



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

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.

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 consultants 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.

Session II: *Anti-racist Health Literacy Policy and Practice* **Panelist Biographies**

Dr. Kealoha Fox is a Native Hawaiian scientist, practitioner, and advocate based in Hawai'i. She is the Native Hawaiian Liaison and manages public policy at AlohaCare, a non-profit health plan in Hawai'i. Her innovative programs are addressing health for Native Hawaiians living in poverty by utilizing a social determinants of health model of care that values culturally effective public health and medical services. She was a public servant leading racial justice policies in the government for nearly 10 years and now an Obama Leader for the Asia-Pacific Region at the Obama Foundation.

Nakia Outlaw is the Program Manager of the Community Health Advocates (CHA), a program at the Community Service Society of New York (CSSNY). In her current role, Nakia oversees a statewide network of community-based organizations and small businesses counseling consumers on health insurance and health care access issues. Nakia has been able to promote significant, positive change in communities and individuals through advocacy, empowered by compassion. Nakia has vast experience in healthcare and consumer advocacy. She has worked in this field at CSS for over 15 years in various roles. For help in New York State, contact the CHA Helpline: 888-614-5400.

Scott Leach, Director of Fatherhood Initiative at NYC Department of Youth & Community Development, has more than 30 years of experience working with fathers and families of varying socioeconomic levels and cultural backgrounds. He received his bachelor's degree in Recreation Education from The Ohio State University.



Following graduation, Scott was drafted to the National Football League by the New Orleans Saints. Scott is the Director of the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (D.Y.C.D.) Fatherhood Initiative. He currently oversees eight fatherhood providers. Scott holds fatherhood certification with M.D.R.C. as a master trainer, 24/7 Dads curriculum, helped in the development of the parenting journey for fathers, and working on finishing up his practitioner certification with Fathers and Families of America, and one of the organizers for the Campaign Dads Take Your Child To School Day.

Nancy Morisseau, MPH, hails from both Brooklyn and Philadelphia, the child of Haitian immigrants. She obtained her BS from Penn State University and her MPH from Emory University. Nancy has been at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene since 2017. In her current role she is a Birth Justice Coordinator - advocating for BIPOC communities that are suffering disproportionate illness and death when giving birth in New York City. She engages with the Birth Justice Defenders (BJDs) - community members throughout the city that are vocal and passionate about sexual and reproductive justice. Nancy and the BJDs employ the NYC Standards for Respectful Care at Birth, an accessible tool that New Yorkers can use to advocate for themselves when engaging service providers around their pregnancy and child related care.

Chyna Johnson, MPH, serves as Director of Impact at GirlTrek. She joined GirlTrek in 2017 as the Summer Fellow while completing her graduate degree at Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. During her time in GirlTrek she has served in several roles. In her current role as Director of Impact she oversees the development and implementation of the systems and tools that identify and capture the depth and breadth of GirlTrek's impact. In this role she is responsible for the collection, management, and analysis of impact data and works closely with the each facet of the GirlTrek team.

Outside of GirlTrek, Chyna is working to honor her passion for Black women's health and wellness by training as a doula. She hopes to make an impact in the area of maternal health as one of many Black women who are tackling the alarming rates of Maternal Mortality seen in the Black community. Chyna is originally from Columbus, Ohio. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry and African & African American Studies from Berea College in Berea, Kentucky and earned her Master of Public Health from Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.