

Mayor's Council on African American Elders

C/O – Aging and Disability Services, Seattle-King County
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June 18, 2021

Members Present – Dr. Benjamin Abe, Interim Chair, Paul Mitchell, Claudette Thomas

Members (Appointment Pending) – Charlotte Antoine, Sheila Mary, Paula Williams, Pamela Williams

Members Absent – Dr. Brenda Jackson

Guest – Zyna Bakari, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle

ADS Staff – Brent Butler, Mary Mitchell, Karen Winston

I. Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle Vaccination Efforts and Strategies

Zyna Bakari, Public Health Liaison and Executive Assistant to President & CEO Michelle Merriweather, presented information about the Urban League's vaccine efforts in BIPOC communities. She began with an announcement about a Juneteenth Vaccination Pop-Up Clinic in Tukwila, following the Black Father's March, sponsored by the [CHOOSE 180](#) Youth Program.

The Urban League's work on the COVID-19 vaccines began months before the vaccine roll-out. They were involved in early conversations with community members and with the WA Health Department, through focus groups, and were able to share concerns from the community, and discuss allocation and prioritization of the vaccines.

Like many, Zyna had many concerns about the vaccine, but after reading information about it and seeing trusted messengers in our community get vaccinated and talk about it, she learned that it was safe and effective. This led her to create the Urban League's Black Health Matters vaccine guide. The purpose of the guide is to reflect the conversations that helped her, and others, feel more comfortable about getting vaccinated. The 17-page guide provides information on historical medical trauma, mistrust in the medical system, and racial bias among medical professionals. The guide highlights how healthcare providers assume that hesitancy among African Americans is the result of historical trauma alone and ignore how the system continues to fail us today. The guide also includes information on how Hesitancy does not mean refusal; Key differences between the vaccines; Life after taking the vaccine; Top 10 most frequently asked questions about the vaccine, and additional resources.

Zyna shared how after creating the guide and through one-on-one conversations, she was able to convince several individuals to sign up for the vaccine. Every conversation matters because "each one teaches one." When we have access to the facts and can get vaccinated in familiar locations, more of us will show up than some may expect.

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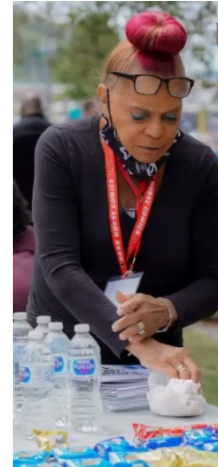


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In preparation for the Juneteenth pop-up clinic, the Urban League conducted educational workshops that included Lunch & Learns with Black doctors; Youth & Family Community Conversations; Phone-banking; and Harm Reduction Conversations with Leadership Team. Pop-up clinics include a clinical team that reflects our community, trained peer educators, trusted messengers, and healthcare providers willing to take time with individuals to calm fears/concerns. Zyna believes that a better experience at a pop-up clinic can mean better health outcomes for tomorrow. If we say Black lives matter, then Black health matters every day. We need to see policy investments and action aligned with every area that effects our health.



MCAAE member, Dr. Brenda Jackson volunteering at an Urban League Pop-Up Clinic.

Before ending her presentation, Zyna urged members to consider getting involved by becoming a trained peer educator, share credible resources, volunteer at pop-up clinics, advocate that racism is a public health crisis, and connect with Black health care providers.

Shout out to the Urban League community partners:

- African Americans Reach & Teach Health (AARTH)
- Dr. Joycelyn Thomas
- Meredith Mathews YMCA
- Lydia Nickels
- And so many others!

Q&A

Question: What was the total number vaccinated at of your outreach events?

Response: Almost 800 at three events (Southeast Seattle Senior Center; Church by the Side of the Road; and El Centro de la Raza)

Question: How can we get a copy of the guidebook?

Response: They are available at the Urban League Office, or you can download the book online.

II. ADS and Legislative Updates – Mary provided the following updates.

State

- Return to Work – The state is targeting July 12 for case management staff to return to work. AAAs throughout the state are pushing back on this because more time is needed to develop a thoughtful plan. There is a state-level sub-group working on this and ADS is participating. They are also looking at ways to modify assessments.
- Homecare Workers and COVID-19 Safety – Mary raised the issue with the state about case managers and Individual Providers vaccinations before entering client homes. This issue was raised at the last MCAAE meeting.
- A case manager raised another issue about funding for rental assistance for clients when the rent moratorium ends, especially people with disabilities.

- Social Isolation – The state has a contract with a new company called Get Set-Up. It offers 300 online classes to help with social isolation. Categories include exercise, how to navigate the internet, cooking, and much more. It also offers opportunities for people to sign up to teach classes. Visit www.getsetup.io
- Robotic Pets – ADS is working with the state to offer robotic pets to clients experiencing isolation and/or dementia.
- SB 5414 – Indian Healthcare Improvement Act – AAA directors received a presentation about the senate bill which included information about historical tribal concerns, including concerns during the pandemic, which amplified the need for access to broadband and Wi-Fi on reservations. Kinship care and staffing changes were also issues discussed. We will continue to discuss how ADS can support recognized tribes in King County.
- ARPA Funding – The State came through with the match. AAAs will also have to provide a match and funds will not be allowed to be carried over these funds from year to year.
- Also discussed having a Limited Spousal Provider Waiver that would allow spouses to receive funding as caregivers with protections in place. Colorado, Oregon, and California currently have this in place.
- W4A Legislative Priorities include:
 - Case Management - Reduced caseloads
 - Long Term Care Trust Act
 - Presumptive eligibility – more to come on this.

City of Seattle

- Vaccine Sites – Seattle is at 70% vaccinated. The Lumen Field site closed on June 15. A few of the smaller vaccination sites are still open.
- Return to office vs. Return to work – The City of Seattle is preparing for the return to work. The mayor sent an email saying that return to work should be employee led. It may end up being a hybrid model of returning to work and working remotely.

III. MCAAE Appointments Update – Karen reported that paperwork for new appointments was submitted to the mayor’s office for approval for:

Charlotte Antione
 Sheila Mary
 Amber McDowell
 Pamela Williams
 Paula Williams

Karen later learned that the person in the mayor’s office facilitating the appointments has moved on to another position. Karen has not had an opportunity to talk to the new person working on appointments yet. She will provide an update at the July meeting.

IV. Mayoral Candidates Forum

Karen reported that the Puget Sound Alliance for Retirement Action (PSARA) would like to partner with the MCAAE on a mayoral candidate's forum. The virtual event would be held some time during the last week of July. Currently, there are 15 individuals running for the position. Members thought it was a good idea!

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for **Friday July 16, 2021**.