, and examining or questioning current frameworks about understanding culture. These articles will be open-access for three months.


References:


