A group of over 120 mental health professionals attended a 2-day conference of sharing ideas at the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the University of Massachusetts, Boston, Infant Parent Mental Health Postgraduate Certificate Program, at the Boston Marriott Hotel in Newton, MA.

The event featured 2 world-renowned luminary speakers. Dr. Colwyn Trevarthen took the stage on Friday morning and presented his talk on Communicative Musicality: Exploring the Basis of Human Companionship. Dr. Trevarthen is a New Zealander with degrees in Botany and Zoology from Auckland University, Professor Emeritus of Child Psychology and Psychobiology in the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, University of Edinburgh.

On Saturday, Dr. Alicia Lieberman, addressed the crowd with her presentation entitled: Speaking the Unspeakable: Child-Parent Psychotherapy to Repair Trauma and Promote Secure Attachment. Alicia F. Lieberman, Ph.D., is Irving B. Harris Endowed Chair in Infant Mental Health, Professor and Vice Chair for Faculty Development at UCSF Department of Psychiatry, and director of the Child Trauma Research Program at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital. She directs the Early Trauma Treatment Network, a center of SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Network. She is the senior developer of Child-Parent Psychotherapy, an evidence-based treatment for traumatized children aged birth-five broadly used nationally and internationally as an evidence-based treatment for traumatized young children and their parents or caregivers.

The audience was comprised of UMass Boston IPMH alumni, current fellows, faculty and prospective candidates. In the span of the past decade, the program has accepted fellows from 25 different countries and over 12 professional disciplines -- together they are a growing force of leaders in the field. “My focus for this 10th Anniversary program weekend has been on deepening the connections between our program alumni, current and prospective students, to support and sustain their work. And yet, we are a part of a larger IPMH community who equally need the sustenance of a conference like this, if not more,” said Dorothy Richardson, PhD, Faculty and Director of the UMass Boston IPMH Program.

An amazing performance of “Cry Havoc” was presented by Stephan Wolfert. Stephan is an Actor/Writer/Director; AEA/SAG member; U.S. Army ’86-’93 – Medic and Infantry Officer. Stephan works with fellow military veterans and scientists, using Shakespeare’s text and classical actor training to heal trauma and to aid in the transition from military service back into life as a civilian. The founder of DE-CRUIT, Stephan, now based in New York City, continues his work with Shakespeare & Veterans nationally and internationally.

TedTalks were given by six IPMH alumni on their individual career paths following their successful completion of the Certificate Program.

The weekend was filled with a sense of community, camaraderie, reconnecting and expanding the international web this program has been successful in creating through its unique global reach.
The program has proudly established the Ed Tronick Award for Distinguished Contribution to the Field of Infant-Parent Mental Health. This inaugural award was presented to Dr. Richard Honigman, MD for his dedication to the field and his contributions to children and their parents. “Richard has had immense impact since his graduation from the program, both in his Pediatric practice in New Jersey, as well as internationally by conducting trainings in Grenada and collaborating with UNICEF and sharing his wealth of knowledge and expertise and taking this important work to other countries,” said Ed Tronick, Distinguished Professor, Department of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts and Founder of the Infant Parent Mental Health Program.

This exceptional and highly acclaimed program, housed and supported by the College of Liberal Arts and the Psychology Department at UMass, Boston - is designed to advance the quality of mental health services for infants and young children in the context of their earliest relationships. Fellows have the opportunity to learn directly from world luminaries, including Chief Faculty, Ed Tronick, Alicia Lieberman, Stephen Porges, Peter Fonagy, Bruce Perry, Charles Zeanah, Joy Osofsky, Brenda Harden Jones, Linda Gilkerson, Arietta Slade, Stephen Seligman, Kevin Nugent, Lynne Murray, Peter Cooper, Beatrice Beebe, George Downing, and many more. The Fellowship is a part-time post-graduate program consisting of 12 intensive, interactive three-day weekends, meeting every other month (Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept, Nov.) over the course of two years. The IPMH program fulfills the Alliance for Infant Mental Health Training and Reflective Supervision/Consultation requirements for the credential: Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health® as an Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist (Category III) and the Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Mentor (Category IV). In addition, Fellows earn a Postgraduate Certificate in Infant-Parent Mental Health from the University of Massachusetts.

We are now accepting applications for our new cohort, which is scheduled to start in January 2020. For more information, and for the application please visit our website at: www.umb.edu/ipmh