



*Say Ah! Symposium*

# Racism & Health Literacy

*A free online series to advance health equity*

August 24-26, 2020

7:30-8:45pm

Register [here](#) or email [info@say-ah.org](mailto:info@say-ah.org)

*Held in solidarity with #BlackLivesMatter and the March on Washington*

## Program Overview

A three-part series examining how racism and health literacy interact to impact health equity. Session I explores racism's effect on the health literacy of Black patients, caregivers and communities. Session II highlights and amplifies anti-racist health literacy practices. Session III features powerful stories of Black healing and provides tools to help participants *change the narrative*.

## Session Overview

**Monday, August 24th: *In the Beginning was the Word*:** Racism is rarely discussed in health communication, and yet it is an important determinant of health. This session examines the ways racism and health literacy interact to impact health equity.

Speakers include: Janet [Ohene-Frempong](#), Dr. Kirkland [Vaughans](#), Dr. [Robert Fullilove](#) and Say Ah! Board member Dr. Tyree [Oredein](#).

**Tuesday, August 25th: *Anti-Racist Health Literacy in Action*:** This panel provides insight from the field, highlighting best practices and identifying key challenges in ensuring health promotion is anti-racist. Panelists represent organizations and programs, including [Girtrek](#), AlohaCare's [Native Hawaiian Cultural Liaison](#), New York City's [Sexual and Reproductive Justice Community Engagement Group](#), New York City's [Fatherhood Initiative](#), and Community Service Society of New York's [Community Health Advocates](#).



Wednesday, August 26th: ***Changing the Narrative***: While the national discourse on health disparities shines a much-needed light on race-based health inequities, it also reinforces a racist narrative. This narrative *must* change. Learn how to be a part of that change at our final evening - a night of storytelling, narrative competency and rally for civic engagement. Storytellers include Say Ah! Board member, literacy scholar and author Valerie [Williams-Sanchez](#), Narrative Medicine educator and third year medical student Marcus [Mosley](#), and Say Ah!'s Narrative Competency lead Oluwatomisin Sontan.

You can start changing the narrative now by registering to vote [here](#) or [here](#)!

***Racism & Health Literacy*** is a part of Say Ah!'s call for a racially just health care system, and an end to the discriminatory health literacy and health communication practices that often leave Black patients and caregivers unseen, unheard and unhealed.

#### **About Say Ah!**

Say Ah! is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that educates and empowers people to make positive choices about their health and health care. We do this by providing health literacy education and training for professionals, and workshops and materials for community members. Founded in 2007, we have helped more than 10,000 community members at over 60 host sites; and trained more than 2,000 professionals. For more information, visit us at [www.say-ah.org](http://www.say-ah.org).

#### **About the March on Washington**

This year's March on Washington, held on August 28, 2020, will be a day of action to demonstrate the relevance and need of the ongoing fight for racial equality and will commemorate the 57th anniversary of the historical March on Washington where Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963. If you cannot march in person, you can join a virtual march here: <https://2020march.com/>



## Session I: *In the Beginning was the Word* Host & Speaker Biographies

### Host:

**Valerie Williams-Sanchez** Valerie is a certified Project Management Professional® who plans, curates and creates full-mix integrated marketing communications content, strategies and solutions for a broad variety of clients. In this capacity, she has worked for, collaborated, and consulted on internal and public-facing, traditional and digital communications. With more than 20 years of experience in marketing and communications, she has worked with private clients and for major corporate brands including Volvo, Disney and Deloitte.

In addition to her extensive skill set in marketing communications, Valerie consults under her company moniker, Valorena Online, L.L.C. She is also a reading and literacy scholar and researcher. An off-shoot of this work, Valerie has published the Cocoa Kids Collection© of books: *Isaiah and the Chocolate Mountain*©, *Eddie and the Hot Cocoa Hot Rod*©, and *Lorena and the Magic Mocha Mirror*©. She's also the editor and writer of a blog *Valerie's Vignettes*.

A former daily journalist, Valerie has written and contributed to articles and essays in *Associated Press*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Miami Herald*, *National Geographic*, *Orange County Business Journal*, and *More Magazine*, online in the US and in Spain. As an undergraduate, she studied Spanish literature and cultural history at the Universidad de Salamanca, Spain, and is an English literature major and graduate of the University of California, Berkeley. At the graduate level, her degree was conferred from Columbia University, Graduate School of Journalism. She is also currently a PhD candidate in Literacy through St. John's University, New York.

### Speakers

**Janet Ohene-Frempong, M.S.** is a plain language and cross cultural communication consultant with over 30 years of experience in patient/provider communications. Formerly Director of the Health Literacy Project, at the Health Promotion Council of Southeastern Pennsylvania, she has conducted workshops and provided consultation



on plain language and cross-cultural communication for a wide range of health information providers, including health care systems, government agencies, health insurers, pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology companies, medical publishers, health and human service agencies as well as schools of medicine, nursing and allied health. She is often an invited speaker at national conferences.

Janet is co-author of *Literacy, Health and the Law: An Exploration of the Law and the Plight of Marginal Readers within the Health Care System*, a monograph for health system and pharmaceutical industry administrators and risk managers.

She is also co-author of a chapter entitled “Health Care for African Americans” in *Rethinking Ethnicity and Health Care*, a discussion of the role of marginal literacy as one of several barriers to optimal care. She has served on a number of national boards and advisories and is a founding member of the Clear Language Group.

**Kirkland C. Vaughans, Ph.D.** is a licensed clinical psychologist and a psychoanalyst. The founding editor of the *Journal of Infant, Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy*, he made JICAP a special venue for the publication of papers on the treatment of children of diverse ethnic groups and economic backgrounds.

First-editor of the seminal two-volume book, *The Psychology of Black Boys and Adolescents*, Dr. Vaughans has published articles on the intergenerational transmission of trauma among African Americans and presented widely on topics affecting Black male youth. He is a senior adjunct professor of psychology at the Derner Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies at Adelphi University, faculty member of their Postgraduate Program in Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy, and serves on the Advisory Board for the Harlem Family Psychoanalytic Institute. He is the recipient of a number of community and professional honors for his service and contributions.

Dr. Vaughans is prominently featured on the documentary *Black Psychoanalysts Speak*, and has spearheaded several conferences discussing the experiences of psychoanalysts of Color as well as the relevance of psychoanalysis to communities of Color.



**Robert E. Fullilove, EdD** is the Associate Dean for Community and Minority Affairs, Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences and the co-director of the Cities Research Group.

Dr. Fullilove has authored numerous articles in the area of minority health. From 1995 to 2001, he served on the Board of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at the Institute of Medicine (IOM) at the National Academy of Sciences. Since 1996, he has served on five IOM study committees that have produced reports on a variety of topics including substance abuse and addiction, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and damp indoor spaces and health. In 2003 he was designated a National Associate of the National Academies of Science. In 1998 he was appointed to the Advisory Committee on HIV and STD Prevention (ACHSP) at the Centers for Disease Control, and in July, 2000, he became the committee's co-chair. Finally, between 2004-2007, he served on the National Advisory Council for the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health [NIH]. Since 2010, he has been teaching public health courses in six New York State prisons that are part of the Bard College Prison Initiative (BPI) and serves as the Senior Advisor to BPI's public health program.

Dr. Fullilove serves on the editorial boards of the journals Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and the Journal of Public Health Policy. He has been awarded the Distinguished Teaching Award at the Mailman School of Public Health three times (in 1995, 2001, and 2013), and in May, 2002, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Bank Street College of Education.

**Tyree Oredein, DrPH** (she/her/hers) has dedicated her career to serving the POC and LGBTQ+ communities, and other marginalized groups. As [Hudson Pride Center's](#) Lead Trainer for 12 years, and later as a Safe School Coordinator with [Garden State Equality](#), Dr. Oredein has been developing and delivering LGBTQ+ related Professional Development trainings to administrators, educators, health professionals, social service providers, corporate personnel and others. She also facilitates LGBTQ+ inclusive workshops to elementary, junior high, high school, college students, and community members surrounding sexuality, HIV/AIDS & sexual health, self-esteem, healthy relationships, consent, media literacy, and social justice and has [worked extensively with QTPOC youth](#).



Dr. Oredein received her Bachelor's Degree from Wellesley College, her Masters of Public Health (MPH) from Hunter College, and her Doctorate of Public Health (DrPH) from Rutgers University. In addition to her posts with Hudson Pride Center and Garden State Equality, she also held positions with the Marion Bolden Student Center, Select Media, Inc, and most recently the American Conference on Diversity. Currently, she serves on the Board of Directors for [Say Ah!](#), a non-profit agency dedicated to increasing health literacy, is an adjunct professor at [Montclair State University](#) in the Department of Public Health, serves as a Special State Officer on the [Healthy New Jersey 2030 Advisory Council](#) under the auspices of the NJ Department of Health, and sits on the [Wellesley Racial Justice Initiative](#) Leadership Collective.