



BLACK MEN'S BRAIN HEALTH

2026 FIFTH ANNUAL

BLACK MEN'S BRAIN HEALTH CONFERENCE

Increasing the Representation of
Black Men in Alzheimer's Disease
and Dementia Research

February 3-4, 2026
Hosted by Merritt College -
Oakland, CA

BLACK MEN'S BRAIN HEALTH

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Greetings

Dear Conference Attendee,

Welcome to the **2026 Black Men's Brain Health Conference!** We are honored to welcome you to **Oakland, California, February 3–4**, for two days of learning, connection, and collective impact.

This conference brings together scholars, practitioners, advocates, community leaders, and ally-leaders who share a commitment to advancing brain health, equity, and well-being for Black men and our communities. Over the next two days, you will engage with compelling research, innovative strategies, and thoughtful dialogue focused on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Equally important to the sessions and panels are the **relationships you build here**.

Our challenge to you is simple and intentional:

Introduce yourself to at least *three new people* today.

Sit next to someone you don't know. Start a conversation during a break. Ask a question, share your work, exchange contact information. Use the GroupMe 2026 BMBH community for outreach. One meaningful connection can lead to collaboration, mentorship, friendship, or a new way of approaching this work long after the conference ends.

We encourage you to be fully present—engage with our speakers, Emerging Scholars, partners, and fellow attendees. Participate openly in discussions, attend the fellowship opportunities, and take advantage of the collective wisdom in the room.

This gathering represents a growing network committed to action. Please help amplify this work by sharing your experience and tagging us on social media:

@BrainHealth4Men #BMBH2026 #BlackMensBrainHealth

Thank you for being part of this important movement. Your presence matters. Your voice matters. And the connections you make here matter.

Welcome to BMBH 2026—we're glad you're here and excited to build together.

With appreciation,

Drs. Carrillo, Rivera-Mindt, and Turner
Co-Principal Investigators

The Black Men's Brain Health Initiative

Welcome

Dear Black Men's Brain Health Participant,

"There is immense power when a group of people with similar interests gets together to work toward the same goals." – I. Koyenikan, American author

A heartfelt thank you for being an integral part of the **2026 Black Men's Brain Health (BMBH Conference)**. This convening would not be possible without your commitment, expertise, insight, and generosity of spirit. Your engagement continues to elevate the quality and impact of this important work.

As conference coordinator, I am honored to welcome you to an event that brings together a diverse and dedicated community of scholars, practitioners, advocates, and leaders in **Oakland, California**. Alongside Drs. Rivera-Mindt and Turner, we have intentionally worked to convene athletes, community leaders, health professionals, researchers, and sport administrators in a shared effort to advance awareness, research, and solutions related to brain health among minoritized populations.

With the continued support of national leaders and partners—including the Alzheimer's Association and the National Institutes of Health (Aging)—what began as a vision has grown into a thriving collaborative network. We are deeply grateful for the many partners who have stepped forward to build bridges for collaboration, scholarship, and meaningful dialogue.

We invite you to help extend the reach of this work by sharing your conference experience and tagging us on social media:

@BrainHealth4Men #BMBH2026 #BlackMensBrainHealth

The Black Men's Brain Health Initiative extends far beyond this conference. We encourage you to review the conference program to learn more about our **BMBH Scholars** and their important contributions. We also invite you to engage with the **Men's Brain Health Registry at Duke University**, and to continue exploring educational opportunities and partnerships through the **Center of Sport Business and Analytics**, whose mission is to connect with and advocate for organizations creating equity, impact, and value across sport and society.

If there are ways we can support your research, programming, or collaborative efforts beyond the conference, please do not hesitate to reach out. Our shared goal remains the creation of a strong, interdisciplinary network committed to advancing Alzheimer's disease and related dementia research. Above all, we hope this conference fostered meaningful connections—through the research presentations, strategy sessions, and fellowship opportunities—that will lead to sustained collaboration and trusted professional relationships.

I am deeply grateful for your participation and partnership.

With appreciation,



Deborah L. Stroman, Ph.D. CLU | @drstroman

<https://www.dstroman.com>

Founder, Center of Sport Business and Analytics

Consultant Professor, University of North Carolina and University of Virginia





Mayor's Proclamation

RECOGNIZING THE BLACK MEN BRAIN HEALTH CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 3–4, 2026

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland is committed to advancing health equity and improving the well-being of all residents, particularly communities that have been historically underserved and disproportionately impacted by health disparities; and

WHEREAS, brain health is a critical component of overall health and quality of life, influencing memory, cognition, emotional well-being, and long-term independence across the lifespan; and

WHEREAS, Black men experience disproportionate rates of Alzheimer's disease, dementia, stroke, traumatic brain injury, and other neurological conditions, often compounded by barriers to early diagnosis, culturally responsive care, and access to preventative health education; and

WHEREAS, the Black Men Brain Health Conference, taking place February 3–4, 2026, at Merritt College in Oakland, California, serves as a vital convening that elevates awareness, education, advocacy, and community-driven solutions focused on brain health in the Black community; and

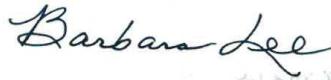
WHEREAS, this conference brings together health experts, researchers, community leaders, caregivers, advocates, and stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue, share evidence-based strategies, and promote early detection, prevention, and wellness for Black men and their families; and

WHEREAS, Merritt College has long served as an anchor institution in Oakland, advancing education, workforce development, and community health, and is an appropriate and powerful setting for this important regional convening; and

WHEREAS, initiatives such as the Black Men Brain Health Conference align with Oakland's broader efforts to address health inequities, strengthen community empowerment, and ensure that public health solutions are informed by lived experience and cultural understanding;

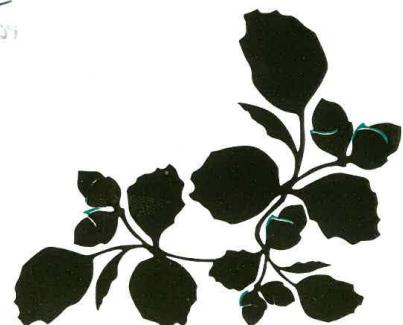
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Barbara Lee, Mayor of the City of Oakland, do hereby proclaim February 3–4, 2026, as "Black Men Brain Health Conference Days" in the City of Oakland, and I encourage all residents, community organizations, healthcare institutions, and policymakers to recognize the importance of brain health awareness, support culturally responsive health education, and work collectively toward a healthier and more equitable future for Black men and our entire community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Oakland to be affixed this February 2026.



Barbara Lee
February 3, 2026

Mayor Barbara Lee
City of Oakland





*Certificate of Special
Congressional Recognition*

Presented to

Fifth Annual Black Men's Brain Health Conference

in recognition of

Your efforts to bring awareness to brain health disparities amongst Black men. Thank you for supporting this critical scientific work and fighting back against racial health inequity.

February 3, 2026

DATE

Lateefah Simon

LATEEFAH SIMON
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
TWELFTH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

Continuing Education

Continuing Education Available for BMBH 2026!

Continuing Education credits and units are provided through the Society of Black Neuropsychology, an approved sponsor with the American Psychological Association and Stroman Athletic & Asset Management LLC, an accredited provider with the International Association for Continuing Education and Training. Sessions have been evaluated for the adherence to sponsor and provider learning objectives.

Why earn Continuing Education credits?

Earning continuing education (CE) credits matters because they support both your **professional credibility** and your **long-term effectiveness**. In short, CE helps you stay sharp, relevant, and trusted.

Here are the core reasons professionals pursue continuing education:

1. Maintain licensure and certifications

Many professions require CE credits to keep licenses or certifications active. Completing them on time protects your ability to practice and avoids costly lapses or penalties.

2. Stay current in a changing field

Industries evolve—new research, regulations, technologies, and best practices emerge constantly. CE ensures your knowledge reflects current standards, not outdated ones.

3. Strengthen professional competence

Continuing education deepens skills, introduces new tools, and sharpens judgment. That translates into higher-quality work, better decision-making, and improved outcomes for clients, patients, or stakeholders.

4. Increase career mobility and advancement

Employers and clients value professionals who invest in growth. CE credits can support promotions, leadership roles, specialization, or transitions into new areas of practice.

5. Demonstrate ethical responsibility and accountability

Ongoing learning signals commitment to professional standards and lifelong learning—key elements of ethical practice and public trust.

6. Expand professional networks

CE courses, conferences, and workshops connect you with peers, experts, and mentors, opening doors to collaboration and opportunity.

7. Improve confidence and professional identity

Staying informed and skilled builds confidence in your expertise and reinforces your standing as a credible, informed professional.

Bottom line: Continuing education isn't just a requirement—it's an investment in relevance, excellence, and long-term impact.

Continuing Education

Available Credits for BMBH 2026

APA: Each approved session = 1 CE (Maximum of 4 credits for the entire conference)

SAAM LLC: Each day = .62 CEU (Maximum of 1.2 credits for the entire conference)

Steps for Credit

1. Conference registration is required, and attendees may earn credit whether attending in person or virtually
2. Attendees must view the entire session for which credit is sought and submit a post-session or post-day survey of completion before February 5, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET. The survey will be made available in person and virtually.
3. After approval of attendance, eligible attendees will receive an invoice for the amount due based upon the number of CEs and CEUs completed.
4. Upon receipt of payment, approved attendees will receive a continuing education certification.
5. All billing, verification, and credit tracking will be handled electronically to ensure an efficient and accurate process.

Note: The Society for Black Neuropsychology is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Society for Black Neuropsychology maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Approved APA Sessions

- Tuesday, Day 1 12:15 - 1:15 p.m. Lunch & Learn – Keynote by Dr. Charles Windon and Panel
- Tuesday, Day 1 3:15 - 5:20 p.m. Workshop: Food, Exercise, and Community is Medicine – Keynote by Dr. David Johnson (UC Davis) and Panel
- Wednesday, Day 2 12:30 - 1:45 p.m. Lunch & Learn Alzheimer's Disease and Dementias: Early Detection and Care Planning - Keynote by Dr. Thomas Cudjoe and Panel

Approved SAAM LLC Sessions

- Tuesday, Day 1 9:45 – 10:45 a.m. The Legacy of the Black Panther Party
- Tuesday, Day 1 11:00 – 12:00 p.m. Bay Area Community Leaders Forum
- Tuesday, Day 1 12:15 - 1:15 p.m. Lunch & Learn – Keynote by Dr. Charles Windon and Panel
- Tuesday, Day 1 1:15 – 1:45 p.m. Emerging Scholars Program Spotlight
- Tuesday, Day 1 1:45 – 3:00 p.m. Advocacy & Community Impact Creates Change (Alzheimer's Association)
- Tuesday, Day 1 3:15 - 5:20 p.m. Workshop: Food, Exercise, and Community is Medicine – Keynote by Dr. David Johnson (UC Davis) and Panel
- Wednesday, Day 2 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Developing Opportunity for People to Evolve
- Wednesday, Day 2 12:30 - 1:45 p.m. Lunch & Learn Alzheimer's Disease and Dementias: Early Detection and Care Planning - Keynote by Dr. Thomas Cudjoe and Panel
- Wednesday, Day 2 10:45 – 11:00 a.m. Let's Tackle CTE Together
- Wednesday, Day 2 1:45 – 2:00 p.m. The CEDAR (Community Engaged Digital Alzheimer's Research) Study
- Wednesday, Day 2 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Raising Young Black Males in the Bay Area
- Wednesday, Day 2 3:15 – 4:15 p.m. Life as a Young Black Male in the Bay Area
- Wednesday, Day 2 4:15 – 5:00 p.m. Q&A Session

Meeting Agenda - Day One

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 - Merritt College in Oakland, CA

8:00 - 9:00 AM

Breakfast and Registration

9:00 - 9:10AM

Opening Remarks

Dr. Robert W. Turner II, Duke University

9:10 - 9:25AM

Opening Session & Welcome

Dr. David Johnson, President of Merritt College

9:25 - 9:45AM

Framing the Conference

Dr. Carl Hill, Chief of DEI for the Alzheimer's Association

9:45 - 10:45 AM

Session 1: The Legacy of the Black Panther Party

Moderator:

Dr. Carl Hill, Alzheimer's Association

Panel Participants:

Mama Tarika Lewis, Black Panther Party

Billy X Jennings, Black Panther Party

Baba Greg Hodge, Brotherhood of Elders

Jason Seals, Chair, Black Studies, Merritt College

10:45 – 11:00 AM MORNING BREAK

Session 2: Bay Area Community Leaders Forum

Keynote & Moderator:

Brian McGhee, Oakland Unified School District

Panel Participants:

Tiago Robinson, OUSD, African American Achievement

Ki'ev Harris, Empowered Aging

Letitia Henderson, Exceptional Community Connections

Darren White, Realized Potential Inc.

Meeting Agenda - Day One

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 - Merritt College in Oakland, CA

12:00 - 12:15 PM

Let's Tackle CTE Together

Speaker

Dr. Michael Alosco, Boston University

12:15 - 12:30 PM LUNCH BREAK

12:30- 1:30 PM

Lunch & Learn: The Benefits of Early Detection

Keynote Speaker:

Dr. Charles Windon, University of California San Francisco

Moderator:

Julia Profit-Williams, Tulsa Health Department

Panel Participants:

Dr. Charles Windon, University of California San Francisco

Dr. Samuel Washington, University of California San Francisco

Dr. Harry Stafford, Duke University

Tracy Porter, NFL Alumni

1:30- 2:00 PM

Emerging Scholars Program Alumni Spotlight

Introduction

Dr. Victor Ekuta, Morehouse School of Medicine

Speaker

Dr. Tabia Pope, Head to Speech Inc.

2:00- 3:15 PM

Session 3: Advocacy & Community Impact Creates Change

Keynote

Gloria Brown, Bay Area Community Health Advisory Council

Moderator:

Marc Loupe, CFOs2Go

Panel Participants:

Gloria Brown, Bay Area Community Health Advisory Council

Aubrey Pettaway, University of Richmond

Cloyce Dickerson, Baxter

Cheryl Johnson, Alzheimer's Association

Meeting Agenda - Day One

Tuesday, February 4, 2025 - Xavier University of Louisiana at New Orleans

3:15 - 3:30 PM BREAK

3:30 - 5:20 PM

Workshop: Food, Exercise, and Community is Medicine

Keynote & Moderator

Dr. David Johnson, University of California Davis

Panel Participants:

Shanette Merrick & Nya Siawatu - Let's Get Cooking

Michael Tatmon Jr - Let's Get Moving

Craig Cook Sullivan - Barbershop Talk

5:20- 5:30 PM

Closing Remarks

Dr. Monica Rivera-Mindt, Fordham University & Mount Sinai

6:00 - 8:00 PM

Reception/Social Mixer

Meeting Agenda - Day Two

Wednesday, February 4, 2025 - Merritt College in Oakland, CA

8:00 - 9:00 AM

Breakfast and Registration

9:00 - 9:10 AM

Opening Remarks

Dr. Roland Thorpe, Johns Hopkins University

9:10 - 9:30 AM

Host Site Welcome Remarks

Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson, Chancellor of the Peralta Community College District

9:30 - 10:30 AM

Session 4: Developing Opportunity for People to Evolve (DOPE ERA)

Keynote

Siddiq Moody Jihad, Urban Cities Healing Strategies

Moderator:

Guy Troupe, Players Network Event

Panel Participants:

Antjuan Cox - Cell Therapy: Rehabilitation through Journaling

Zimbabwe - THUG Therapy Life Coach

Siddiq Moody Jihad, Urban Cities Healing Strategies

10:30 - 10:45 AM BREAK

10:45 - 11:00 AM

Honoring the Legendary Laney College Football Coach John Beam

Josh Ramos, Head Football Coach & Interim Athletic Director at Laney College

10:45 - 11:00 AM

Honoring Boise State HOF & former NFL athlete Doug Martin

Brian Smith, former teammate

Meeting Agenda - Day Two

Wednesday, February 4, 2025 - Merritt College in Oakland, CA

11:15 - 11:45 AM

Brain Health Champions Award Ceremony

Awardees

Coach Jeff Tedford – UC Berkeley
Ken Harvey – NFL Alumni
John Burris Esq.
Mrs. Sylvia Mackey – Spouse of John Mackey, NFL HOF
Al Smith – NFL Alumni
Dr. Noha Aboelata – Roots Community Health
Kenyon Rasheed – NFL Alumni & Entrepreneur

11:45 - 12:30 PM LUNCH

12:30 - 1:45 PM

Lunch & Learn: Alzheimer's Disease and Dementias: Early Detection & Care Planning

Keynote

Dr. Thomas Cudjoe, Johns Hopkins University

Moderator:

Dr. Jeremy Grant, Ohio State University

Panel Participants:

Dr. Rochelle Woods, Kaiser Permanente
Dr. Tony Jackson, Prana Mind Center for Brain Wellness
Neal Hatten, Bayview Senior Services
Dr. Thomas Cudjoe, Johns Hopkins University

1:45 - 2:00 PM

The Community Engaged Digital Alzheimer's Research (CEDAR) Study

Speakers

Dr. Rachel Nosheny, University of California San Francisco
Dr. Michael Weiner, University of California San Francisco

Meeting Agenda - Day Two

Wednesday, February 5, 2025 - Xavier University of Louisiana at New Orleans

2:00 - 3:00PM

Session 5: Raising Young Black Males in the Bay Area

Keynote

Shanette Merrick, The Good Life Path

Moderator:

Carmen McZeal, EDGE Sports Consulting

Panel Participants:

Dame Drummer, Parent
Charmaine Brent, Parent
Jerome Gourdine, Parent
Sarah Allen, Parent

3:00 - 3:15 PM BREAK

3:15 - 4:15 PM

Session 6: Life as a Young Black Male in the Bay Area

Keynote

Anthony McDonald, Leaders of Men Inc

Moderator:

Brian McGhee, Oakland Unified School District

Panel Participants:

Elijah Jackson, Resident
Avae Diamond, Resident
Joshua Oludayo, Resident
Lamont Williams, Resident

4:15 - 5:00 PM

Q&A Session for Both Session 5 & 6

All Panel Participants from Sessions 5 & 6

5:00 - 5:15 PM

Closing Remarks

Dr. Robert W. Turner, Duke University

Conference Location - Huey P. Newton & Bobby Seale Lounge

Huey P. Newton & Bobby Seale Student Lounge
 12500 Campus Dr. Oakland, CA 94610
 (R Building)

Directory

A	Administration of Justice, Art, Child Development, Fitness Center, Music, Classrooms
D	Division I Office, MLK Jr. Freedom Center, Latitude 37.8 High School
E	Gymnasium
F	Locker rooms, Faculty Offices, Engineers Office
H	Landscape Horticulture
L	Library, Learning Center Electronic Classroom Math/Science Lab, Tutorial Center
P	Classrooms, Puent Program, Computer Access Lab/DSPS, Computer Labs
Q	Administration Office of President Vice President of Instruction Business Services Cashier's Office Mailroom & Switchboard Production Center
R	Student Services Admissions & Records, Assessment, Bookstore, Counseling, Disabled Students Programs & Services, EOPS, Financial Aide, Newton/ Seale Student Lounge, Student Activities, Student Health Services, Transfer Center, Veterans Affairs, Vice President of Student Services
S	Science & Allied Health Program Classrooms & Labs, Division II Office, Division III Office
EC	Environmental Center

Legend

	ACCESSIBLE PARKING		AC TRANSIT BUS STOP (RTE. 54)
	DAILY HOURLY PARKING DISPENSERS		STAIRWAYS
	ACCESSIBLE ELEVATOR		EMERGENCY BLUE PHONE



Co-Principal Investigator



**Monica Rivera-Mindt, Ph.D.,
A.B.P.P.**

Professor of Psychology,
Fordham University/ISMMS

Dr. Monica Rivera Mindt is a Professor of Psychology at Fordham University, with a joint appointment as a Professor of Neurology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City. As a board-certified neuropsychologist and neuroscientist, she is a leading expert in cultural neuroscience, the role of contextual factors on cognitive aging and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (AD/ADRD), and community engaged research in populations disproportionately impacted by AD/ADRD and other serious health conditions.

As a Principal Investigator (PI)/Multi-Principal Investigator (MPI) of a large research portfolio supported by the NIH/NIA, the Alzheimer's Association, and Genentech, the overarching aim of her work is to advance early detection of AD/ADRD utilizing plasma and digital biomarkers in populations disproportionately impacted by AD/ADRD, within real-world settings; understand the role of contextual factors on cognitive aging and AD/ADRD to inform clinical trials and health policies geared towards improving brain health outcomes for all people; and to increase the generalizability of AD/ADRD research.

Co-Principal Investigator

CONTINUED



**Robert W. Turner II,
Ph.D.**

Duke University Aging Center

Dr. Robert W. Turner II is an Associate Professor in the Department of Population Health Sciences, within Duke University School of Medicine. He holds a secondary appointment in the Department of Neurology, at Duke University, Aging Center. He earned his Ph.D. in medical sociology at the Graduate Center, City University of New York (CUNY). After attending James Madison University on an athletic scholarship, he played football professionally in the United States Football League (USFL), the Canadian Football League (CFL), and the National Football League (NFL). He is the author of "Not For Long: The Life and Career of the NFL Athlete" (Oxford Press) and a consultant for the LeBron James-produced HBO documentary film "Student Athlete."

Dr. Turner is the PI for the \$6.3M NINDS-funded R01 grant, The Contribution of Repetitive Head Impacts and Social Determinants of Health to Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias in Older Adult Black Men. Additionally, he is the Co-PI for an R13 grant entitled, Black Male Brain Reserve, Resilience & Alzheimer's Disease, and oversees the Men's Brain Health Initiative (MBHI), which launched the Men's Brain Health Directory in the summer of 2023.

Co-Principal Investigator

CONTINUED



Maria C. Carrillo,
Ph.D.
Chief Science Officer
Alzheimer's Association

As chief science officer, **Maria C. Carrillo**, Ph.D., sets the strategic vision for the Alzheimer's Association global research program. Under her leadership, the Association is the world's largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer's research — currently investing over \$250 million — and an internationally recognized pioneer in convening the dementia science community. Dr. Carrillo uses her platform as a noted public speaker to play an instrumental role in the Association's efforts to lobby for increased funding for the disease.

Dr. Carrillo oversees the implementation of the Association's growing portfolio of research initiatives, including the Alzheimer's Association International Conference® (AAIC®), the world's largest and most influential dementia science meeting, and the Research Roundtable, which enables international scientific, industry and government leaders to work together to overcome shared obstacles in Alzheimer's science and drug development. In addition, she leads the Association's direct involvement in research by serving as a co-primary investigator for the Association-funded and led U.S. POINTER study, a lifestyle intervention trial to prevent cognitive decline and dementia.

Dr. Carrillo earned her Ph.D. from Northwestern University's Institute for Neuroscience and completed a postdoctoral fellowship focused on Alzheimer's brain imaging and risk factors at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.

The Alzheimer's Association is a worldwide voluntary health organization dedicated to Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia®. For more information, visit alz.org.

Featured Speakers



Anthony McDonald

Founder
Leaders of Men Inc.

Anthony E. McDonald Sr. is the founder and driving force behind Leaders of Men Inc., a pioneering nonprofit established in 2018 and the only organization of its kind in Solano County. Under his leadership, the organization has gained remarkable momentum—meeting youth where they are and equipping them with the tools to persevere, regardless of their circumstances.

Anthony's life story is rooted in resilience. At just four years old, he suffered a traumatic eye injury that left him permanently blind in his left eye. The physical and emotional toll was immense, compounded by relentless bullying throughout his youth. Yet Anthony refused to be defined by ridicule. He leaned into the values instilled in him early: respect, eye contact, and the quiet strength of leadership.

Raised in East Oakland, Anthony's formative years demanded courage and adaptability. After relocating to San Diego, his family lived in a shelter—an experience that deepened his empathy and sharpened his resolve. Later, in Brooklyn, New York, he faced the harsh realities of urban survival, taking on odd jobs to support his household. These experiences instilled in him a profound sense of responsibility, humility, and the value of hard work.

Though he entered the workforce prematurely and without essential life skills, Anthony persevered. His lived experience became the blueprint for Leaders of Men Inc.—a visionary initiative rooted in the belief that information and awareness are essential for making informed decisions and overcoming adversity.

At its core, Leaders of Men Inc. is built on the principle of respect: showing it, giving it, earning it, and learning it. Through culturally responsive mentorship, leadership development training, and rites of passage programming, Anthony ensures that every young person who engages with the organization is empowered to rise above their circumstances and embrace their full potential.

Anthony's legacy is not just in the programs he's built, but in the lives he's touched. His story is a testament to perseverance, purpose, and the transformative power of respect.

Featured Speakers



Antjuan Cox

Cell Therapy: Rehabilitation through Journaling
DOPE ERA

There was a time when Antjuan "Tjuan" Cox believed he would die behind cold prison walls.

A son of Oakland, raised in a city known for its brilliance and its battles, Tjuan spent over 25 years of his life incarcerated — sentenced not just by a courtroom, but by a society that never expected him to survive, let alone rise.

In the beginning, prison broke him. Crushed his dreams. Left him staring down a future he couldn't bear to live. His pain was so heavy, he tried to silence it forever. But fate had other plans.

From the ashes of despair, Tjuan chose something radical: he chose to fight for himself.

What started as scribbled words on scraps of paper inside a prison cell became the blueprint for his rebirth.

Through broken nights and unforgiving days, he wrote. He healed. He dreamed a new life into existence.

Today, Tjuan has authored over 18 books — a body of work born not from privilege, but from survival, pain, love, and relentless hope. Every page he pens is a lifeline tossed to the forgotten, the abandoned, the ones who think they'll never get another chance.

Tjuan isn't just a writer.

He is a living, breathing declaration that you can lose everything and still rebuild yourself into something stronger than you ever imagined.

With his brother Mistah FAB standing beside him, Tjuan is now building a movement:

- A publishing empire for those whose stories have been buried.
- A bridge for returning citizens and broken youth who were told they would never matter.
- A legacy of truth, healing, and unshakable love.

Freedom, for Tjuan, isn't just walking out of prison — it's the fight to reclaim your mind, your voice, and your destiny.

Antjuan Cox is not just free — he is a force.

And he's just getting started.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Aubrey Pettaway

University of Richmond

Aubrey Pettaway has over twenty-five years of experience in curriculum design, project management, training and consulting interventions. He was a learning & development specialist at the University of Richmond in Richmond, VA. Prior to working at UR, he was a human resources analyst at the Sacramento Municipal District. He has worked primarily in the utilities and healthcare industries in California.

He holds a Master of Arts degree in Human Resources Development from George Washington

University as well as a Master of Sciences degree in Psychology from Florida State University. Aubrey has volunteered as a community educator at the Northern CA/ Northern NV chapter of the Alzheimer's Association for the past three years.

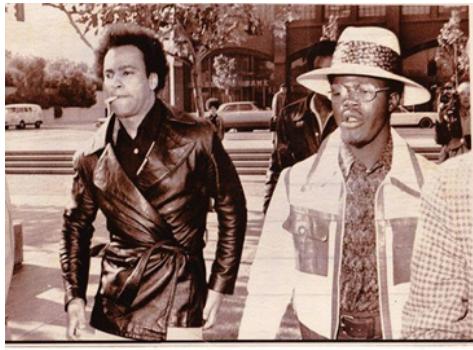


Avaе Diamond

Avaе Diamond is a Graduate of Oakland Tech, class of 2025. He is a local music artist who performs around the Bay Area. His interests are music, Black History, Philosophy, and Psychology. Avaе has been a part of African American Male Achievement (AAMA) from elementary through high school. He has stated that "being a part of the program has had many positive impacts on his life". This includes meeting adults whom he can trust, who act as mentors, and who see him as part of the community. Since he participated in AAMA, he has grown tremendously. When introduced to new people, they often complimented him for his maturity.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Billy X Jennings
Black Panther Party

Joined the BPP in the summer of 1968 when I was 17yrs.

Worked in E. Oakland office until 1970, transferred to National HQ's

Aide to Central Committee, became Huey's aide in 1971-1972

Attended Merritt and Grove St. College in 1971-1973-

When Bobby Seale ran for mayor of Oakland, I ran his Central office 1972-1973

Out my campaign office came Barbara Lee, she was a student at Mills we reminds friends for over 50 yrs. and Carter Gilmore who became the first elected Black to the City Counsel in 1977

Help the Panther School in East Oakland get off the ground in 1973-74

1995 we Organized It's About Time/ BPP Alumni committee, made up of Oakland and Sacramento Panthers, we have been hosting BPP reunions and celebration since. We help other chapters of the BPP organize around their legacy.

I started the first BPP website in 1998 www.itsabouttimebpp.com, I also have a large BPP archive, and have A traveling photo exhibit. I have took it around the world, Africa, New Zealand, the UK, Ireland, Portugal and other countries Had a BPP exhibit at the State Museum in Sacramento this summer from June to December.

My archives had over 500 photos have been used by HBO, Showtime, and many news outlets.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Brian McGhee

Oakland Unified School District

Brian McGhee is a lifelong Oakland resident, educator, and community leader with over 30 years of experience supporting Black youth and families across education, child welfare, probation, and nonprofit systems. Born and raised in West Oakland, Brian brings both lived experience and professional expertise to conversations about Black male identity, mental wellness, and brain health.

Brian is a proud graduate of McClymonds High School and attended the University of California, Berkeley, where he was a student-athlete on the Cal Football team from 1985–1989 as a Quarterback & Wide-Receiver. He is also a First Generation College graduate. Brian later earned a Master's degree in Social Work from San Francisco State University, strengthening his clinical, systems-level, and trauma-informed approach to supporting individuals, families, and communities. His academic and athletic experiences shaped his understanding of stress, resilience, discipline, and the importance of holistic support for Black men navigating educational and social systems.

Professionally, Brian has served in leadership and service roles with West Oakland Health Center, Casey Family Programs, Alameda County Social Services—Children & Family Services, and the Alameda County Office of Education. For the past seven years, he has worked as a Program Manager with Oakland Unified School District's Office of Equity, supporting the African American Male Achievement Program. His work centers on culturally responsive practices, healing-centered engagement, and creating affirming environments that support academic success and emotional well-being for Black males.

In addition to his professional work, Brian coaches high school football and volunteers in the community, including feeding the homeless and mentoring. He enjoys traveling with his wife, reading, attending sporting events, and spending time with family and friends. Brian's work is grounded in service, mentorship, and empowering Black men and boys to thrive mentally, emotionally, and socially.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Brian Smith

Beyond the Game

Brian Smith is a community-driven leader, evaluator, and coach dedicated to empowering athletes through intentional relationship-building, holistic development, and mentorship. Grounded in experience across scouting, coaching, facilitation, and administration. He specializes in identifying talent while understanding the mental, emotional, and characterbased qualities that support both peak performance and long-term health. Passionate about creating environments where athletes can thrive on and off the field. He is a continuous learner committed to excellence, consistency, and a global perspective on culture, leadership, and well-being.

He earned his B.S. in psychology from Boise State University and is the founder of Beyond The Game, an initiative that uses athletics as a pathway to recovery from trauma and addiction.



Dr. Carl Hill

Chief DEI Officer
Alzheimer's Association

Carl V. Hill, Ph.D., MPH, is Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer at the Alzheimer's Association. He leads initiatives to address health disparities in dementia care and research, builds partnerships with diverse organizations, and champions inclusive practices. Formerly with the National Institute on Aging, Dr. Hill earned his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and MPH from Morehouse School of Medicine.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Carmen McZeal

CEO & Co-Founder
EDGE Sports Consulting

Carmen McZeal, LPC, NCC, CCMHC, is the CEO and cofounder of EDGE Sports Counseling, where she has built a respected practice dedicated to helping athletes, leaders, and high-performing professionals strengthen their mental game and maximize both performance and well-being. With a career rooted in service, advocacy, and excellence, Carmen is known for blending clinical expertise with elite-level mental performance coaching to create sustainable, life-changing results.

Carmen has extensive experience working with athletes across youth, collegiate, professional, and elite levels, as well as coaches, executives, and high-pressure professionals. Her work spans a wide range of sports, including soccer, tennis, golf, football, baseball, track & field, cross country, dance, and cheer. She specializes in helping clients navigate performance anxiety, fear of failure, perfectionism, confidence instability, injury recovery, leadership stress, and high-stakes decision-making. Through a performance-focused, evidence-based approach, Carmen equips clients with tools to remain composed under pressure, refocus after setbacks, and perform with clarity and confidence.

What distinguishes Carmen's work is the depth and breadth of her advanced training. She is a Certified Mental Game Performance Coach with extensive specialization in performance psychology, mindfulness, and self-regulation strategies. She is also a Certified EMDR Therapist, allowing her to address performance blocks rooted in trauma, fear, or past experiences. Her additional credentials include Certified Clinical Trauma Professional, Certified Integrative Mental Health Professional, Mindfulness and Self-Regulation Trainer, Certified Anger Resolution Therapist, and Certified Mediator. This multidisciplinary background allows Carmen to work seamlessly at the intersection of mental health and peak performance—meeting clients where they are while helping them move forward with purpose.

At EDGE Sports Counseling, Carmen leads and mentors a team of highly trained counselors and performance coaches who share her commitment to holistic, client-centered care. EDGE's model integrates mental wellness with performance optimization, ensuring clients are not only performing better but developing resilience, emotional intelligence, and long-term sustainability. Carmen has also designed and delivered specialized programs for injured athletes, leadership development, stress management, accountability, and team dynamics for athletic departments, corporations, and community organizations.

Carmen's impact has been widely recognized. She was named one of Houston's Top 30 Most Influential Women and a Top 50 Professional and Entrepreneur, and she is a sought-after speaker, consultant, and educator across athletic, academic, and corporate spaces. Through workshops, keynote presentations, and collaborative initiatives, she continues to advocate for mental health as a competitive advantage rather than a limitation.

At the core of Carmen's work is a deeply personal mission: to break the stigma surrounding mental health and redefine what strength looks like in high-performance environments. Grounded in empathy, authenticity, and excellence, she is committed to helping individuals and organizations not merely survive

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Charles Windon, MD

Assistant professor of Clinical Neurology at the UCSF Memory and Aging Center

Charles Windon, MD, is an assistant professor of neurology at the University of California San Francisco Memory and Aging Center. In his current role he participates in the clinical care and management of those with neurodegenerative conditions, conducts research focused on biomarkers of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) among diverse populations, and leads MAC outreach efforts to the African American community in the San Francisco Bay Area. His research efforts seek to explore the use of novel imaging and blood-based biomarkers for the detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in populations that have been historically excluded from research. He also seeks to understand the intersection between social determinants of health and ethnocultural identity in the context ADRD biomarkers. Through his outreach efforts and volunteer clinical care in community clinics in San Francisco, he seeks to bring education about brain health and better care to communities that are at highest risk for unfavorable disease outcomes related to ADRD.

Dr. Windon's work has been generously funded through organizations like the Alzheimer's Association and the National Institute on Aging. He has previously been awarded the John A. Watson Faculty Scholar Award and named a Dean's Population Health and Health Equity Scholar as well as a UCSF Multiethnic Health Research Center Emerging Equity Scholar. He is also the inaugural recipient of the Solomon Carter Fuller Award from the Society for Behavioral and Cognitive Neurology.

Dr. Windon received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Princeton University before obtaining his medical degree from Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Jersey. He completed his residency training in neurology at the University of California, Los Angeles and his behavioral neurology fellowship at the University of California San Francisco Memory and Aging Center.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Charmaine Brent, MSW

Director of Programs and Services
Empowered Aging

Charmaine Braziel-Brent, MSW, a Bay Area native who grew up in Richmond, CA, currently serves as the Director of Programs and Services at Empowered Aging. There, she leads the strategic oversight and administration of advocacy programs for older adults and individuals with disabilities. With a career spanning over 20 years in Georgia's child welfare system and six years dedicated to advocating for adults in California's long-term care facilities, Charmaine is a fierce champion for marginalized populations and those deemed voiceless.

She specializes in navigating complex human service systems to ensure vulnerable individuals have direct access to the resources they need to thrive. Charmaine holds a Master's in Clinical Social Work from Clark Atlanta University and is currently pursuing a PhD in Organization Management-Leadership from Liberty University. Her doctoral work focuses on utilizing transformative leadership to dismantle systemic barriers to care. As the parent of two sons and a daughter, Charmaine views this discussion as vital to empowering the men in our community and ensuring they have a seat at the table in brain health research.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Cheryl Johnson

Alzheimer's
Association

Cheryl L. Johnson is a retired Department of the Air Force Budget Analyst, completing a distinguished career managing resources for the 60th Communications Squadron at Travis AFB. She holds an MBA and a Graduate Certificate in Life Coaching.

Cheryl is deeply committed to advocacy, equity, and service. A Legacy Life Member of the Fairfield–Suisun–Vacaville Section of the National Council of Negro Women, Inc. (NCNW), she has served in numerous leadership roles and currently serves as President. She is also a Life Member of the NAACP and has supported multiple community initiatives including Habitat for Humanity, Cancer Relay for Life, Walk to End Alzheimer's, and other local outreach programs. She also serves on the Advisory Council on Aging for the Napa/Solano Area Agency on Aging.

Her passion for Alzheimer's advocacy is reflected in her work as a volunteer with the Alzheimer's Association for four years before joining the staff, serving as the Solano County Walk to End Alzheimer's Recruitment Chair, Community Educator and later as an Alzheimer's Association Ambassador for California, assigned to Congressman Garamendi (CA03). She also serves as a spokesperson for the CA Alzheimer's Disease Burden Report.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Cloyce Dickerson

Professor and Dean, Xavier
University of Louisiana -
College of Pharmacy

With over 30 years of experience in healthcare, Cloyce is a highly accomplished professional who has also dedicated many years of his life to advancing diversity, preparing young students for the life ahead of them, promoting marriage through Intentionally Yours a non-profit he and his wife co-founded in 2018 and more recently early Alzheimer's intervention, preventing other families from experiencing the emotional impact of watching their love ones quality of life evaporate. As today there are 6 million people in the US diagnosed with Alzheimer's a figure that is projected to grow to over 13 million in the next 20-25 years.

Cloyce has spent the last two decades as a servant leader, focusing on "Developing people to lead beyond tomorrow." He's lead Baxter's Digital Health team as an Area Vice President where he successfully established Baxter as a credible Digital Health company. In addition to his role as VP of Baxter's Digital Health team, Cloyce held the prestigious position of President of Baxter's Black Professional Alliance (BPA), an organization with greater than 1000 members. The BPA serves as a vital business partner, supporting the inclusion, recruitment, development, retention, and engagement of African American talent within Baxter.

Prior to Baxter Cloyce played a pivotal role in expanding Voalte's clinical communication presence within the most prominent healthcare systems in the US. His strategic approach and strong leadership contributed to the company's growth.

Cloyce's commitment to excellence extends beyond his professional achievements. He has dedicated 30 years to coaching basketball, earning three California High School Basketball State Championship game appearances: two Girls Basketball State of California High School State Championships and A Boy's State Championship appearance in which his team lost to eventual NBA world champion Clay Thompson of the Golden State Warriors.

Cloyce's personal achievements include inductions into the Flint Michigan African American Hall of Fame and receiving the Harlem YMCA's National Black Achievers In Industry Award and countless President's awards at Fortune 500 companies.

Cloyce's leadership philosophy centers around building diverse teams that can approach problem-solving from different perspectives. He believes in fostering a culture of collaboration and teamwork, empowering individuals to grow and lead beyond their current capabilities. His unwavering dedication to developing people and creating opportunities for advancement is at the core of his mission.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Craig Cook-Sullivan

The Good LIfe Path
New Alliance of Black Men

Craig Cook-Sullivan, widely known as Craig Mack, is a community pillar, master barber, and purpose-driven leader with over 30 years of experience shaping people as much as he shapes fades. Rooted in the barbershop and extended into schools, nonprofits, and healing spaces, Craig's work lives at the intersection of mentorship, mental health, and community empowerment.

As the founder of the New Alliance of Black Men (NABM) and a mentor/counselor with Successful Purpose, Craig shows up daily for youth and adults, especially Black men creating safe spaces for truth, growth, and accountability. He is the host of Barbershop Talk, a weekly men's mental health healing circle that's been running strong for over three years, proving that real change starts with real conversation.

Whether he's cutting hair, mediating conflict, mentoring students, or building programs that uplift the next generation, Craig moves with heart, integrity, and intention. His mission is simple but heavyweight: help people heal, stand tall, and walk in their purpose together.

Your friendly neighborhood barber

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dame Drummer

Musician & Filmmaker

With persistence and diligence and consistency GRAMMY® -Certified Producer and Master Creator Dame Drummer is making his way in the music industry. Dame has toured around the world with Liv Warfield, Los Rakas, Zion-I, and Fantastic Negrito and E-40 to name a few. As a GRAMMY® -Certified producer on the GRAMMY® Award Winning Album "The Movement" by Alphabet Rockers, this singer-songwriter and award-winning filmmaker of "Black Daddy: The Movie" and with more than 5 solo albums, Dame. Drummer's artistic contributions have reached people all over the world.



Darren White

Realized Potential Inc.

Darren White is an award-winning senior practitioner in the field of youth facilitation, advocacy, counseling, and supervision for various community-based youth organizations. He has worked for more than 25 years in service of the community, helping first time offenders and disadvantaged youth and young adults through diversion programming to avoid incarceration.

During his tenure at Bay Area Youth Court's diversion program, he served first time youth offenders and their families. Prior to his time with the Youth Court, he was as an Inclusion Facilitator Supervisor, providing intervention services for severely emotionally disabled youth and their families. In addition, he has continued to sharpen his knowledge and expertise by maintaining certifications in the relevant fields of violence prevention, anger management, restorative justice, effective parenting, father engagement specialist and life coaching with a focus on selfcare.

Mr. White also serves as a dedicated volunteer civil servant on several community based Executive Board of Directors including formally seven-year member BART Police Citizens Review Board – District 4, currently the Oakland Branch of the NAACP. For his exemplary service he has won several prestigious awards, including the Civic Pride Award for Distinguished Community Service, the Dick Gregory Award for Community Excellence and is also the proud recipient of the Alameda County First Five Fatherhood Advocacy and Communications Award The Gary Thompson Fatherhood Leadership and Innovation Award.

He also possesses decades of experience working with the community and youth as a football coach, teachers' assistant, group home counselor and supervisor, deputy director/director of youth offender services, and director of public relations. He is the former Community Coordinator for the Obama Foundation's My Brother's Keeper Alliance at which he manages and directly supports program delivery, collective impact coordination and facilitation as well as resource development for male youth 14 to 25 years of age.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. David Johnson

President,
Merritt College

Dr. David M. Johnson is a transformational leader in higher education with over 20 years of experience as an administrator, educator, and advocate for student opportunity and success in the California Community College system. Currently serving as President of Merritt College in Oakland, Dr. Johnson has dedicated his career to advancing student success, particularly among historically underrepresented populations.

As president, Dr. Johnson oversees an urban campus serving more than 11,000 students and leads initiatives that integrate strategic planning, fiscal stewardship, accreditation, and inclusive leadership. Under his guidance, the college has reaffirmed its accreditation, expanded dual enrollment, and strengthened partnerships with industry, education, and community organizations. His tenure is marked by a deep commitment to shared governance and student-focused innovation.

Dr. Johnson previously held executive roles at Las Positas College and Cañada College, and served as Vice President of Instruction at Merritt College prior to assuming the presidency. Throughout his administrative career, he has championed equity-minded hiring and assessment practices, promoted academic freedom and intellectual curiosity, and managed multimillion-dollar budgets,

Before his transition into executive leadership, Dr. Johnson taught history and African American Studies at Berkeley City College, California State University East Bay, and UC Berkeley. He holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of California, Berkeley.

Featured Speakers

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CONTINUED



Gloria Brown, MPA

Bay Area Community
Health Advisory Council

BACHAC's trailblazing co-founder, Gloria Rhodes Brown, M.P.A., has been devoted to improving the lifestyle and health of her community for almost 50 years. Over several decades, she has passionately advocated for targeting health issues of vital importance to underserved populations.

Gloria co-founded the Mills-Peninsula Health Services African American Community Health Advisory Committee (AACHAC)* in 1995 and has worked tirelessly to improve health conditions in her community, ultimately reaching more than 55,000 people, with lives saved each year. She has spearheaded innovative health educational programs including annual events such as the Women's Health Conference, Men's Health Symposium, and the Soul Stroll for Health Walk and Resource Fair. She launched special programs addressing Alzheimer's, domestic violence, elder abuse, caregivers' education, and more including:

- Nutrition Education for Youth and Adults program that reaches the community through more than eighteen congregations.
- Health screenings at BACHAC signature events and churches, bringing critical health information and service directly to underserved populations.
- A grant from State Farm to implement an Anti-Bullying program in the Jefferson Union High School District.
- A program to provide thousands of uninsured women with free breast screenings through the Mills-Peninsula Breast Center.

A sustained legacy of volunteerism and devotion has garnered Gloria significant public recognition.

- An inductee into the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame
- Recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Recipient of the NFL Community Quarterback Award
- Honored in 2011 by Blacks in Philanthropy, the YMCA Branch's Leadership Award, and in 2012 with a national recognition at the American Diabetes annual meeting
- In 2013, the recipient of the first UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center's Visionary Excellence Award for her work in the Abundant Life Greater Bay Area Health Ministry Program

Gloria has served on numerous boards and commissions including the Mills-Peninsula Board of Directors, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, the African Women's Development Fund USA Board, the Faiths Committee of the UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, and as a Trustee of the Notre Dame de Namur University Board of Directors. She is currently a member of the Facing Our History Emeritus Advisory Committee and the St. James Community Foundation Board of Directors.

Gloria earned her Bachelor's Degree in Home Economics with an emphasis in Nutrition Education from Texas Southern University and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the College of Notre Dame, Belmont, CA.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. Glora Wu, MD, MBA

Stanford Center of Asian
Research and Education

Dr. Gloria Wu, MD, MBA: AB Harvard, MD Columbia, MBA Los Angeles Pacific University. Completed general surgery internship at Mount Sinai Hospital NYC, ophthalmology residency at Cornell-Columbia Medical Center, and retina-vitreous fellowship at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary.

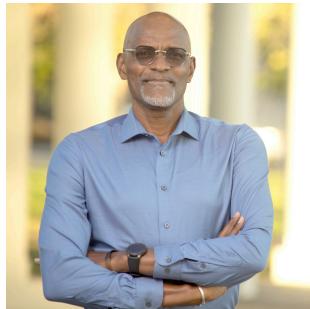
Dr. Wu is past president of the Santa Clara County Medical Association (2024) and sits on the California Medical Association Board of Trustees, American Medical Association Governing Council. She will be the 2027 President of American Medical Women's Association.

Founded and published JournalofAsianHealth.com (2011-2020), now part of Stanford Center of Asian Research and Education. Created 5 mobile apps, including EyeQuix, to fight stroke and traumatic brain injury. Works with University of California Santa Cruz in the Department of Computational Psychology and has a Virtual Reality Game to fight stroke side effects and traumatic brain injury. Served as CMO, COO of LongHealth.io, a startup in Health data (2023-2025).

Author of three textbooks, plus 14 articles on AI and Medicine (2024-2026). Practices in San Jose, CA. For fun, she paints and plays tennis.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Gregory Hodge

Brotherhood of Elders

Gregory Hodge is a social change activist and organizational development consultant with Khepera Consulting. Working as a strategist, meeting designer, racial equity trainer, facilitator and coach, Gregory works with a range of groups from small non-profits and foundations to public agencies, particularly school districts and foundations. Greg served as the Executive Director for the Executives' Alliance for Boys and Men of Color and currently as the Chief Executive Officer for the Oakland-based Brotherhood of Elders Network. He is a coordinating partner in designing the Healing Generations Institute with the National Compadres Network.

His clients include the Association of Black Foundation Executives, The California Endowment and Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. As a leader in his community, Gregory served two four-year terms as a member of the Oakland Unified School District Board of Education beginning in January 2000, including a year as president of the board. Greg is a Fulbright-Hayes Fellow, recipient of the Gerbode Fellowship and board chair of the Rockwood Leadership Institute. He is a proud father of five, active gardener and lives in Oakland, California

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Guy Troupe

PNE Founder
President and CEO
of Troupe21 &
Associates

Troupe, a former college football player, is best known as an athlete development and transition specialist in amateur and professional sports. His career began as a substance abuse educator and counselor for the District of Columbia Public Schools and Associated Catholic Charities. Troupe transitioned into athletics as compliance services intern for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). He has worked as an NCAA enforcement representative, Oklahoma State University special advisor for student athlete development, NFL Alumni Director of Career Transition, and NFL Vice President of Player and Employee Development. During his tenure at NFL headquarters, Troupe was tasked with the challenge of designing and managing player development initiatives for all 32 NFL teams. Known for his ability to design and develop innovative human capital management initiatives in sports, Troupe served as the chief architect of the following: NCAA Big Brother/Big Sister Program, NCAA Operation Intercept, NCAA Advanced and Expert Coaching Programs, NFL/NCAA Life Skills Speakers Bureau, NFL Career Transition Program, NFL High School Coaching Program, NFL Europe Coaching and Administration Program, NFL Veteran Co-Facilitation Program, NFL Credit Management Program, NFL Diversity Mentoring and Internship Program (now known as the Junior Rotational Program), and the NFL Alumni Player of the Year Awards (now known as NFL Honors). Troupe is the Founder and CEO of the Player Networking Event (PNE) Super Bowl Weekend and a member of Friendship Church in Tulsa and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. Harry Stafford

Duke University

Dr. Stafford received his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. As an undergraduate, he participated as a student-athlete on the Men's Track and Field Team. His tenure continued at the university with the completion of his medical degree at the UNC School of Medicine. Upon completion of medical school, Dr. Stafford attended Duke University School of Medicine as a resident in the Family Medicine Program, where he served as Chief Resident. Following residency, Dr. Stafford continued his training at Duke in the Sports Medicine Fellowship Program and following joined the Duke Sports Medicine faculty. In 2008, he returned to UNC to become the Director of the Primary Care Sports Medicine Fellowship.

Dr. Stafford served as a team physician at the University of North Carolina since 2008. He was the team physician for Women's Basketball, Football, as well as the Men's and Women's Track & Field and Cross-Country teams.

Dr. Stafford returned to Duke to become the Associate Director of the Duke Sports Sciences Institute as well as Director of Sports Performance for DSSI. He also serves as Team physician for Duke Football and is the current Head Team Physician and Director of Sports Performance at NCCU. He also serves and head team physician for Shaw University and Elizabeth City State University. He is the Chief Medical Officer for the MEAC conference.

He is an active member of the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine and American College of Sports Medicine, Dr. Stafford has authored many book chapters and journal articles. He is currently doing research in the areas of Sports Nutrition, EKG changes in African American Athletes, and Sickle Cell Trait in Athletes. Dr. Stafford is a highly regarded leader in the field of sports medicine and has been the recipient of prestigious awards recognizing his humanitarian efforts, academic pursuits, and care of athletes.

Dr. Stafford received his Masters in Business Administration from UNC Kenan Flagler School of Business where was awarded The Poets and Quants award for Executives. He is certified by the National Strength and Conditioning Association as a strength and conditioning specialist. He serves on the Board of the North Carolina Special Olympics and the North Carolina Central University Foundation.³⁵

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Jason Seals

Pennington
Biomedical
Research Center

Jason Seals is an African-centered educator, filmmaker, and thought leader with over twenty-two years of experience across education, behavioral health, and youth development. His work centers justice, healing, and equity, with a deep commitment to creating transformative learning spaces that uplift Black voices and support system-impacted individuals, families, and communities through storytelling, political education and community engagement.

The role Jason holds most dear is that of father. His love for his children deeply informs his work, grounding his commitment to rebuilding families and strengthening communities as essential pathways toward collective healing and wellness.

Outside of his professional work, Jason enjoys spending quality time with his children, running, and attending Jumuah prayer.



Dr. Jeremy Grant

Ohio State University

Jeremy G. Grant, Ph.D., is a clinical neuropsychologist in the Department of Psychology at The Ohio State University. As the director of the Cognitive Health in Late Life (CHILL) Lab, his research examines behavioral interventions to promote cognitive health and compensate for cognitive decline in individuals at risk for dementia. He is a co-investigator on Black Impact, a community-based lifestyle intervention designed to improve cardiovascular and cognitive health in Black men.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Jerome Gourdine

Oakland Unified School
District

Jerome Gourdine, husband to Crystal and father of three incredible sons, Angus, Asa, and Alijah has served the Oakland Unified School District for more than 28 years, as a teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, Program Manager for AAMA and now Director of Targeted Strategies Office of Equity Oakland Unified School District. He supports and coordinates the development of the different targeted groups (African American, Latino/a, Arab, Asian Pacific Islander student sub groups and families. He truly enjoys working with his colleagues to reach the established goals and bring more voice to these communities. In addition, he currently works at UC Berkeley as a coordinator of the African American Leaders Network with a goal to increase the number of African American administrators in public education. Among his many accomplishments and awards is receiving the 2007 MetLife Principal of the Year Award, a distinguished title afforded to just twenty-five school leaders in the United States. One of his proudest professional achievements is leading two teachers to be named California Teacher of the Year.



Josh Ramos

Head Football Coach &
Athletic Director at Laney College

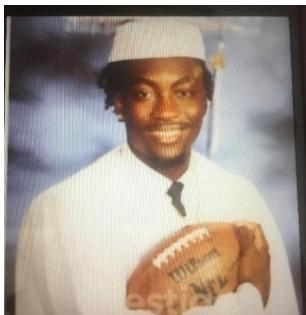
Josh Ramos is the Head Football Coach and Interim Athletic Director at Laney College. Coach Ramos is entering his 15th season at Laney College, bringing a player-focused, high-energy approach to the program. Known for his commitment to discipline, development, and accountability, Ramos emphasizes building strong student-athletes both on and off the field. His leadership centers on creating a competitive culture while supporting academic success, personal growth, and preparation for the next level of football and life. Prior to Laney College, Coach Ramos was an assistant coach and instructor at Solano College for five years.

Featured Speakers

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CONTINUED



Joshua Oludayo

Joshua Oludayo is an Oakland Native, alum of OUSD and AAMA program/middle and high school African American honor roll student. Beginning in elementary school he has been involved in community based organizations efforts to improve education and social programs for all students and families, focusing on the needs of his community. In 5th grade he was selected to be a mentor to second graders and continued as a peer mentor in high school. He is a freshman scholar athlete at Foothill College in Los Altos and plans to obtain a degree in digital marketing, with the goal of creating cultural based marketing with positive impact through leadership, education and advocacy. He values God and his family as the foundation of his personal growth, leadership and community impact.



Julia "JP" Profit-Williams, MHA, BSN

Associate Director of Preventative Health
Tulsa Health Department

Julia Profit-Williams, affectionately known as "JP" serves as the Associate Director of Preventive Health at the Tulsa Health Department. In this role, she provides leadership and oversight for all clinical operations within the Tulsa City-County Health Department.

JP's extensive educational background includes nursing degrees from Rogers University in Claremore, Oklahoma, and Oklahoma City University in Oklahoma City. She furthered her education by earning a Master of Science degree in Healthcare Administration from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, where she was honored as a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. She also holds a certificate in Nurse Leadership from Duke University.

With a distinguished career spanning over twenty-seven years in nursing, JP has held various leadership positions within the Hillcrest Health System: Clinical Manager, Bailey Medical Center Owasso, OK, Chief Nursing Officer, and Chief Operating Officer, Cushing Hospital, Cushing, OK. JP is deeply committed to serving her community and profession. She currently holds board positions with the Oklahoma Nurses Association, Oklahoma Center for Nursing, Morton Comprehensive Health, and Youth Medical Mentorship.

She is an active member of several professional organizations, including the National Black Nurses Association, Oklahoma Nurses Association, American College of Healthcare Executives, and Oklahoma Public Health Association and the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, & Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) JP served as Section Legislative Coordinator lobbying for Oklahoma legislation for women and children in the US Senate and US House of Representatives.

She has been recognized numerous times as Nurse of The Day with the Oklahoma Nurse Association, receiving Citation of Appreciation from; Senator Regina Goodwin, Senator JJ Dossett, Representative Derrel Fincher, Representative Earl Sears.

JP is passionate about creating opportunities for youth from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities to explore careers in medicine, nursing, and other healthcare professions. She actively participates in community advocacy projects that promote and protect the health and well-being of marginalized communities in healthcare settings.

JP is dedicated to addressing health and social disparities that impact the health outcomes and life expectancy rates of marginalized communities.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Ki'ev Harris
Empowered Aging

Ki'ev Harris is a proud Bay Area native and the devoted father of two amazing children and a believer and follower of Jesus Christ. With more than 15 years of experience in social services throughout the Bay Area, Ki'ev has intentionally dedicated his life's work to pouring back into the community that raised him.

Over the years, Ki'ev has served in multiple capacities, including as a case manager for families experiencing homelessness, where he provided critical resources and restored hope for long-term stability. He has also worked as an intensive care coordinator for adolescent youth and has been a strong advocate for reentry populations and individuals who have been sexually exploited.

For the past six years, Ki'ev has focused his advocacy on the elderly community through the Empowered Aging Ombudsman Program, where he currently serves as Program Manager. In this role, he leads efforts that impact and support more than 1,800 residents each year, ensuring dignity, safety, and quality of life for some of our most vulnerable community members.

Outside of his professional work, Ki'ev enjoys the simple things in life—taking long walks, creating small businesses, and spending meaningful time with his loved ones. He firmly believes that one conversation, one smile, and one handshake can change a life in ways we may never fully realize.

Ki'ev believes that supporting Black men's mental health is not optional—it is essential. He reminds us that strength can look like asking for help, leadership can look like listening, and healing begins when we allow Black men to show up as their full, authentic selves.



Lamont Williams

My name is Lamont Williams. I'm from West Oakland, and a senior at McClymonds high school. My extracurricular activities consist of basketball and football since 10th grade. My work experience consists of the SPAAT program, Pearson's Premium Barbecue Sauce, and The EOYDC. I have also been in close ties with the OK program and the 100 Black Men of America Inc. These opportunities all helped me become a man and showed me responsibilities at a young age. I believe this experience as well as what I learned from school and where I come from can only help me in my journey to become a man.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Marc Loupe
CFOs2Go

Marc is a partner in the firm CFOs2Go and provides consulting services as a Chief Financial Officer (CFO). He leads the company's Agribusiness practice group and has held positions as the CFO of AAA (Northern California, Nevada and Utah), CFO of Sage Software-North America, and Chief Audit Executive for three publicly held companies (Ampex Corporation, Sun Microsystems and CA Technologies). His accounting, finance and operational experiences include strategy development and implementations, company transformations, acquisitions and divestitures, financial and operational systems implementations, profitability and cash flow improvement programs, improved financial governance and accounting processes, treasury operations, international business, legal operations, human resources, sales development, product line general management and Co-CEO. With his diverse experience, he has consistently demonstrated an ability to adapt and lead in large and complex business and financial environments.

During Marc's career, he has:

Led and managed the financial operations of large, global, growth, stable and challenged businesses. Also, he has opened financial operations in Argentina, Brazil, China, Columbia, Dubai, Egypt, France, Greece, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Taiwan and Venezuela.

Championed and executed financial and operational turn-around programs, yielding improved business operations, profitability and cash flows.

Developed and implemented Enterprise Risk Management systems and processes which focused on strategic, governance, financial and operational risk mitigation.

Designed, developed and implemented successful acquisition and divestiture plans, achieving growth, synergistic and financial objectives.

Implemented many successful Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), business intelligence and financial planning systems, improving financial management capability and transparency.

Marc earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with an Accounting concentration from

California Polytechnic State University - San Luis Obispo; he has a Master of Science in Accounting from Golden Gate University. He became a CPA shortly after graduation; he is now in Inactive Status. Also, he completed the Stanford University Executive Program which focused on management, marketing and strategy; he obtained his certificate in Wine Industry Accounting and Finance from Sonoma State University's Wine Business Institute. His board-level experience includes C-Suite/executive participant, AAA Life Insurance,

Lifehouse (a non-profit organization focused on those individuals with developmental disabilities) and the

Youth Leadership and Development of San Francisco Foundation. His professional affiliations are: Financial Executive Institute, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Wine Institute, North Bay Area Food Industry Group and other local organizations.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Marlo Briscoe

Marlo Briscoe is a wife, mother of four, and fourth-generation resident born and raised in Oakland. She grew up in Allen Temple Baptist Church, graduated from Skyline High School in the 80s, and later attended Southern University in Baton Rouge, LA. After, she lived in Sacramento, Stockton, and Georgia, where she began raising her first three children aged 33, 30, and 25 before moving back to Oakland in 2010. Her 30 and 25-year-old daughters both attended and graduated from Oakland public schools before graduating from LSU and UC Irvine. Currently, she and her loving husband and family continue to raise their 12-year-old son who attends Oakland Public Schools where she aims to make a difference not only in her son's life, but also all of our Black children in Oakland.

She combines her knowledge and experience as a concerned mother to support her mission in ensuring that all children, particularly Black students and parents, feel valued, heard, and supported. Rather than passively observing, she is a firm believer in the importance of advocating for our children to uplift them to always see their worth and potential- always working to offer ideas and engage in meaningful conversations to support the creation of an environment where Black students can thrive, see themselves through each other, and know that they matter.



Dr. Michael Alosco
Boston University

Dr. Alosco is a clinical neuropsychologist and Associate Professor of Neurology at the Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine, where he serves as the Vice Chair of Research, Co-Director of Clinical Research at the BU CTE Center, and Leader of the BU Alzheimer's Disease Research Center Clinical Core. His career has been devoted to studying methods to detect and diagnose neurodegenerative diseases during life, particularly chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE). He is the PI of several NIH-funded grants focused on this effort in addition to those that investigate the long-term white matter and vascular consequences of repetitive head impacts from contact and collision sport participation. His research has laid the foundation for the development and validation of ways to detect pathologies from repetitive TBIs during life. He hopes his work will ultimately lead to the development of strategies to treat and prevent CTE and Alzheimer's disease.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Edward Davis Jr.

EDT Performance
Enhancement

My name is Edward Davis Jr. I am an Oakland born educator, championship coach, professional trainer, entrepreneur, and father committed to advancing Black male brain health, identity, and performance. I walk the line between public and private servant leadership, serving as an African American Male Achievement Facilitator and physical education teacher at Bret Harte Middle School, while also coaching at Bishop O'Dowd High School.

At Bishop O'Dowd, we became Kings of the North and CIF State Champions, completing a season long transformation by starting 1–3 and finishing 11–4. That turnaround reflects the resiliency mindset I teach all of my students. Setbacks are information, pressure builds focus, and consistent habits rewire the brain for confidence, discipline, and belief.

I am the founder of EDT Performance Enhancement, where I work as a professional trainer integrating physical conditioning, mental resilience, and performance psychology. I also lead STEM and drone based ventures, using technology and hands on learning to open pathways in education, entrepreneurship, and creative expression.



Neal Hatten

Bayview Senior Services

Neal Hatten brings more than five decades of nonprofit leadership and direct service experience, beginning in 1974. His work spans youth and workforce development, substance abuse counseling, and services for unhoused individuals. He currently serves as Deputy Director of Bayview Senior Services, advancing culturally rooted programs that support Black seniors and disabled community members to age in place through social services, housing, food security, health, and social connection. Bayview Senior Services routinely partners with the University of California, San Francisco's Memory and Aging Center | Global Brain Health Institute, as well as San Francisco State University's School of Nursing, to advance innovative, community-informed approaches to senior care and healthy aging.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Nya Siwatu
The Good Life Program

Nya Siwatu is a wellness program producer and host with The Good Life, where she coordinates and livestreams accessible exercise classes and co-hosts interactive cooking demonstrations. Her work centers on creating inclusive, community-rooted health experiences that support nourishment, movement, and everyday well-being across diverse backgrounds and ages. Nya brings a warm, engaging presence and a passion for making healthy living practical and joyful.



Dr. Rochelle Woods
Kaiser Permanente

Rochelle Woods MA, MD is a native of Los Angeles. She is a geriatric neuropsychiatrist at Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara where she teaches psychiatry residents in both geriatric and consultation-liaison psychiatry.

Her endeavors include working on a functional neurological disorders program at the medical center and acting as a consultant for the Parkinson's and Huntington's disease clinics. She attended Northwestern University (BA - psychology) and Pepperdine University (MA - psychology), before completing medical school at the University of Illinois, Chicago. As a first-generation physician, she trained in both neurology and psychiatry at Brown University where she focused on the diagnosis and treatment of dementias and other cognitive disorders. From there she pursued sub-specialty training in cognitive and behavioral neurology and geriatric psychiatry at UCLA and the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center. Dr. Woods has been an assistant professor of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences at both UCLA and Boston University, teaching medical students, residents, and fellows in geriatric psychiatry and behavioral neurology, and she has participated in peer-reviewed research for most of her career. Since 2011, her work at Kaiser Permanente has included leadership roles as medical director of the memory clinic and chief of the adult psychiatry department. Medical education is her passion, and she was the inaugural clerkship director for the Boston University's School of Medicine psychiatry rotation at Kaiser Permanente and then the inaugural Kaiser Permanente San Jose psychiatry residency program director. She is focused on compassionate and exceptional medical care for all and increasing the representation of BIPOC in medicine. Dr. Woods is an avid promoter of health equity in the African American community and she participates in health initiatives within the Kaiser Permanente system and in her community to identify and to address health disparities. She also has expertise in medical ethics and narrative medicine, patient safety, and curriculum development. She loves laughing at the dinner table with family, fiber crafts, reading, and running.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. Roland Thorpe

Johns Hopkins University

Roland J. Thorpe, Jr., PhD, MS, is a Professor in the Department of Health, Behavior, and Society, Founding Director of the Program of Men's Health Research in the Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions (HCHDS), Deputy Director of HCHDS, and Co-Director of the Johns Hopkins Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center for Minority Aging Research at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He was recently appointed as the inaugural Associate Vice Provost of Faculty Diversity. He holds joint appointments in the Division of Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology in the Department of Medicine, and the Department of Neurology at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and the Department of Sociology at the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Thorpe is a social epidemiologist whose research focuses on the association of how social and structural determinants of health impact health and functional outcomes among men across the adult life course. He is particularly interested in two areas: disentangling race and SES inequalities across the life course, and understanding how structural inequalities impact biology to affect health and health behaviors. Dr. Thorpe serves as multiple principal investigator (MPI) on several NIA funded grants and is a MPI of the Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning consortium to Advance Health Equity and Researcher Diversity (AIM-AHEAD) with a focus on increasing the participation and engagement of the researchers and communities that are currently underrepresented in AI/ML modeling and applications through mutually beneficial partnerships. He participates in several training programs designed to develop under-represented minorities at many career stages. He is a past recipient of the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health Advising, Mentoring, and Teaching Recognition Award, the inaugural annual 2018 NHLBI OHD PRIDE Roland J. Thorpe, Jr. mentoring award, recipient of the 2020 Minority Issues in Gerontology Outstanding Mentorship Award and the 2020 JHBSPH Dean's Award of Distinction in Faculty Mentoring. Dr. Thorpe is also the Editor in Chief of *Ethnicity & Disease*, Associate Editor for *Innovation in Aging*, *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences*, and *American Journal of Men's Health*.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. Samuel Washington

University of California
San Francisco

Dr. Samuel L. Washington III is a urologic oncologist and Assistant Professor within the Departments of Urology and serve as the Associate Chair of Inclusive Excellence in the Department of Urology, the Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center Prostate Cancer Program Community Outreach and Engagement Liaison, a member of the the NCCN Guidelines for Prostate Cancer Early Detection Panel, and as co-Director of the Community Outreach and Engagement Core for the UCSF Cancer Health Outcomes SPORE grant. His work and research, funded by the National Cancer Institute, Prostate Cancer Foundation, and The Movember Foundation, focuses on understanding how regional and healthcare system-related factors interact with race and ethnicity, geography, and social environment to perpetuate differences in urologic cancer management and how to develop mitigation strategies through interventions and organizational change.

He holds positions including Associate Chair of Inclusive Excellence in the Department of Urology, Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center (HDFCCC) Prostate Cancer Program Community Outreach and Engagement Liaison, and served on the NCCN Guidelines for Prostate Cancer Early Detection Panel. His research portfolio includes efforts funded by National Cancer Institute, Prostate Cancer Foundation, and The Movember Foundation. His work includes co-investigator and co-principal investigator roles on projects funded by the Department of Defense and the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative with peer-reviewed publications in high-impact journals such as European Urology and JAMA Oncology.



Sarah Allen

Journalist & Producer

Sarah Allen has 20 years of experience working in media including in both film production and print media. She was an executive producer on the Emmy nominated, Showtime feature documentary, Stand about former NBA player, Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf; currently streaming on Paramount+. Sarah's work is often centered on social justice issues. She is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists and has sat on the board of the Bay Area Black Journalists Association since 2011. Sarah is a proud mom of Oakland Tech 11th grader, Shawn Allen Deudor.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Shanette Merrick

Executive Director,
The Good Life Program

Shanette Merrick is a longtime Oakland, California resident and the Executive Director of The Good Life Program for Healthy Aging, where she leads the vision, strategy, and implementation of community-centered wellness initiatives focused on healthy aging, disease prevention, and whole-family healing. Under her leadership, The Good Life integrates food, movement, education, and community connection to address chronic disease, brain health, and health inequities in historically underserved communities.

In addition to her nonprofit leadership, Shanette serves as a Clinical Research Supervisor at UC Davis Medical Center, bringing over 13 years of experience in clinical research across Hepatitis C, HIV, Fatty Liver Disease, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and diabetes prevention. Her work bridges clinical science and public health with a deep commitment to equity, prevention, and real-world impact.

With more than 20 years of community engagement experience, Shanette's approach is grounded in Community-Engaged Research, ensuring that community voices, lived experience, and cultural context inform program design and implementation. She works closely with participants, community partners, and multidisciplinary teams, translating community insight into evidence-informed, culturally responsive programs that empower, support, and uplift individuals, families, and communities.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Siddiq Moody Jihad
Urban Cities Healing Strategies

Siddiq has dedicated his career to criminal justice and restorative work, beginning in 1998 as the Post Release Programs Director for the San Francisco Sheriff's Department Jail Alternative Division under the leadership of Sheriff Michael Hennessy. After transitioning from San Quentin State Penitentiary, Siddiq became one of the co-founders of the Five Keys Charter School in the early 2000s, the first institution of its kind in the U.S. to provide inmates with the opportunity to earn high school diplomas through in-custody and post-release programs. His multidisciplinary approach included job readiness training, mental wellness support, domestic violence prevention, life skills development, and substance abuse education, ensuring that all post-release participants were eligible to enroll in high school education classes.

Siddiq holds a Baccalaureate Degree in Social Psychology and Political Science from Sonoma State University. While his academic background provided a strong foundation, his practical skills were honed through hands-on experiences, including serving as a Clinical Case Manager at the Black Coalition on AIDS during the AIDS epidemic of the 1990s and as the Harm Reduction Coordinator for the Bridge Project in San Francisco's Tenderloin district, where he worked alongside a multidisciplinary team of doctors, social workers, and mental health professionals.

Core tools of Siddiq's approach include wellness and psycho-education, with a strong emphasis on empathy and accountability facilitated through cognitive psycho-social education. His role as Co-Chair of HIV (AIDS) Health Services for the Northern District of California, Oregon, and Washington contributed significantly to his understanding and development of services tailored to complex and challenging populations. In 2021, Siddiq co-founded "THUG Therapy," an African-centered approach to community and male wellness, integrating psycho-social education with cognitive solutions aimed at healing individuals within urban communities. In 2025, he also established Urban Cities Healing Strategies, which has since received its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and is actively working to fulfill grant outcomes and obligations while serving its community.

Siddiq is an active member of the Bay Area Association of Black Psychologists.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. Tabia Pope

Head to Speech Inc

Dr. Tabia Pope is a leading advocate for athlete brain health whose work began during her doctoral studies at Howard University, where she developed an awareness campaign that became Head to Speech, Incorporated. As President and CEO, she leads the nation's first nonprofit organization advancing educational, scientific, and charitable initiatives focused on the impact of sports concussions on cognitive-communication skills. She leads programs that bridge athletics and communication sciences, earning national recognition from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the NFL's My Cause, My Cleats campaign, NFL Foundation, and the Black Sports Business Symposium.

She serves as a Clinical Instructor of Speech-Language Pathology and B.R.A.I.N. Lab Coordinator at the University of the District of Columbia, where her research focuses on developing cognitive-communication programming for elite and professional football players transitioning from the National Football League (NFL), Canadian Football League (CFL), The United Football League (UFL), and other leagues. She has also provided interventions for players in the Women's Football Alliance (WFA) experiencing post-concussion syndrome and cognitive-communication challenges. She trains students and the community using concussion simulations to deepen their understanding of concussion symptoms.

Beyond academia, Dr. Pope has led masterclasses on sports concussions alongside former NFL players and the producer of *Concussed: The American Dream*. Her expertise and courses have been featured on Fox Sports Radio, Bowie TV on Super Bowl Radio Row, My Field Goals, Significance in Athletics and Sports, Hits and Heels, MedBridge, and SpeechTherapyPD.com. She has spoken on Women in Sports panels and addressed sports management programs about the connection between athlete brain health and organizational success—often emphasizing, “If brain health is not a line item or a part of the bottom line, then what are we really doing?”

In her upcoming book entitled, “Protect Your Brand: A Healthy Brain is a Wealthy Brand,” Dr. Pope talks about advancing brain health and cognitive wellness for athletes’ long-term career and leadership success. She remains committed to advancing brain health research, improving community awareness, and increasing representation of Black men in Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementia research. For information, email tabia.pope@udc.edu. Determine eligibility and sign up for the research study by clicking on the questionnaire: <https://forms.gle/3atUeipsmkP2Juft6>.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson
Chancellor
Peralta Community College District

Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson is a dedicated leader in higher education, committed to social justice, equity, and inclusion. With over two decades of experience in community colleges, she has worked to create learning environments that meet diverse students' needs and promote academic success.

As Chancellor of the Peralta Community College District in Oakland, CA, Dr. Gilkerson continues to drive transformative change. She previously served as President of Evergreen Valley College and Laney College, as well as Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs at Contra Costa College. Additionally, she was the inaugural Diversity, Inclusion, and Innovation Officer for the Contra Costa Community College District. Her career began as a psychology counseling faculty member and TRIO Student Support Services coordinator at Chabot College.

Beyond academia, she has worked with The Greenlining Institute and UC Berkeley's Office of Student Life and Early Academic Outreach Program. She has led statewide and national initiatives focused on basic needs, undocumented students, and distance education. She also serves on several national and statewide boards and commissions dedicated to researching and addressing systemic barriers within higher education that hinder racial equity and the development of future community college leaders. As an Equity Avenger and Chancellor-In-Residence for the CCHALES Research Collective at San Diego State University, she champions learner-centered institutions rooted in love, hope, and inclusion.

A first-generation college graduate, Dr. Gilkerson holds a bachelor's degree in history, a master's in counseling, and a doctorate in organizational leadership. She is deeply committed to fostering leadership and community-building at all levels, creating spaces where individuals can learn and lead with authenticity, courage, and humility.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Joan Tarika Lewis
Black Panther Party

Born and raised in Oakland CA. Joan Tarika Lewis is a descendant of California Pioneers. She has often been described as a Renaissance Woman. An accomplished Jazz/Blues violinist, visual artist, genealogist and alumni of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense. Ms. Lewis is a graduate of Cal State East Bay and the Academy of Arts in San Francisco. Ms. Lewis is recognized as being the first female recruit of the BPP by its founder Bobby Seale. She also testified in court in behalf of Huey P. Newton in 1968 when only one office existed. Ms. Lewis has appeared in numerous documentaries including Stanley Nelson's 'Vanguard of the Revolution', consultant for Melvin and Mario Van Peebles' motion picture 'PANTHER' and Oakland Museum's BPP's 50th Anniversary to name a few. She also made a guest appearance on Prof. Henry Louis Gate's Finding Your Roots Show providing valuable research materials for one of his star guest.



Dr. Thomas Cudjoe
Johns Hopkins University

Thomas Cudjoe is a home-based medicine physician and clinical investigator. He is an Associate Professor at Johns Hopkins University, with appointments in Public Health (Epidemiology), Nursing, and is an affiliate of the SNF Agora Institute. Dr. Cudjoe employs qualitative and epidemiological methods and human-centered design to understand and address social isolation. He has contributed to multiple National Academies discussions on social connection and was an invited reviewer of the Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. Tiago Robinson

Oakland Unified
School District

Dr. Tiago J. Robinson is an Oakland native, he attended school in OUSD. His academic journey was untraditional, however ultimately completed his his A.A with a Major in Art at City College of San Francisco, and continued on to earn his B.S Degree from Cal-State Hayward, with Major: RecreationTherapy, his M.S degree from California State University East Bay in Counseling & Student Services, and his Ed.D. in Educational Leadership for Social Justice from California State University East Bay with a Major in Social Justice.

Dr. Robinson has worked in the community for over 30 years as well as travelling abroad at the American International School of Bolivia in Cochabamba Bolivia. He taught computer skills to Pre-K through 12th grade students, and Art and PE to both middle school and high school students. Moreover, he was the head coach for the boys basketball team, and head coach for the girls cheerleading team, and assistant high school soccer coach for girls and boys, and was named best coach of the Year (1998-1999). While at Bolivia he created many programs, such as Drug free Program, The Big Brother, Big Sister Mentoring Program, City Wide Basketball Tournaments and School Wide Community Service Program for students k-12. He also led lectures that informed students of college and career options.

Dr. Robinson enjoys helping students navigate through the challenges and obstacles of the educational system, and supporting students to complete their high school courses, earn their diplomas, obtain scholarships, attend college, and attend Career and Technical Education Programs (CTE). He has worked for 12 years at Oakland High School to help improve the school's climate and culture for bullying and harassment from 13th to 44th state percentile, managed and led a team of teachers, administrators and district office staff through an S3 Grant for Safe and Supportive School Climate including: (PBIS) Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, Anti-bullying, Positive Climate & Motivational Strategies, Case Management, Credit Recovery, Parent Workshops & Community Involvement. Dr. Robinson was the first to teach African American Male Achievement (AAMA) Courses both district and state wide.

He increased of 32%, supported the reduction in school violence and substance abuse from 53rd to 70th state percentile, a decrease of 17%, reduction in total suspension rate from 11.8% to 8.6% a decrease of 3.2%, and provided counseling & support services to reduce truancy having the highest student attendance in 2007. He also played a crucial role in increasing the positive outcomes through the juvenile justice system support.

His recognitions include: California State University Hayward (CSUH) - Dean's List (2000).

California State Assembly District 15 - Certificate of Recognition in Honor of: "your continued dedication and leadership in our city and your commendable efforts to end inequality and intolerance throughout the Bay Area". (2013).

NAACP Honoree - Educator Award "Grateful Appreciation and Hard Work for keeping the Dream Alive for Our Kids". (2015).

Marcus Foster Education Institute (MFEI) 100 for the 100TH Legacy Awards champion for inclusion. (2023).

NAACP Honoree, Black College Expo & Oakland NAACP Golden Heart Award. (2024).

The acknowledgements, as mentioned above, are amongst many other accolades earned for the work Dr. Robinson has committed to students and families within the community.

Featured Speakers

CONTINUED



Dr. Tony Jackson

Co-Founder
PranaMind

Dr. Tony Jackson is an activist, educator and scientist-practitioner. He is a licensed QEEG Diplomate, licensed clinical psychologist, board certified neurofeedback practitioner, clinical training director and co-founder of PranaMind, LLC. His clinical experience includes tours with Children's Hospital-Oakland, New Leaf Treatment Center, Oakland Community Counseling and Sunset Day Treatment Center in San Francisco. He established his teaching career at College of Notre Dame (now Notre Dame de Namur University) as an assistant professor of psychology and at Skyline College, as an adjunct professor. He earned his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Health and Multicultural Psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology, Berkeley-Alameda campus (renamed Alliant University). Dr. Jackson served as Clinical Training Director for the Therapist In Residency training program (TNR-bay area) and currently serves as clinical supervisor for the Nganga na Dibuti program. As a tenured professor of psychology at Skyline College (Ret.), he formally coordinated the ASTEP (African American Success Through Excellence and Persistence) program. His teaching experience includes various graduate and undergraduate programs in the San Francisco Bay area. Dr. Jackson assisted in developing a handbook for the development of culturally sensitive learning communities as part of the GROWTH (Genuine Rebuilding Opportunities With Technology and Humanity) curriculum as well as in the development of The Adewole Project and the ASTEP Math Academy, at Skyline College. He is co-author of "Psychology: Connections in Theory and Practice 4th ed." and author of "Black Male Violence in Perspective-Towards an Afrocentric Approach" and the DragonSlayer curriculum for violence prevention/intervention. In addition, he developed and co-directed the first Brain Training and Peak Performance Project along with Dr. Raymond Jones at Skyline College.

Dr. Jackson brings a wealth of therapeutic experience including working with families, couples, children, group therapy, treatment of seriously mentally ill patients, working with troubled teens, treatment of drug addiction and complex trauma. His research interests and clinical experience also include treatment with a focus on psycho-nutrition (the use of optimal nutrition to stimulate mental and physical health and healing) and brain technologies. Dr. Jackson is a member (and past President) of the Bay Area Chapter of the Association of Black Psychologists, the International Association of Functional Neurology and Behavioral Rehabilitation, the Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback and the American Psychological Association. He serves on the boards of several community-focused organizations including the African American Health and Wellness Steering Committee for Alameda County, The Love Not Blood Campaign and the Alameda Alliance for Health Peer Review and Credentialing Committee. He believes in the strength and ability of culture and the community to heal. Dr. Jackson's sources of inspiration are his family, his love of music and his ongoing thirst for the application of knowledge.

Featured Speakers

Black Men's Brain Health Conference | #BMBH2025

BMBH

CONTINUED



Dr. Victor Ekuta
Morehouse School of
Medicine

Victor Ekuta, MD is a neurology resident physician at Morehouse School of Medicine and a physician-scientist focused on brain health equity. His work examines racial disparities in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, with an emphasis on improving the inclusivity of diagnostic and neuroimaging tools. Dr. Ekuta was a member of the inaugural Black Men's Brain Health Emerging Scholars Program (2021–2022) and remains committed to advancing equitable brain health care for Black communities.

Zimbabwe Davies

THUG Therapy



Oakland Native Zimbabwe Davies got his start in entertainment by producing fashion shows. In 2002, Davies produced his first fashion show titled Enchantment, "Making Winter Wear Magic." he teamed up with a non-profit organization, ILSP (Independent Living Skills Program), an organization which Helps foster youth become self-sufficient when they enter adulthood. The first year Davies helped raise 3,500 dollars for foster youth housing and schooling needs. The following year, Davies collaborated with ILSP for his sophomore fashion show On The Contrary: Paradise in Oakland." The fashion show raised a total of 8,500 dollars.

In 2003, Davies served as a foster youth ambassador for Alameda County Social Services Agency. Davies was part of a national initiative named "Family to Family," an initiative that helps foster youth connect with family members they have lost contact with. He worked alongside former Agency Director Chet Hewitt and Current Director Lori Cox. In 2005 Davies was presented with the Angel Award for his philanthropy efforts. The award was given to him by

Actress Terri J Vaughn, most notable for playing Lovita in "The Steve Harvey Show, and actress Nia Long, most notable for playing Nia in "Love Jones."

Davies has received numerous awards, ranging from the Young Entrepreneur Award to the Soldiers Against Violence Award. He has also collaborated with the likes of Platinum and Gold award artist Mistah Fab, Lenny Williams from "Tower Power", Ise Lyfe from Def Poetry, and Nikki Thomas from 102.9 KBLX. In 2018, Davies also teamed up with the Oakland Police Department and created Building Bridges Basketball, a movement geared towards bridging the community and police officers through basketball. Davies believes a change in environment can make all the difference and help break barriers that lead to discussions around public safety. Zimbabwe Davies joined Thug Therapy Collective in 2024 as a facilitator and data analyst. Davies' lived experience as a former foster youth and as a life coach adds value and supports community residents who attend the Thug Therapy Bi-Weekly Group Sessions.

Brain Health Champions

**Al Smith**

Former NFL Player

Al Smith is a former All-Pro National Football League player, executive, author, and speaker with over 25 years of leadership experience in sports, business, broadcasting, and community

service. Smith credits his mother for instilling in him the discipline, structure, and values to help him succeed. He continues to pass those and other lessons along to help people

achieve their own goals. Smith formerly served as a member of executive leadership with

the Tennessee Titans, President of the NFL Alumni Association President, and former Director of Player Development at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. Currently, Al serves as the Lead Executive Ambassador for the NFL Alumni Association Grant programs and a Compliance Officer for the National Football League. He has served on the boards of the American Cancer Society, NFL Alumni Association, NFL Player Care Foundation and Ambassador to the NFL's Fuel Up to Play 60 initiative. Smith works closely with multiple organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, American Cancer Society Bridges Domestic Violence Center, and the Ronald McDonald House, to name a few. A standout collegiate defensive Player-of-the-Year award winner and team captain and leader, Smith was inducted into the Utah State Athletic Hall of Fame and selected for the State of Utah's All-Century Team. In 1987, he was drafted by the Houston Oilers. The Oilers finished 9-6 that season and were second in their division. Al's NFL career highlights includes multiple Pro Bowl selections and First Team All-Pro Honors. Passionate about personal growth, development, and leadership, Smith pens in his new book, Think Like a Pro - Act Like a Pro: Game-winning Strategies to Achieve Results, Discipline and Success in Life and Business, 17 lessons on what it takes to go

from an amateur to pro in all aspects of life. The book inspires its readers to assume an all-in, all-pro mindset, embracing the attitude and character it takes to both Think Like A Pro and Act Like A Pro! Smith is a widely sought after speaker and has been invited to speak on topics such as teamwork, discipline, courage, servitude, and leadership by organizations such as Transamerica Corporation, Maximized Living, American Cancer Society, Utah State University, NFL Alumni Association and Vanderbilt University among others. Smith holds a Masters of Education from Tennessee State University, Bachelor of Science from Utah State University and has attended Executive Leadership Training from Georgia Tech Scheller Business School, Kellogg School of Business- Northwestern University and Stanford Graduate School of Business.

Brain Health Champions

CONTINUED



Jeff Tedford

Former Football Coach

Since taking the reins of his alma mater, Jeff Tedford has revived Fresno State football, compiling multiple division titles, conference championships, bowl wins and Top 25 finishes across two tenures as head coach.

In five seasons leading the Bulldogs (2017–19, returned Dec. 2021), Tedford guided Fresno State to three Mountain West West Division titles, two Mountain West championships, four bowl victories and three 10-win seasons (2017, 2018, 2022). His 12-win 2018 season remains the winningest in program history. Across his first stint he turned a 1–11 program into a 44–22 overall record (27–13 MW), and in 2022 the Bulldogs became the first FBS team ever to start 1–4 and finish with 10 wins, closing with nine straight victories, a Mountain West title and a 29–6 win over Washington State in the LA Bowl. Fresno State finished 2022 ranked No. 24 in both final AP and Coaches polls.

In 2023, Tedford's Bulldogs opened the season on a 10-game winning streak (14 straight before their first loss), recorded road wins over Power 5 opponents Purdue and Arizona State — the first time since 2004 they beat two Power 5 teams on the road — and appeared in the AP Top 25 multiple times. Academically, Fresno State led the Mountain West with 48 Academic All-Mountain West honorees in 2023, and posted program-best academic marks in 2022, including a 990 APR and 53 Fall Academic All-MW selections.

Tedford's 2018 turnaround included an overtime road win at Boise State for the conference crown and a Las Vegas Bowl victory over Arizona State, producing the program's first 12-win season. That year he was an Eddie Robinson and Paul "Bear" Bryant Award finalist; Fresno State placed 15 players on all-conference teams and 19 on the Fall Academic All-MW list.

His initial 2017 campaign (10–4) was one of college football's most dramatic single-season turnarounds, earning him Mountain West Coach of the Year, AFCA Region-5 Coach of the Year, and national coach-of-the-year finalist recognition. The 2017 team produced 16 MW postseason honorees and strong academic performance.

Before returning to Fresno State, Tedford was a highly successful Division I head coach at California (2002–2012), where he became the school's winningest coach with 82 victories. At Cal he led a school-record seven straight bowl appearances, posted as high as No. 2 in national rankings in 2007, and produced notable postseason success, including a string of four consecutive bowl wins (2005–08). His Cal teams generated 40 NFL Draft selections, including eight first-rounders, and he earned Pac-10 Coach of the Year honors twice. Tedford developed nationally recognized offensive attacks and became known as a quarterback guru, coaching or mentoring future first-round NFL quarterbacks such as David Carr, Trent Dilfer, Joey Harrington, Kyle Boller, Akili Smith and Aaron Rodgers.

A native of Southern California, Tedford played quarterback at Cerritos College before starring at Fresno State (1981–82), where he set multiple passing records. He played six seasons in the Canadian Football League and later began his coaching career at Fresno State in the late 1980s. He served as Fresno State quarterbacks coach and offensive coordinator in the 1990s, was Oregon's offensive coordinator (1998–2001), and then accepted the Cal head coach position in 2002.

Across his career, Tedford's teams have combined on-field success with academic achievement and player development, producing high NFL draft totals, multiple nationally recognized players, and consistent recognition for team academic performance. His deep ties to Fresno State—as a standout player, assistant coach and two-time head coach—anchor his reputation as a program builder who has restored the Bulldogs to prominence.

Brain Health Champions

CONTINUED



John L. Burris
Civil Rights Attorney

John L. Burris, a renowned civil rights attorney with over forty years of experience, is celebrated for his significant impact on police litigation and advocacy for civil rights. His career, highlighted in a 2025 documentary, *Godfather of Police Litigation* and his book "Blue vs. Black: Let's End the Conflict between Police and Minorities," has earned him widespread recognition, including multiple prestigious honors in 2025 such as Lawyers of Distinction, National Bar Association Centennial Lawyers of Distinction, and Top 100 Lawyers Lifetime Achievement for Police Misconduct. Throughout his career, Burris has been a frequent lecturer, speaker, and legal analyst for various media outlets.

John L. Burris is widely recognized as an iconic figure in civil rights law. In 2025, his work was celebrated with several prestigious accolades:

- Who's Who Publishing Group: Most Influential Leaders in North America – Law
- City of Oakland: Mayor's Proclamation Honoring the Birthday of Attorney John L. Burris
- The HistoryMakers: John Leonard Burris Oral History at the Library of Congress

John L. Burris is a graduate of UC Berkeley School of Law (formerly Boalt Hall), the UC Berkeley School of Business (MBA), and Golden Gate University (BS Accounting). His alma mater, Berkeley Law, established the John L. Burris Civil Rights Endowment to provide scholarships for aspiring civil rights attorneys. Burris was profiled in the 2024 Fall issue of Berkeley Haas magazine under the headline: Top civil rights attorney John Burris, MBA 70, champions a world without discrimination and police brutality.

Over the course of his legal career, John Burris has represented more than 1,000 victims of police misconduct. He has also provided legal counsel and representation to defendants in criminal cases, including high-profile public figures and athletes. Among his most significant cases, Burris represented Rodney King, rapper Tupac Shakur, and 119 plaintiffs in a landmark civil rights lawsuit involving the Oakland Police Department "Riders" scandal, which led to federal oversight and reforms.

Burris is a member of Alpha Gamma Boule, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, and 100 Black Men of the Bay Area as well as several civil rights legal organizations.

John and Cheryl Amana Burris have established The John L. Burris and Cheryl E. Amana Burris Endowment Fund to support single mothers at North Carolina Central University, where Cheryl was a law professor. They have a blended family consisting of nine children, twenty grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

Brain Health Champions

CONTINUED



Ken Harvey

Former NFL Player

Ken Harvey is a former NFL Pro Bowl linebacker turned visionary creator, speaker, and entrepreneur. Recognized among the Washington Commanders' "80 Greatest Players," Ken now uses his platform to inspire others through creativity, innovation, and purpose.

Ken has built a creative hub where sports, storytelling, and motivation collide — producing projects like Floatball E (a groundbreaking hybrid sport), Football in the Fridge (a children's book series), and Older Wear (a lifestyle brand celebrating purpose at every age).

Blending his background in professional sports, faith, and artistry, Ken speaks to audiences about perseverance, leadership, and finding new beginnings. Whether on stage, on screen, or in the community, his mission remains the same: to help people see their gifts, chase their calling, and believe it's never too late to start.

Brain Health Champions

CONTINUED



Kenyon Rasheed

Former NFL Player

With over 25 years in sports innovation, I leverage my unique dual perspective as a former professional athlete and a strategic growth leader to redefine how organizations succeed in the evolving sports ecosystem. My expertise in athlete intelligence, commercialization of emerging technologies, and risk management frameworks has consistently driven exponential market growth, reduced entry costs, and strengthened brand presence across collegiate and professional sports sectors.

Highlights include:

Pioneering AI-powered risk management frameworks helping leading college programs identify potential transfer and athlete recruitment and risk assessment practices for leading college programs.

Driving commercial strategy and technical innovation for top-tier brands including Verizon, IBM, and Global Payments.

Establishing industry-first payment and digital commerce solutions adopted by NFL teams and stadiums creating sustainable revenue models and real-time data insights.

Brain Health Champions

CONTINUED



Sylvia Mackey

88 Plan

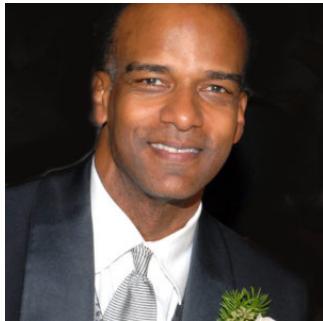
Sylvia Mackey is a true Renaissance Woman. She has worked as a bilingual secretary for the World Bank, a linguist for the Defense Department, was one of the top fashion models in the world, and is presently working as an international flight attendant for United Airlines.

She is best known for her tireless work on behalf of former football players suffering from Alzheimer's, Dementia, ALS and Parkinson's. In fact, she was the driving force behind the major support for retired NFL players with neurological diseases. This support is called the 88 Plan appropriately named after her husband's jersey number throughout his entire career as one of the five greatest tight ends in the first 100 years of the NFL. As the number one, he actually changed how the position of tight end is played.

Sylvia, a dedicated caregiver and advocate, has influenced how the NFL and others handle head trauma and long-term care for those affected. She has served on boards of several key nonprofits and advocacy groups focusing on brain injuries and dementia, and she is presently on the board of directors of the Concussion Legacy Foundation.

Brain Health Champions

CONTINUED



Tracy Porter

NFL Alumni Association

Tracy R. Porter is a dynamic business leader, entrepreneur, and board director with a passion for fostering diverse governance and driving transformational growth. Currently, he is the Founder and CEO of Premiere Solutions LLC, a growing fleet management and equipment procurement services firm, Chairman of the NFL Alumni Association, and a charter member of the NCAA Independent Resolution Panel. Tracy brings extensive expertise in enterprise strategy, sales, marketing, and operations leadership - gained from his tenure at Fortune 100 companies, his success in entrepreneurship, and his experience in board service. His leadership acumen is further reinforced by his completion of the University of Pennsylvania Wharton Executive Management Program – Healthcare Administration, equipping him with broad healthcare industry insights and strategic foresight.

Tracy's distinguished career includes 14 years with the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies, where he played a pivotal role in pharmaceutical and medical device sales, marketing, and operations. His leadership helped drive revenue growth in the hundreds of millions, strengthening J&J's market position across multiple healthcare segments. His expertise in commercial strategy, operational execution, and market expansion in the healthcare space has provided him with a comprehensive understanding of the broader healthcare industry.

In 2003, Tracy transitioned from corporate leadership into entrepreneurship, leveraging his strategic marketing and operational expertise to build a thriving Mercedes-Benz franchise. Since then, he has spearheaded multiple successful ventures in the automotive industry, culminating in his leadership at Premiere Solutions, Inc., a premier fleet management company. As Chairman of the NFL Alumni Association, Tracy has been instrumental in quadrupling the organization's revenue, strengthening its ability to support its 22,000 former NFL players.

Beyond his corporate success, Tracy is an ardent advocate for diverse board representation and philanthropic impact. He was recently appointed to the John Muir Health Board, expanding his governance leadership into the nonprofit healthcare sector. His work in healthcare governance is complemented by his service on the Board of Trustees at the University of San Francisco, where he co-chaired the Audit Committee of the \$500M nonprofit entity. Tracy also plays a leadership role in advancing diversity as the Chair of the Blacks on Corporate Boards Committee within the Boule (Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity).

Tracy's legacy of social impact is further exemplified by his role as Founding Chairman of the Epsilon Beta Boulé Foundation, which provides educational programs, scholarships, and mentorship to at-risk youth in the San Francisco Bay Area. He also serves as a business mentor for disabled veterans through the AT&T Global Supplier Diversity Initiative.

A former NFL player, Tracy began his career at Louisiana State University, where he was a standout football athlete before playing professionally for five years. His multifaceted leadership journey -spanning sports, healthcare, corporate, and entrepreneurial success - positions him as a uniquely skilled executive adept at building long-term relationships, driving strategic growth, and elevating organizations through governance excellence. He resides in Danville, California, with his wife, Terri, and they have two adult daughters.

Brain Health Champion Ceremony Moderator



Ken Coffey

NFL Alumni Association

Ken Coffey serves as Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President of the NFL Alumni Association. Drafted by Washington in 1982, he played four seasons as a defensive back and was a member of the Super Bowl XVII and XVIII teams. Following his NFL career, Ken built a highly successful business career, serving as Senior Vice President of Sales at VALIC ranked among the top 10 life insurance companies in the U.S. and Canada and later as Vice President of Independent Retirement Sales at Global Atlantic Financial. He earned a BBA in Finance from Texas State University. Passionate about football and the relationships he has built throughout his life, Ken enjoys collaborating with NFL Alumni chapters and corporate partners to advance the organization's mission.

Emerging Scholars Leadership Team



Desiree A. Byrd, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Queens College, CUNY



Ozama Ismail, Ph.D.

Director, Scientific Engagement
Alzheimer's Association



Roland J. Thorpe, Jr., Ph.D.
Co-Director DRPH Concentration
In Health, Equity, and Social
Justice, Professor, Associate Vice
Provost of Faculty Diversity
Johns Hopkins University



Sherral Devine, Ph.D.
Research Associate Professor
Boston University



Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort IV

CONTINUED



Erin-Leigh Gallop, Ed.D.

Erin-Leigh Gallop is a postdoctoral scholar at the Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute and the University of Miami Department of Neurology. Her research focuses on the relationship between neighborhood contexts and mental health among older adults with a sleep apnea diagnosis. With a multidisciplinary background that includes degrees in Psychology (B.A., New York University), Nutrition and Food Science (M.S., Montclair State University), Community Health (M.S., Columbia University), and Health Education (Ed.D., Columbia University), Erin-Leigh is dedicated to understanding how dietary profiles influence cognitive health in older adults, aligning her work with the goals of improving health equity and advancing translational science.



Mark A. Bernard, Ph.D.

Dr. Mark A. Bernard is an Instructor of Neurology at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, where he is junior research faculty at NYU's Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC), and a member of the ADRC Biomarker Core. His current research focuses on increased understanding and development of biomarkers of Alzheimer's Disease (AD), particularly those in blood plasma. He is investigating associations between neuropsychiatric symptoms (such as anxiety and depression) and changes in these biomarkers, and is further interested in the nexus between plasma AD biomarkers and sleep and circadian rhythm dysfunctions.

Dr. Bernard is a chemical biologist by training, with a PhD in Organic Chemistry, and a postdoctoral fellowship and Master's degree in Clinical Epidemiology and Health Services Research. This unique background, combining basic physical sciences and clinical research, informs Dr. Bernard's continued interest in not only the molecular mechanisms of disease progression, but also in developing culturally-competent methods of translational research, aimed at reducing health disparities in his and other underserved communities.

Mark enjoys food, travel, cars, and photography. Many days, he can be found outside riding his bike. Big fan of New York sports teams with names NOT ending in "-ets."

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/markabernard/>

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort IV

CONTINUED



Lilcelia A. Williams, Ph.D.

Lilcelia "CeCe" A. Williams is a postdoctoral scholar with dual appointments in the School of Medicine in the Division of Geriatrics and the School of Rehabilitation Sciences in the Department of Occupational Therapy, supported by the Integrated Clinical Research and Geroscience T32 Program. Williams recently concluded her appointed as an Alzheimer's Disease Research Center Optimizing Scientific Careers in Alzheimer's disease Research (OSCAR) scholar in the Outreach, Recruitment, and Engagement Core and will begin a faculty appointment as a Research Instructor of Psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Williams' research is driven by her passion to improve patient health outcomes and to eradicate health disparities experienced by persons who self-identify as a member of a minoritized community (e.g., socioeconomically disadvantaged, racial or ethnic minority, residing in an underserved rural area, sexual or gender minority, person with a disability). Her research specifically focuses on the health disparities experienced by minoritized communities at the intersection of cognitive changes due to chronic illnesses associated with cardiovascular disease (e.g., stroke) and Alzheimer's disease or related dementias (e.g., vascular dementia, mixed dementia).

Williams is currently serving as the Principal Investigator of a pilot study examining the lived experiences and outcomes of persons who experienced a stroke and received in-patient rehabilitation, demonstrating her commitment to improving patient outcomes in neurodegeneration and aging. She is also the co-investigator of a multi-institutional study examining the lived experiences and perspectives of persons at risk of developing Alzheimer's disease or related dementia.

Williams is a clinically trained and board certified interdisciplinary clinician, with more than 20 years of health care experience as a clinician, manager, and patient advocate. Williams has advanced training in educational leadership and management and has taught a dearth of courses in undergraduate and graduate programs, such applied science in technical leadership, business, science, and physician assistant studies. Williams earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Wayne State University, her Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management degree from Western Governors University and her Doctor of Philosophy in Instructional Management and Leadership degree from Robert Morris University.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort IV

CONTINUED



Phelan Glenn

I am a second-year PhD student in the Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program at UCLA. My research is motivated by my grandfather's experience with Alzheimer's Disease and focuses on employing multiomic approaches to identify ancestry-specific biomarkers and address brain health disparities in underrepresented populations. Previously, I conducted research at San Francisco State University in Dr. Misty Kuhn's Biochemistry Lab, investigating enzyme acetylation and structural motifs, and in Dr. Plueni Pennings' lab, applying machine learning to predict antibiotic resistance. Beyond my academic pursuits, I am deeply committed to community outreach, including addressing food insecurity, advocating for brain health equity, and serving as a UC Healthy Campus Initiative fellow. In this role, I am leading the development of a community garden at the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior to promote agricultural sustainability and foster intergenerational connections.



Merci Ngozi Best, Ph.D.

Dr. Merci Ngozi Best is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Michigan, specializing in tau-mediated neurodegeneration. As a Black Men's Brain Health Emerging Scholar, she will investigate the roles of genetics, tau pathology, and educational inequality in Black men's vulnerability to Alzheimer's, dementia, and other brain disorders. Dedicated to community engagement, Dr. Best will also actively collaborate with local organizations. Dr. Best holds a Neuroscience degree and a Community Studies minor from the College of William & Mary. Inspired by early research opportunities, she founded STEAMTRIX, an education company addressing summer learning loss in K-12 students through hands-on STEM activities. Continuing her impact on STEM education, she transitioned STEAMTRIX to STEAMKITX, a product-based company that makes STEM educational experiences more accessible and sustainable. In 2023, Dr. Best earned her Ph.D. in Pharmacology from the University of Virginia with a dissertation titled "Breaking Barriers: A Quantitative Analysis of Axon Initial Segment Damage in Neurodegenerative Disease." Currently, her goal is to lead an independent research lab using human brain organoids, datasets, and post-mortem tissue to uncover the cellular mechanisms of Alzheimer's disease and frontotemporal dementia, with a particular focus on Black Americans.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort IV

CONTINUED



Marcus Johnson, Ed.D.

Dr. Marcus Johnson is a seasoned educator and researcher specializing in kinesiology, physical education, and health studies. Dr. Johnson earned a Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Health, Kinesiology, Physical Education, and Sports Studies from Texas A&M Commerce in 2021. His dissertation explored the impact of integrating a literacy intervention in pre-kindergarten physical education classes, highlighting his commitment to interdisciplinary approaches in education.

Dr. Johnson holds a Master of Education in Kinesiology and a Bachelor of Applied Science in Interdisciplinary Studies with concentrations in History and Education from Dallas Baptist University. With over a decade of experience teaching at various academic levels, Dr. Johnson has developed and managed course curricula, mentored students, and engaged in scholarly research aimed at promoting justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) in physical education.

Currently, Dr. Johnson serves as an Assistant Professor of Kinesiology at Texas Southern University, where he is also a member of the Graduate Faculty and actively involved with the Center for Biomedical and Minority Health Research Collaborative. His research projects, such as the Thirdspace Movement Model and the Spectrum of Teaching Styles, focus on refining pedagogical applications to foster inclusion and social justice in physical education settings.

Dr. Johnson has contributed to the academic community through publications and numerous presentations, including co-authoring articles in esteemed journals like the Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance. He has also led workshops and delivered presentations at national conferences, sharing insights on integrating JEDI principles into physical education lessons.



Tracie Canada, Ph.D.

Tracie Canada Ph.D. is the Andrew W. Mellon Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology and is affiliated with the Sports & Race Project at Duke University. She is also the founder and director of the Health, Ethnography, and Race through Sports, or HEARTS, Lab. As a Black feminist anthropologist and ethnographer, her work uses sport, specifically American football, to theorize race, kinship, care, and gender. Dr. Canada is the author of *Tackling the Everyday: Race and Nation in Big-Time College Football* (University of California Press, 2025). In this ethnographic work, she analyzes the performing athletic body to reveal how processes of anti-Blackness, injury, violence, and care impact the everyday lived experiences of Black college football players. In addition to her academic publications, her work has been featured in public venues and outlets like The Museum of Modern Art, The Guardian, and Scientific American.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort IV

Xavier University Scholars



Marcia Henry, Ph.D.

Dr. Marcia B. Henry, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at Xavier University of Louisiana. She earned her PhD in Biochemistry from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Tulane University School of Medicine, where she also completed an MS in Clinical Research.

Dr. Henry's research examines how nutrition and diet-driven inflammation influence metabolic aging and cognitive decline in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. She integrates molecular, clinical, and population-based approaches to study inflammatory biomarkers, nutritional epidemiology, and social determinants of diet quality. Her work aims to identify modifiable nutritional pathways that reduce disparities in aging and dementia and support precision-nutrition strategies.



Christopher Bolden, Ph.D.

Christopher T. Bolden, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at Xavier University of Louisiana. Trained in clinical and translational science, he earned his PhD in Biomedical Sciences (Clinical & Translational Science) from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, with doctoral work focused on protecting the blood-brain barrier and mitigating neuroinflammation. He is also completing an MPH in Epidemiology & Population Health at LSU Health Sciences Center (expected May 2027).

Dr. Bolden's research integrates blood-brain barrier biology, neuroimmune mechanisms, and population-health approaches to understand neurologic disease risk and outcomes. His scholarship includes an equity-focused neuroscience agenda centered on Black men's brain aging and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), including work that examines how social and environmental exposures shape brain health in Gulf Coast communities.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort IV

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Donaldson F. Conserve, MS, Ph.D.

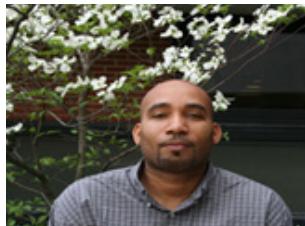


Associate Professor in the Department of Prevention and Community Health in the Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University

Donaldson F. Conserve MS, PhD is an Associate Professor in the Department of Prevention and Community Health in the Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University. His research focuses on implementing and disseminating evidence-based HIV prevention, care, and treatment interventions for scale-up and population impact. As part of his K99/R00 Pathway to Independence Award from the National Institutes of Mental Health, he developed the Self-Testing Education and Promotion (STEP) Project and contributed to implementation science efforts to promote community-based HIV self-testing (HIVST) distribution in Tanzania. Building on his experience in Tanzania, he has expanded his research on HIVST to his native country of Haiti, and other Sub-Saharan African countries with collaborators from the HIV Self-Testing AfRica (STAR) Initiative, the world's largest HIVST implementation science project to date. In the US, he is contributing to the upcoming HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN) 096 protocol, a community-randomized implementation science trial designed to test an integrated, HIV status-neutral, population-level health equity approach to reducing intersectional stigma and increasing rates of HIV testing, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) uptake, and HIV viral suppression among Black men who have sex with men (MSM). Currently, he is leveraging his HIVST research experience to inform the implementation of COVID-19 self-testing, which was recently authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug and Administration.

Conserve received his MS and PhD in Biobehavioral Health from the Pennsylvania State University and completed his postdoctoral training in the Department of Health Behavior at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In recognition of the impact of his work, he received the Pennsylvania State University College of Health and Human Development 2020 Emerging Professional – Graduate Degree Award, given to graduates of the past 10 years who have demonstrated professional excellence and exemplary voluntary community involvement in the health and human development professions. Prior to joining George Washington University in October 2020, he was an assistant professor at the University of South Carolina.

Krim K. Lacey, Ph.D.



Associate Professor, University of Michigan at Dearborn

Krim K. Lacey is an Associate Professor at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. His primary research is on intimate partner violence. Within the broader topic of intimate partner violence, Dr. Lacey's research has focused on understudied and marginalized populations and the intersection of race, ethnicity, culture, and environmental factors in shaping occurrences and experiences of interpersonal violence and related health outcomes. A focus of Dr. Lacey's more recent work has involved the investigation of risk factors and consequences of violence toward African American and Caribbean Black women. Along with his work on intimate partner violence, Dr. Lacey has explored the physical and mental well-being of Caribbeans living in the United States, England, Canada and within the Caribbean region to better understand the influence of social context, culture, and processes of migration on health outcomes.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort IV

CONTINUED



Thomas K.M. Cudjoe, M.D., M.P.H., M.A

Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Endowed Professor,
Associate Professor of Geriatric Medicine and
Gerontology at the Johns Hopkins School of
Medicine

Thomas K.M. Cudjoe, M.D. M.P.H. M.A. is the Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Endowed Professor, Associate Professor of Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Dr. Cudjoe is the co-director of Medicine for the Greater Good and the Division of Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology's Director for Community Engagement. He leverages community-based strategies, mixed-methods and human centered design to understand and address social isolation. Dr. Cudjoe also serves on the Scientific Advisory Council for the Foundation for Social Connection and as the co lead to the Stakeholder Core for the Johns Hopkins Artificial Intelligence and Technology Collaboratory for Aging Research. Additionally, he has led studies that examined the prevalence of social isolation among older adults and associations between social isolation and health outcomes. His work has been featured in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, NPR, and on Good Morning America. He is a Major in the US Army Reserve Corps. Dr. Cudjoe received his undergraduate degree in Cellular and Molecular Biology at Hampton University and was active in the Honors College and Army ROTC program. He graduated from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and earned a master's in public health in health policy at Harvard School of Public Health. He completed his internal medicine residency Internal Medicine at Howard University Hospital and clinical and research fellowship at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. In 2023, Dr. Cudjoe completed a master's degree in social design at Maryland Institute College of Art.



Lauren J. Parker, Ph.D.

Associate Scientist, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Dr. Lauren J. Parker is an Associate Scientist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her research focuses on leveraging home- and community-based supports to address the cultural needs of African American and Hispanic caregivers and individuals living with dementia. Supported by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), Dr. Parker investigates the impact of adult day services on both physiological and psychosocial stressors among African American caregivers, integrating biological and psychosocial indicators of stress. She is also the Principal Investigator of the clinical trial "Understanding Mechanisms of Action of the Tailored Activity Program for People with Dementia in Adult Day Services," funded through the EMBRACE Roybal Center (NIA 1P30AG086642-01).

In addition to her research, Dr. Parker serves on the Leadership Core/Health Equity Task Force of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure, Public Health Center of Excellence in Dementia Caregiving at the University of Minnesota. She is a member of the Research Committee of the National Adult Day Service Association and a Co-Investigator of the Partnership and Engagement Core of The State Alzheimer's Research Support Center (StARS). Dr. Parker completed her postdoctoral training at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She earned a dual-title PhD in Gerontology and Health Promotion from Purdue University and a Bachelor of Arts from Hampton University.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort IV

CONTINUED



Joyce (Joy) Balls-Berry, Ph.D., M.P.E.

Associate Professor of Neurology, Washington University School of Medicine

Joyce (Joy) Balls-Berry Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of Neurology at Washington University School of Medicine and inaugural Core Leader for the Health Disparities and Equity Core in the Knight Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, the Associate Lead for Community Engagement for Precision Health for the Institute of Clinical and Translational Science, and the Academic Engagement Lead for the Greater Plains. Before joining the faculty of Washington University School of Medicine, Dr. Balls-Berry was an Assistant Professor of Epidemiology at the Mayo Clinic. She completed her formal education at the Xavier University of Louisiana with graduate training at Washington University School of Medicine and The University of Toledo. Dr. Balls-Berry completed a post-doctoral research fellowship in health equity, epidemiology, and biostatistics at The University of Florida and a faculty fellowship in aging at Mayo Clinic. Her work as a scientist centers on increasing awareness of community-patient engagement in research to increase health equity in minoritized and under-resourced communities. As a scientist, Dr. Balls-Berry has published over 80 peer-reviewed publications. Her current funding as a PI includes NIH and CDC. Her current funded includes a National Institute of Aging R24 grant titled, Creating Opportunities to Increase Health Equity and Equality for Persons at Risk for Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementia (COEQUAL). The goal is to establish a novel approach to recruiting, enrolling, and retaining under- resourced communities into an ADRD research registry. To date, 833 people have enrolled in the COEQUAL registry. Dr. Balls-Berry serves as the Secretary/Parliamentarian of the Association for Clinical and Translational Science Board of Directors and Chair of Person of the Board for Health Literacy Media. The Aside from her work as a scientist, Dr. Balls-Berry shared her story of living with dyslexia as a TEDx Talk. More recently, in January 2025, she was honored as one of The 40 for 40 MLK Servant Leader Awardees during the 40th Annual Bayer YMCA Commemorative King Breakfast.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort V



Eun Seok Choi, Ph.D.

Eun Seok Choi, Ph.D., is a postdoctoral scholar in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB). He received his Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences from Yonsei University in 2018 and completed his doctoral training through a joint research program with the National Cancer Center (NCC), where he conducted his dissertation research and developed strong expertise in translational cancer biology. His multidisciplinary background spans aging biology, cancer biology, and RNA biology, with additional translational experience from the biotechnology industry.

Dr. Choi's research focuses on elucidating the molecular mechanisms of neurodegenerative diseases, particularly Alzheimer's disease, through the study of regulatory small non-coding RNAs, with an emphasis on tRNA-derived fragments (tRFs), a novel class of RNAs that exhibit disease-specific and species-specific expression patterns. His recent work involves identifying tRF-based biomarkers in patient blood samples from individuals with Alzheimer's disease and multiple sclerosis, with an expanding interest in sex-specific differences in neurodegenerative diseases.

As a Black Men's Brain Health Emerging Scholar, Dr. Choi investigates whether the APOE3 (R145C) mutation increases neuronal vulnerability by altering pathways involved in cellular stress, inflammation, and responses to environmental challenges. By leveraging human cellular and organoid models to examine genetic and viral risk factors, he aims to bridge the gap between basic molecular discovery and the development of precision diagnostics and therapies for brain health.



Emily Hokett, Ph.D.

I currently work as a postdoctoral research scientist at Columbia University in the Department of Neurology. My background is in the cognitive neuroscience of sleep, aging, and episodic memory performance in racially and ethnically diverse groups. My research investigates associations between disparities in sleep quality and disparities in cognitive aging. I am particularly interested in environmental sleep barriers and sleep facilitators that are related to brain health in older, Black adults. A long-term goal of my research is to identify precise sleep interventions that reduce brain health disparities in older age.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort V

CONTINUED



Maurice Haskins, DSW, LCSW-C

Maurice Haskins, DSW, LCSW-C, is a licensed clinical social worker with over fifteen years of experience in healthcare and community-based practice. His work focuses on aging, caregiving, and promoting positive health outcomes across the lifespan. Dr. Haskins has held clinical and leadership roles at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Inova Health System, and Luminis Health, providing therapeutic and crisis interventions, care coordination, and programmatic support to individuals and families navigating complex health transitions. With a multidisciplinary background in community development, education, nonprofit management, and healthcare, he brings a holistic approach to practice and leadership. His clinical expertise includes supporting individuals and families affected by Traumatic Brain Injury, Parkinson's disease, and Alzheimer's disease. Guided by dignity and empathy, he integrates person-centered, evidence-informed strategies to strengthen outcomes for clients and organizations. Dr. Haskins earned a Bachelor of Sociology and Master of Social Work from Morgan State University and a Doctor of Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania. His doctoral research explored identity reconstruction following intensive caregiving experiences, enhancing understanding of the emotional and psychological dimensions of caregiving and aging. He is an alum of the American Society on Aging's RISE Leadership Program and the National Collaboratory to Address Elder Mistreatment Mentorship Program.



Chukwuanugo Ogbuagu, M.D., Ph.D.

Chukwuanugo is a physician-scientist and neurosciences researcher with expertise spanning global health, clinical research, and academic medicine. My work centers on community-engaged aging brain health programs, integrating population neuroscience with lived experience to improve early detection of cognitive change. I focus on developing and deploying culturally responsive tools and care pathways that reach marginalized populations, particularly in elderly Black men, who are often underrepresented in research and diagnosed late in the disease course.

By partnering with communities, primary care systems, and faith- and community-based organizations, my research reduces stigma, builds trust, and supports timely screening and follow-up. Ultimately, this approach aims to enable early intervention, strengthen brain resilience, and advance equity in dementia prevention and care.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort V

CONTINUED



Essa Mohamed, Ph.D.

Dr. Essa Mohamed is a biomedical researcher and medical device innovator whose work integrates translational science, biomedical engineering and community-engaged research to address health disparities and inequities. He completed an NIH-funded T32 postdoctoral fellowship in Lung Physiology and Biomedical Engineering and transitioned to a scientist role with the Mayo Clinic Alzheimer's Disease Research Center in 2023.

Dr. Mohamed's research examines the biological and social pathways linking sleep-disordered breathing, inflammation, metabolic dysfunction (including fatty liver disease), cardiovascular disease and dementia. His work emphasizes racial/ethnic and sex-based differences in disease risk and progression through the integration of non-traditional disease markers such as social determinants of health, migration history and structural exposures with mechanistic and clinical data.

With over 16 years of experience conducting translational research from bench to bedside to curbside, Dr. Mohamed has extensive training in biomedical sciences with a strong focus on health disparities and immigrant health. He has led the development of community advisory boards and established long-standing partnerships with community-based organizations both nationally and internationally to address chronic disease inequities and barriers to research participation. This work has contributed to improvements in clinical assessment practices and increased inclusion of underrepresented populations in clinical and observational studies.

Dr. Mohamed's current research focuses on aging and Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias in African-descended populations, with the goal of strengthening inclusive research infrastructure and advancing equitable precision medicine.



David Larbi Simpong, Ph.D.

David Larbi Simpong is a distinguished clinical laboratory scientist and neuroscientist dedicated to mitigating health disparities and building sustainable diagnostic infrastructure across Africa. He currently serves as an Atlantic Fellow for Equity in Brain Health at the Global Brain Health Institute (GBHI), University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). In this capacity, Dr. Simpong focuses on validating and optimizing innovative screening tools designed for the early identification of cognitive impairment in elderly populations.

His mission is driven by the urgent need to replace the costly, unsustainable practice of outsourcing diagnostic biomarkers with accessible, localized solutions. At the University of Cape Coast (UCC), Ghana, he is pioneering the development of culturally adaptive diagnostic protocols tailored specifically to the local population. A prolific researcher, his scholarly impact is evidenced by numerous peer-reviewed publications on aging and brain health. Beyond research, he is a staunch advocate for educational reform, successfully integrating neurodiagnostics into postgraduate health curricula to cultivate a resilient, specialized workforce.

As a Black Men's Brain Health (BMBH) Scholar, Dr. Simpong expertly bridges the gap between research and clinical implementation. He is leading the establishment of Ghana's first high-capacity facility for the early detection of neurodegenerative diseases, with a specialized focus on Alzheimer's. By leveraging his extensive biobank of clinical samples and his leadership at UCC, he is developing a state-of-the-art neurodiagnostic hub. This serves as a global model for health equity, providing transformative early intervention for dementia within the Black community.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort V

CONTINUED



Christopher Webster, PhD

Dr. Christopher Webster is a clinical health psychologist and an NIA T32 postdoctoral fellow at the Center for Health Outcomes and Interdisciplinary Research (CHOIR) at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School (MGH/HMS). Dr. Webster earned a dual major Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and Kinesiology at Michigan State University, where he developed an interdisciplinary research program at the intersection of clinical science, behavioral health, and sport psychology.

Dr. Webster's current research examines how physical activity and psychological techniques influence mental, physical, and cognitive health, with the overarching goal of developing integrated exercise-based and psychotherapeutic interventions to expand access to care and improve outcomes for underrepresented populations. Supported by an NIA Resource Center for Minority Aging Research Pilot award, Dr. Webster is conducting a qualitative study examining the interest and acceptability of an integrated physical activity and behavioral activation (PA+BA) intervention for older Black men with depression and subjective cognitive decline – an understudied population at elevated risk for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD). His long-term goal is to develop scalable, culturally congruent behavioral interventions that reduce depression, enhance cognitive functioning, and advance brain health equity among older Black men.



Kendra Ray, PhD, MBA, MPH

Kendra Ray, PhD, MBA, MPH, NYS-Licensed Creative Arts Therapist, Nationally Board-Certified Music Therapist, is a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at NYU Langone, Chief Research Officer at CaringKind, and Adjunct Faculty at the John J. Cali School of Music. She holds a Ph.D. in Creative Arts Therapy, a Master's in Public Health, and a Master's in Business Administration in Sports and Recreation Management, bringing interdisciplinary expertise in music therapy, public health, and community-based care.

Her research focuses on non-pharmacological interventions for aging populations and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD). She has led studies showing music-based activities reduce depression, agitation, and other neuropsychiatric symptoms in ADRD (Dementia, 2017; Frontiers in Medicine, 2018), with sustained benefits when caregivers are trained in basic techniques. Her community-centered work includes training CNAs and home health aides in music-assisted caregiving (Music and Medicine, 2021) and co-developing a National Institute on Aging Small Business Technology Transfer proposal for algorithm-driven music dosing through her company, Autotune Me. She currently leads studies funded by the Alzheimer's Association, the Women's Alzheimer's Movement, the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, and Columbia University's Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Alzheimer's Disease Disparities, advancing evidence-based music interventions for people living with dementia and their family caregivers.

A committed advocate for health equity, she addresses disparities among underserved groups, including people with HIV-associated neurocognitive disorders, and serves on the board of the Black Music Therapy Network. Last year, Dr. Ray received the Margaret M. Cahn Award, recognizing outstanding Alzheimer's research within the Hudson Valley Chapter's territory. A 2023 NIA Startup Challenge Finalist, her current work expands into Black men's brain health—investigating culturally relevant, personalized interventions (e.g., reduced anxiety from dosed and prescribed music) to mitigate neurological decline in high-risk groups such as athletes.

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort V

CONTINUED



Doris Molina-Henry, PhD

Associate Professor of Research Neurology at
the USC Keck School of Medicine

Mentor

Doris Molina-Henry, PhD - Associate Professor of Research Neurology at the USC Keck School of Medicine
Doris Molina-Henry is an Assistant Professor at the USC Epstein Family Alzheimer's Therapeutic Research Institute. She is part of the leadership of the Epstein Family Alzheimer's Therapeutic Research Institute in San Diego. Her work is focused on the science of recruitment and retention of diverse participants into clinical trials. Currently, she works on evaluating strategies that promote participation of cognitively unimpaired, at-risk, diverse adults into studies that aim to help prevent the symptoms of Alzheimer's well before they begin.



Charles Senteio, PhD

Associate Professor of Library and Information Science at the
Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Communication and Information

Mentor

Charles Senteio's research investigates the collection and use of information to identify causes of persistent racial health inequities, and develop approaches to address them. He uses community-engaged approaches at each stage of the research process, from developing research questions to selecting methods to data collection, analysis, and dissemination. He also teaches graduate students about the challenges and opportunities to engaged scholarship.

Senteio has been the Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-PI on investigations funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), and the RWJF. In 2023 he received the Rutgers Public Good Pinnacle Award. He also received honorable mention for the Betty J. Cleckley Minority Issues Research Award from the APHA Aging in Public Health Section for promoting Black American elders use of health technology and the SCI LIS Distinguished Achievement in Research award for 2017-2018 and 2019-2020.

His first book will be published by Cambridge University Press in Summer 2026, "Progress Meets Backlash: Perceptions, Cycles of Backlash, and the Struggle for Racial Health Equity." Also, he is a Co-PI, along with Itzhak Yanovitzky and former SC&I assistant professor Gretchen Stahlman, on a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded project, "Articulating Clear Principles, Practices, and Tools for Centering Health Equity in Public Health Data Dashboards' Design and Implementation". He is also the PI on a project based in Kenya and Ghana funded by the Rutgers Global Health Institute Seed Grant program, "Addressing Barriers to Mental Health Care for Young Adults in Africa."

Emerging Scholars Program- Cohort V

CONTINUED



Edward D. Vargas, PhD, MPH

Associate Professor at the School of
Transborder Studies, Arizona State University
Mentor

Edward Vargas' primary areas of interest are the effects of poverty and inequality on the quality of life, focusing specifically on health, immigration status and social policy, and how these factors contribute to the well-being of vulnerable families. In addition, poverty and inequality are strongly tied to race and ethnicity; thus, he is also interested in the methodological issues involved in the quantitative study of race and ethnicity.

To address these issues, Vargas has developed two programs of research. The first examines how anti-immigrant climate is impacting Latina/o health. A second area research examines methodological issues in the quantitative research on race and ethnicity among Latina/o populations. He is a Co-PI on the 2015 Latino National Health and Immigration Survey and Co-PI on the 2016 and 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey (CMPS) which is funded by the National Science Foundation.

Currently, Dr. Vargas is funded by the Robert W. Johnson Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on work related to the collection of racial and ethnic data across Federal Agencies. He is a leading expert on health policy and Latino politics, he regularly provides political commentary to several state, national, and international media outlets including the Washington Post, NBC News, Univision, and Brookings Institution.



Kellee White Whilby, PhD

Associate Professor of Health Policy and Management at the University
of Maryland School of Public Health
Mentor

Dr. Kellee White Whilby's scholarship on racial/ethnic residential segregation (i.e., the spatial manifestation of institutionalized racism) and health have helped shape the literature conceptually, methodologically and analytically and further situate segregation as a central determinant of racial/ethnic health inequalities. She has devoted increasing attention to understanding how patterns of discrimination accumulate over the life course to influence aging-related processes and uncover resilience factors related to healthy aging. Scholarly work also investigates the role of social, psychosocial and contextual factors on accelerated aging with a focus on multimorbidity and its impact on aging-related outcomes, quality of life and health care utilization across the lifespan. Emerging research employs novel and rigorous analytical methods to understand factors that propagate gender and racial/ethnic inequalities in late-life cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease. Her research has been published in leading public health and medical journals and has been supported by the National Institutes of Health and the Alzheimer's Association. Additionally, Dr. White has mentored numerous undergraduate, master and doctoral-level students and junior faculty.

Vendors

UCSF Weill Institute for
Neurosciences
Fein Memory and
Aging Center

UCSF Fein Memory and Aging Center

The UCSF Fein Memory and Aging Center provides evidence-based education on brain health, healthy aging, early detection of cognitive changes, and opportunities to participate in cutting-edge research on conditions such as Alzheimer's Disease, Mild Cognitive Impairment, and Frontotemporal Dementia. We offer cognitive evaluations, access to clinical trials and observational studies, support groups for patients and caregivers, and referrals to specialized clinics and community resources. Our team engages diverse communities with outreach and education to promote brain health equity and empower people with knowledge and support. For more information, contact Ashley.Jackson3@ucsf.edu or go to memory.ucsf.edu.



Alameda County Behavioral Health Department Health Equity Department Office of Ethnic Services

Alameda County Behavioral Health Department provides comprehensive mental health and substance use services across five systems of care: Children, Transition Age Youth, Adults, Older Adults, and Justice-Involved populations. Our department is committed to delivering culturally responsive, linguistically appropriate services through our Health Equity Department and Office of Ethnic Services. We offer both treatment and recovery support services designed to meet the diverse needs of our community. Through collaborative partnerships and evidence-based practices, we work to reduce disparities, promote wellness, and ensure accessible, quality behavioral health care for all Alameda County residents.



Alameda County Public Health Department

Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) has an array of programs and services designed to protect the health and safety of County residents. The backbone of Public Health includes assessments of the health status of residents, disease prevention and control, community mobilization and outreach, policy development, education, and assurance of access to quality medical and health care services. ACPHD's mission is to work in partnership with the community to ensure the optimal health and well-being of all people through a dynamic and responsive process respecting the diversity of the community and challenging us to provide for present and future generations.

Vendors



Urban Strategies Council

Founded as a non-profit in 1987, the Council works with stakeholders in low-income communities of the Bay Area. We envision vibrant, thriving communities where poverty is no longer a systemic barrier to opportunity. By leveraging evidence-based research, deep community partnerships, cross-sector collaboration, and innovative policy solutions, we work toward lasting change to eliminate urban poverty. With the support of visionary funders and local change-agents, we transform projects into scalable impact to build stronger, more inclusive communities with sustainable futures



Merrit College Wellness Center

The Merritt College Wellness Center is a free mental health clinic for students enrolled at Merritt College. Our clinicians offer confidential mental health assessment, crisis intervention, individual therapy, psychoeducation workshops, and referrals to supportive services both on and off campus. We also dispense over-the-counter meds and personal care products. All goods and services are free of charge.



Bay Area Black Nurses Association

The Bay Area Black Nurses Association, established in 1969, is the second oldest Chapter of the National Black Nurses Association. We are both active and retired registered nurses, staff nurses, public health nurses, nurses administrators, nursing educators and licensed vocational nurses. We welcome nursing students!!! We are striving to provide an association of caring women and men who address scholastic support, mentoring and financial assistance to nursing students. During this time of crisis due to the COVID pandemic and systemic racism.

We are about: Promoting and enhancing the professional growth, abilities, and skills of nurses in the Bay Area. Our goal is render more efficient healthcare to the public at large, and to foster and promote understanding and appreciation of healthcare in our communities.

Vendors



Back 2 Nature

Welcome to Back 2 Nature! Terra Robinson, is the founder of Back 2 Nature Skincare & Wellness Spa/Salon. She has been an Anesthetic-Skincare Specialist, Plant Geologist, Licensed Beauty Advisor, Heath & Wellness Life Coach, Certified Herbalist and Weight Loss Consultant for over 25 years. As a Certified Homeopathic Herbalist . She has studied the plant for 7 years where she is excited to say that Back 2 Nature products are 100% Organic-Natural ingredients that are designed for good skin health. Customer's always ask Terra how did she design her "Skincare by Terra" products? She respond by saying, "as a child she used to suffered with disseminated superficial actinic porokeratosis-(DSAP), eczema and impetigo skin disorders. As an adult, it was her life-long journey to discover a Self-care remedies." Although, she had acquired her skin, beauty & wellness credentials it wasn't until a dear friend by the name of Pennyshay introduced her into the Egyptian Plant Kingdom that truly discovered how to treat her own skin illness thru the use of plants. Customer's always rave about how these amazing products have made a difference in their health and lives. Back 2 Nature has hundred-to-thousands of testimonies from people sharing their experiences with the Miracle instant Stress and Pain-Out Gel. B2N Theme: "Discover Nature Secrets to Health & Wellness and a Flawless Complexion."

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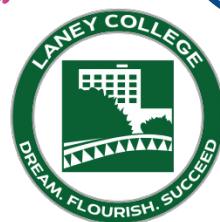
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Disability Accommodation Statement

The Black Men's Brain Health Conference is committed to providing an inclusive environment and, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. Send direct accommodation requests to Deborah Stroman at debby@dstroman.com or through the event platform, UBMe.