

BLACK HEALTH SUMMIT



**SUMMARY
REPORT**
AUGUST 2023

OUR PURPOSE

On June 6th, the Health Foundation of South Florida convened health systems, residents, public and private sector leaders, and community organizers to discuss the current state of Black health in South Florida — and to identify health equity solutions for the region’s Black communities—at the Second Annual Black Health Summit.

The three Summit focus areas—black maternal health; toxic stress and healing; and housing, race, and climate were selected **as these are entrenched issues that require ongoing dialogue, continued stakeholder engagement, and next-level collaboration to resolve.** We remain committed to bringing together partners from across the community to collaborate on health inequities that disproportionately affect South Florida’s Black communities.

And, with about 350 guests, the annual event’s attendance doubled this year and featured a thought-provoking keynote conversation and highly interactive breakout sessions. **Community stakeholders invested their time discussing and identifying actionable solutions for addressing longstanding inequities impacting the health and well-being of Black residents across the region.**

At the 2023 Black Health Summit, **the Foundation announced more than \$2M to support initiatives that address the disproportionate harms of lack of healthcare access, community violence, climate change and racism on South Florida’s Black communities.** These initiatives, many of which originated at the 2022 Summit, are detailed on the following page.

There are so many people doing extraordinary work across South Florida to ensure our region’s Black communities are healthy, strong, and resilient. We are immensely grateful for their leadership, their partnership, and their stewardship.

When we work together, hear each other, and join forces, nothing will stop us.



OUR INVESTMENTS

> Improving Doula Access and Integration in Miami-Dade

A collaborative of organizations, comprised of Jackson Health System, Southern Birth Justice Network, Metro Mommy Agency, Magnolia Birth House, and YWCA South Florida, will receive **more than \$930,000 to help build the infrastructure needed to incorporate community-based doulas (trained professionals who provide continuous physical, emotional and informational support before, during and shortly after childbirth) into the prenatal, birthing and postpartum process to reduce Black maternal and infant mortality and morbidity.**

> Opening an OB/GYN clinic in a Maternity Care Desert in Broward

A second collaborative, comprised of Community Care Plan, Broward Health, Urban League of Broward County, and the Broward County Healthy Start Coalition, will receive **\$850,000 to open an OB/GYN clinic to serve zip codes 33311 and 33313, which include Oakland Park, Lauderhill, and Sunrise, areas currently known as maternity care deserts.**

> Implementing Trauma-Informed, Community-Based Violence Prevention in Liberty City and Overtown

The Circle of Brotherhood (COB), **a nonprofit organization primarily of Black men committed to crime reduction, violence prevention, economic empowerment, and youth mentorship, will receive \$290,000 for its Peacemakers program which supports community safety by connecting neighborhood residents to services like employment training, housing, food, and health care access.**

> Funding training for climate action and medical response teams

Beyond these investments, since the last Summit, **the Health Foundation has invested nearly \$100,000 in training for the Florida Clinicians for Climate Action and Dr. Armen Henderson's inspiring Miami Street Medicine and Dade County Street Response teams.**

SUMMIT AT A GLANCE

9

Sectors represented, including community-based organizations, healthcare providers, universities, public health departments, insurance payers, media, philanthropy, government, and faith-based organizations.

350

Attendees from across Broward, Miami- Dade, and Monroe counties who registered and attended the in-person conference, which took place at Florida Memorial University, the region's only Historically Black College or University.

3

Breakout sessions, each led by a subject matter expert and panelists, who facilitated interactive discussions with attendees.

23

Number of speakers who presented throughout the day.



KEYNOTE CONVERSATION

Nancy Ancrum, the Editorial Page Editor at the Miami Herald, the first African American woman to hold that position, moderated our Keynote Conversation, which featured Linda Villarosa, who recently published her third book, *Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation*. Linda's book was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize this year. Linda is a contributing writer for the New York Times Magazine, covering race, inequality, and health; she is the former executive editor at Essence Magazine.

Nancy guided the conversation through a series of vignettes ranging from Linda's "Aha! Moment" about the roots of healthcare disparities to the horrific childbirth outcomes for Black women to the invisible wounds of racism on the Black psyche and the essential nature of self-care. The conversation resonated deeply with the audience as participants overwhelmingly felt that Linda gave voice to their lived experiences, offering authentic testimony and engaging dialogue about both entrenched challenges and emerging opportunities.

Linda emphatically asserted that medical school students and future practitioners training to address structural racism and bias are the best, greatest hope for managing our Black communities through this confluence of health and wellness crises.



NANCY ANCRUM AND AUTHOR LINDA VILLAROSA



AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Following the morning keynote conversation, Summit participants attended one of three breakout sessions, each focused on a high-impact theme:

- > **Black Maternal Health**
- > **Intersection of Housing, Race & Climate**
- > **Toxic Stress & Healing**

Each session began with a presentation by a subject matter expert, who provided data and context about the challenges associated with each theme. These introductory remarks were followed by engaging panel discussions that invited attendees to share experiences, insights, and ideas for solutions and improvements. Facilitated by community leaders, this dialogue focused on identifying actions and strategies and answering the question:

Where do we go from here?

The following pages feature summaries of each breakout session.



BREAKOUT SESSION #1

BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH

OPENING SPEAKER/SESSION MODERATOR

Okezi T. Otoo, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History and African and African Diaspora Studies, Florida International University

PANELISTS

Jamarah Amani, Executive Director, Southern Birth Justice Network; **Mark Barrett**, Vice President, Network Development and Contracting, Sunshine Health; **Sasha Davidson, M.D.**, Physician, Maternal Fetal Medicine Specialist, Signature Perinatal Care; **Esther McCant**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Metro Mommy Agency; **Delisa Skeete-Henry, M.D.**, Chair, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Broward Health

OVERVIEW

Black maternal death rates have been steadily rising in the United States for decades, with Black mothers nearly three times as likely to die from pregnancy-related complications as White women, according to the CDC. The CDC estimates that four out of five of these deaths are preventable. The history of structural and institutional racism which has resulted in inadequate access to care, maternity care deserts, lack of health insurance, and implicit bias exacerbates the Black maternal health crisis. **Overwhelmingly, speakers and participants confirmed the need to provide more information about alternative birth settings and practitioners to women during pregnancy so that they/each can advocate for their care in the setting and with the practitioner of their choosing.** Next, it is imperative to ensure that decision-makers that can influence compensation and workforce development understand the historical and community value of these approaches to care. Finally, attendees of this breakout session emphasized the importance of storytelling to humanize the issues and engage the diverse constituencies in activating solutions.



BREAKOUT SESSION #1

BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH (continued)

ISSUE: COMPENSATION AND WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

CHALLENGE

Providers and insurers have not historically valued alternative birth settings and practitioners, and as a result, compensation for these services needs to improve and the number of these practitioners needs to increase.

ACTIONABLE IDEA (S)

- Develop a storytelling campaign to inform decision-makers about the valued tradition of doulas and midwives within the Black community and the resulting improvements in health and wellness outcomes.
- Establish data dashboards that track quantitative and qualitative outcomes associated with alternative birth settings and practitioners to document the business case for these care options.
- Create a midwife training program in South Florida to grow the number of practitioners in the field, including scholarship opportunities and connections to HBCUs, and in collaboration with South Florida health systems.
- Integrate doulas and midwives into the standard of care in South Florida hospitals with associated reimbursement support.

ISSUE: THE OVERMEDICALIZATION OF PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

CHALLENGE

There is a deficit of information about the risks of c-sections and other adverse postpartum outcomes and about each patient's rights to direct her care.

ACTIONABLE IDEA (S)

- Increase awareness and education about pregnancy and childbirth healthcare alternatives, such as doula and midwife services, at OB/GYN appointments before and during pregnancy.
- Ensure access to 6-week postpartum checkups so patients remain engaged with a trusted provider and that wellness is an ongoing focus.
- Foster restorative practices such as listening sessions to gather testimonials after birth to educate providers and offer therapeutic experiences for birthing people.

BREAKOUT SESSION #1

BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH NEXT STEPS

HOW THE HEALTH FOUNDATION OF SOUTH FLORIDA IS SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH

Transitioning the standard of care for women during their childbearing years requires systems-level change. From coordinating the dozens of impactful programs in South Florida to engaging large healthcare providers and insurers, collaboration will be essential to realize the potential of changed mindsets, changed reimbursement models, and improved outcomes for Black women of childbearing age in South Florida. **Moving from the overmedicalization of pregnancy and childbirth to a model focused on wellness, patient agency, and advocacy demands a new level of engagement.**

In response to the solutions proposed by participants at the 2022 Summit, the Health Foundation of South Florida provided maternal health collaboratives with capacity-building training and invested nearly \$1.8 million to fund two of these collaboratives. One collaborative is working to improve doula access and integration in Miami-Dade County. The second is opening an OB/GYN clinic in a maternity care desert in Broward County. See page 3 for all the details.

Moving forward, the Foundation will:

- Continue to support these maternal health equity collaboratives, sharing lessons learned and identifying additional opportunities to address the issues that are driving the disparities.
- Foster improved communication and collaboration between health systems, community-based organizations and community birthing centers, and the birthing workforce to best ensure appropriate and optimal pregnancy and childbirth care that emphasizes quality, safety, and mutual respect.



BREAKOUT SESSION #2

INTERSECTION OF HOUSING, RACE & CLIMATE

OPENING SPEAKER

Sara Haas, Senior Director, Southeast Market, Enterprise Community Partners

DISCUSSION FACILITATOR

Jeanette Ruiz, Executive Director, Miami Climate Alliance

PANELISTS

Jorge Damian de la Paz, Senior Strategist, Government Innovation, Miami-Dade County; Santra Denis, Executive Director, Miami Workers Center; **Jennifer Jurado, Ph.D.**, Chief Resilience Officer, Broward County Government; **Adrian Alberto Madriz**, Co-Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, SMASH (Struggle for Miami's Affordable and Sustainable Housing); **Jennifer Posner**, Senior Manager for Policy and Programs, University of Miami, Office of Civic and Community Engagement; **Alexander T. Rundlet**, Acting Director, Social Justice Institute, Florida Memorial University; Fredman Family Foundation Practitioner in Residence, Center for Ethics and Public Service, University of Miami School of Law Advisory; **Marvin Wilmoth**, Real Estate Developer and Consultant; former Vice Mayor of North Bay Village

OVERVIEW

After beginning the session with an overview of the short- and long- term effects of exposure to extreme heat on physical and mental health, the opening speaker and panelists articulated the systemic and statutory housing challenges facing historically Black neighborhoods in South Florida. Additionally, South Florida's natural, municipal, and residential resources are under stress, from a confluence of environmental issues driven by climate change and an influx of in-migration. Moving quickly to a robust discussion of potential solutions, from neighborhood "resilience centers" to public awareness campaigns that inform residents about economic development rules and resources, participants were united in their support for mapping community assets and the importance of building social and political capital across the constituent groups.

ISSUE: ACCESS TO AIR CONDITIONING

CHALLENGE

Lack of access to air conditioning causes short-term and long-term impacts on mental and physical health.

ACTIONABLE IDEA (S)

- Advocate for changes to Florida building codes to mandate air conditioning and other interventions to mitigate the adverse health impacts of heat.
- Equip churches and other safe spaces as resilience hubs, including AC, battery or solar backup, medications, etc.
- Engage in community mapping to identify all the available resources and disseminate that information across all vulnerable neighborhoods via various communication channels.

BREAKOUT SESSION #2

INTERSECTION OF HOUSING, RACE & CLIMATE (continued)

ISSUE: THREAT FROM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CHALLENGE

The affordability framework that has been relied upon has not preserved historically Black communities decimated by economic development.

ACTIONABLE IDEA (S)

- Advocate for consequences that remedy deficiencies for affected communities when developers do not meet historical preservation and affordability objectives.
- Distribute information about the preservation and affordability rules to members of the historically Black communities (such as Overtown, Coconut Grove Village West, and Little Haiti, among others) so residents understand their rights and the developers' obligations.
- Engage in dialogues to share how current policy has led to the destruction of historically Black communities AND craft the narrative promoting the value of diversity in communities and multifamily projects.

ISSUE: RULES GOVERNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CHALLENGE

The lack of alignment between existing economic development rules and their explicit or implicit objectives leaves residents exposed to displacement.

ACTIONABLE IDEA (S)

- Leverage community organizing and activism to change legislative policy, together with litigation strategies reliant on the Fair Housing Act.
- Advocate for rules-based interventions running the gamut from bans on investment companies owning single-family homes to increased use of community land trusts.
- Develop tailored communications materials that speak to each audience (resident, developer, official, owners, etc.), educating them about their rights and responsibilities.

ISSUE: AVAILABLE RESOURCES FOR HOUSING

CHALLENGE

Historically Black communities and allied developers are not fully informed about the public and private resources available to preserve Black communities while addressing climate change imperatives.

ACTIONABLE IDEA (S)

- Engage constituents in community resource mapping to identify funding for housing related investments and improvements.
- Invest in affordable housing and develop strategies for the use of vacant land.

BREAKOUT SESSION #2

INTERSECTION OF HOUSING, RACE & CLIMATE NEXT STEPS

HOW THE HEALTH FOUNDATION OF SOUTH FLORIDA WILL SUPPORT EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE AND RACE ON HOUSING

South Florida has an active roster of engaged citizens and community organizations dedicated to surfacing climate change and affordable housing issues, advocating for resolutions, and providing valuable services to those affected. Increased funding, advocacy, and collaboration are required as heat-related threats and constraints on access to affordable housing accelerate. **The Health Foundation is interested in ways to support existing groups whose work is centered around policy and advocacy that advance solutions to mitigate the disparate burden of the climate crisis in Black communities.**

Aligned with its strategic focus, the Health Foundation is particularly interested in:

- Exploring investments that will lead to the building or rehabilitation of energy-efficient and climate-resilient affordable housing.
- Investing in strategic actions that reduce climate displacement or gentrification.
- Increasing civic engagement so that solutions and budget decisions are informed by those most affected.
- Informing the allocation of federal, local and state resources in housing by developing an inventory of affordable housing projects that includes a community led assessment of housing needs.



BREAKOUT SESSION #3

TOXIC STRESS & HEALING

SESSION MODERATOR

Roger Mitchell Jr., M.D., Chair of Pathology, Howard University College of Medicine

PANELISTS

Melissa Dunn, Commissioner, City of Lauderhill; Mindfulness Coach; **Pastor Linda Freeman**, Executive Director, Trinity Church, Peacemaker Family Center; **Dr. Tisa McGhee, Ph.D. LCSW**, Transformational Strategist; **Dr. Roger McIntosh, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Health Psychology & Cognitive & Behavioral Neuroscience, University of Miami

OVERVIEW

The session began with grounding mindfulness practices to settle participants into their bodies and breathing before beginning a discussion on the impacts of toxic stress disparities in Black communities. Toxic stress (also called chronic stress) is persistent, keeping the fight-or-flight response over activated. Toxic stress impacts the autonomic nervous system and all bodily systems, increasing risks to brain health – such as depression and anxiety – and worsening risks for cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and many other illnesses. Healing and recovery are also more difficult in stressful environments. Racial trauma, or race-based traumatic stress (RBTS), is characterized by chronic exposure to physical and emotional distress resulting from experiencing discrimination. Effects of racial trauma may linger over multiple generations. **Participants in this community conversation addressed ways to reduce the impacts of toxic stress and the importance of “keeping hope alive” through individual actions such as spiritual practice, listening sessions, and self-care, to community advocacy and policy change.** Unequal environmental and structural stressors in Black communities – such as lack of access, challenges with housing, healthcare, and the criminal justice system – as well as interpersonal violence and internalized stressors, result in significant health impacts. Solutions ranged from increasing awareness of racial trauma, and accessibility to nature spaces in South Florida, to establishing shared accountability for community stressors.



BREAKOUT SESSION #3

TOXIC STRESS & HEALING (continued)

ISSUE: TOXIC STRESS, VIOLENCE AND HEALING

CHALLENGE

The number one killer of Black males aged 10-35 in the U.S. is homicide. The violence epidemic can be impacted by reducing both structural violence and interpersonal violence, which creates an aftermath of trauma, fight-or-flight stress reactivity, cycles of violence and related impacts on Black communities. Healing must be an on-going priority.

ACTIONABLE IDEA (S)

- Provide more support and trauma-informed care for survivors of trauma and violence and embrace mental health and community-based interventions that encourage resilience.
- Enhance wrap-around services for individuals and families to assess exposure to toxic or traumatic stress and connect those affected to support in order to foster healing.
- Promote mindfulness and stress reduction practices within Black neighborhoods and community organizations.

ISSUE: TOXIC STRESS AND CHRONIC DISEASES

CHALLENGE

Many diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, mental illness, as well premature aging (or “weathering”) and death, are exacerbated by toxic stress and impacts can be multi-generational.

ACTIONABLE IDEA (S)

- Train parents, teachers, and community leaders on coping skills and develop programs to cascade this training to young adults, adolescents, and children.
- Develop programs that connect those exposed to trauma and at risk for toxic stress to natural environments.
- Activate discussion groups, arts, and healing practices among grassroots organizations to capture the lived experience, cultivate community pride, and elevate these voices with elected officials via advocacy.



BREAKOUT SESSION #3

TOXIC STRESS & HEALING NEXT STEPS

HOW THE HEALTH FOUNDATION IS SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO REDUCE VIOLENCE AND PROMOTE HEALING

Looking forward, supporting, cultivating, and funding collaborative efforts among grassroots organizations interrupting cycles of toxic stress and structural and street violence in Black communities is a priority for the Health Foundation. As an outcome of the 2022 Black Health Summit, the Foundation invested in the Circle of Brotherhood's Peacemakers program.

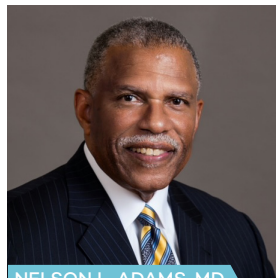
The Foundation will continue:

- Strengthening our relationship with Black-led grassroots organizations to identify ways in which the Foundation can support and help scale evidence- and community- based violence intervention and prevention efforts in the areas these organizations serve.
- Fostering an economically thriving Black community via the South Florida Anchor Alliance which increases access to procurement and hiring opportunities.
- Building the awareness of what's needed to promote healing and hope in all that we do.
- Supporting solutions that seek to address street and structural violence by identifying, illuminating, and supporting organizations that seek to disrupt the cycle of violence in under-resourced communities.



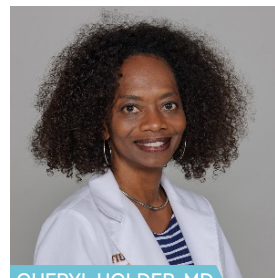
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Health Foundation of South Florida, Board Member
Sunshine Health Board of Directors, Chair National Medical Association, Past President



CHERYL HOLDER, MD

Florida Clinicians for Climate Action, Executive Director

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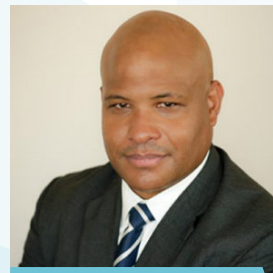
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Florida Memorial University,
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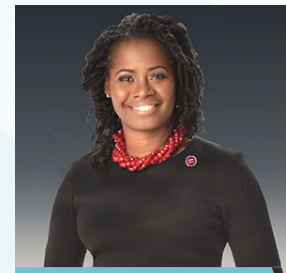
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ALEXANDER RUNDLET, ESQ.

Florida Memorial University,
Social Justice Institute,
Chief Strategist



GERMAINE SMITH-BAUGH, EDD

Urban League of Broward
County, President & CEO

THANK YOU TO OUR SPEAKERS

2023 SPEAKERS

Nelson L. Adams, M.D.

Board Member, Health Foundation of South Florida; Chair, Sunshine Health Board of Directors; Past President, National Medical Association

Jamarah Amani

Executive Director, Southern Birth Justice Network

Nancy Ancrum

Editorial Page Editor, Miami Herald

Mark Barrett

Vice President, Network Development and Contracting, Sunshine Health

Jorge Damian de la Paz

Senior Strategist, Government Innovation, Miami-Dade County

Sasha Davidson, M.D.

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Melissa Dunn

Commissioner, City of Lauderhill; Mindfulness Coach

Pastor Linda Freeman

Executive Director, Trinity Church, Peacemaker Family Center

Sara Haas, Senior Director

Southeast Market, Enterprise Community Partners

Cheryl Holder, M.D.

Executive Director of Florida Clinicians for Climate Action

Jennifer Jurado, Ph.D.

Chief Resilience Officer, Broward County Government

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Esther McCant

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Metro Mommy Agency

Tisa McGhee, Ph.D. LCSW

Transformational Strategist

Roger McIntosh, Ph.D.

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Acting Director, Social Justice Institute, Florida Memorial University; Fredman Family Foundation Practitioner in Residence, Center for Ethics and Public Service, University of Miami School of Law Advisory

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Chair, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Broward Health

Linda Villarosa

Author, *Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation*

Marvin Wilmoth

Real Estate Developer and Consultant; former Vice Mayor of North Bay Village

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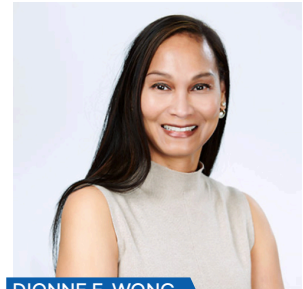
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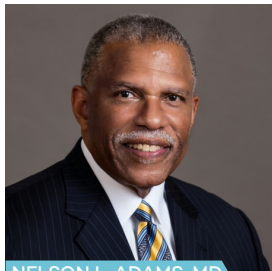


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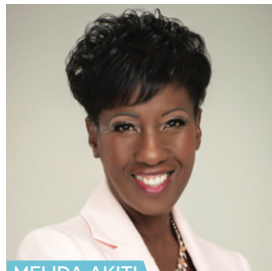


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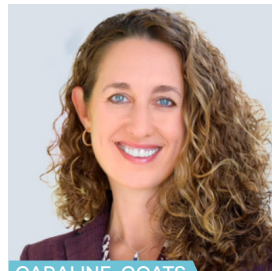
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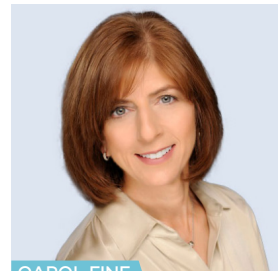
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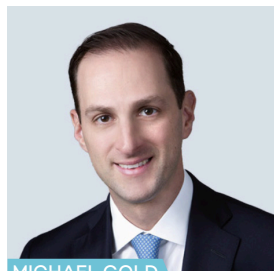
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Memorial Health System



CARALINE COATS
Humana



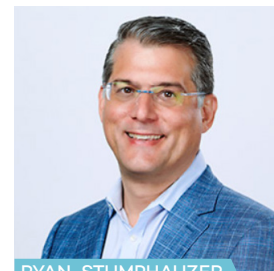
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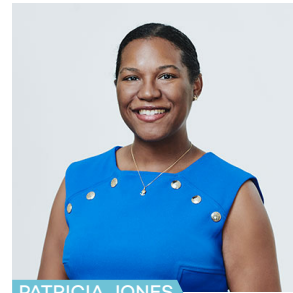
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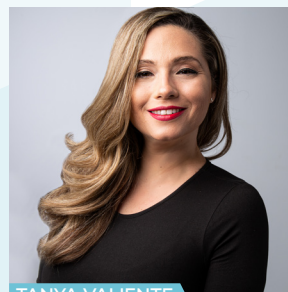
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Thank you to **Carla Crossno** and **Soledad Picón** for developing the Black Health Summit Summary Report.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

“After months of planning, the 2023 Black Health Summit exceeded every expectation. The engagement of our attendees, the hospitality of our host, Florida Memorial University, the professionalism and expertise of our esteemed speakers, and the dedication of the staff and board of the Health Foundation of South Florida was truly phenomenal.

While we acknowledge that health and healthcare disparities are ingrained in what we experience, owing in part to long standing inequities in our healthcare system, we know that if you have health (physical, mental, financial, environmental, and spiritual), you have just about everything. Our shared responsibility is to ensure that healthcare is available, affordable and accessible to everyone, especially those on the socio-economic margins of our society.

As we look ahead, I invite you to find a place for yourself in this work, as a practitioner or an advocate, as a volunteer or a community organizer. I invite you to be the **BEST** version of yourself that you can be. Remember to do so this way: Good, better, best. Never ever let it rest. Not until your good, my good, our good becomes our better and our better becomes our best.”

Peace and Blessings,



Nelson L. Adams, MD

Chair, Racial Justice and Equity Committee
Co-Chair, Black Health Summit

BLACK HEALTH SUMMIT



SAVE THE DATE
BLACK HEALTH SUMMIT 2024
JUNE 2024