

# **How Cultural Factors and Suicide Risk Interact**

November 10, 2011

In case you missed it, the cameras were rolling at the APS 23rd Annual Convention in Washington, DC. Watch Lillian Polanco from Hunter College present her APSSC Award–winning poster session research on “Cultural Risk and Protective Factors for Depression and Suicidal Ideation.”

Polanco and her coauthors Jessica Silver and Regina Miranda examined whether two culture-related variables — acculturative stress and ethnic identity — would prospectively predict depression symptoms and suicidal ideation. At two-year follow-up, the researchers found that baseline acculturative stress predicted depression symptoms and suicidal ideation. Ethnic identity at two-year follow-up was associated with decreased depression and lower suicidal ideation. According to Polanco, “these findings suggest that cultural factors should be considered in assessing risk for suicidal behavior and may help to combat the ethnic-racial disparity in suicidal behavior.”