



HBCU COVID Awareness and Resilience Day– (HBCU-CARD)

will take place on *Tuesday, May 4, 2021*. The event will be dedicated to raising awareness about the unequal burden of COVID-19 and mobilizing our African American Communities to build equity against this pandemic.

I. IMPETUS

Racial disparity remains a persistent, intractable force that continues unabated in and around historically underserved communities in which many of our HBCUs are housed. These communities hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic continues to suffer this glaring disparity. Whether primarily by lack of access, to some hesitancy, or a healthy dose of mistrust towards the U.S. health care system in general and the vaccination in particular, data show that African Americans are dying from COVID-19 at higher rates than other ethnic groups. Conversely, this group is getting vaccinated at lower rates. So how do we develop trust and save the lives of our communities? Linking the academic community to promote and engage the wider community is one innovative approach to tackle this disparity. Specifically, the trusted voices of our HBCU student leaders will spearhead this effort in partnership with the HBCU Emergency Management Workforce Consortium.

II. Overview of HBCU-CARD

The goal of HBCU-CARD is to bring awareness to HBCU campuses and surrounding communities about steps to protect themselves and safeguard their health from the COVID-19 pandemic. HBCU student leaders are well positioned to be powerful advocates and educate not only their peers, but also close and extended family members about how to safeguard their health against COVID-19.

Our research show that amidst all the turmoil and marginalization, the resilience of our students rises to the surface and remains an inspiration for us all. Many of our students, huddling around bus and train stations to get access to Wi-Fi and complete their online learning portfolios; using earplugs to allow for quiet learning environments; utilizing ironing boards as substitutes for tables and desks; speak to their indomitable fortitude. Despite the policies and practices of persistent structural and systemic inequality, they have inspired us all with their accomplishments, their resilience! As our students move forward in gaining their academic degrees, let us play our role in helping them safeguard their health. *Our HBCU academic community is urged to promote and engage the wider community in this effort.*

HBCU-CARD is dedicated to mobilizing COVID-19 literacy by raising awareness of, and taking actions against, COVID-19 by our HBCU student leaders nationwide. So how do we get access, develop trust, and save the lives of our communities? Together, let's ***Know More*** and together ***Do More***.

III. HOW TO GET INVOLVED

HBCU Student Council Presidents will provide leadership on their respective campuses to implement this nationwide activity. These young, dynamic, educated engines of change will activate their student bodies to provide support to the community by achieving the following:

1. Host Community Appointment Sign-Up Events

○ One of the many barriers prohibiting individuals from receiving the vaccine is their lack of access or effective use of the internet and technology. Student leaders can plan to host appointment sign-up events wherein they assist community members in making their appointments and provide technical support along the way. Students would be required to bring their own devices (laptops, tablets, etc.). It is suggested that these events be hosted in an open, public space that allows for social distancing -- such as a public park easily accessible through public transportation.

2. Post Information Graphics

○ Work with teams of student leaders on your campuses and in your community to research and collect relevant, local COVID information -- such as testing sites, appointment requirements, and descriptions of the benefits of the vaccines. Alert your communities about this opportunity. (This should likely be done in addition to another community engagement activity).

3. Celebrate & Host “On-Campus Testing Day”

○ Encourage students (include students not affiliated with your HBCU in the surrounding area) to participate in COVID testing on campus if this is available or at local testing sites. Publicly promote and post the taking of tests to encourage community awareness for our HBCUs to take pride in regular testing!

4. Virtual Q&A Sessions with Trusted, Culturally Competent Medical Personnel

○ If your campus has a health professions program (medicine, nursing, dental, etc.) consider recruiting them to host a community Q&A session. National Minority Health Professions Associations such as the National Medical Association, National Black Nurses Association, etc. are also excellent resources to support this effort. It is suggested to host two sessions -- one for students and student-aged members of the community, and another for vulnerable individuals (senior citizens, physically challenged, geographically remote, etc.).

5. Be an Example:

○ As a student leader set an example by getting COVID-19 tested and when it is your turn, get vaccinated. In doing so, you are taking bold, decisive, and powerful steps towards reducing stigma and related COVID-19 disparities among our hardest hit communities. This act will also help efforts in safely returning to learning on campus.

IV. Coverage and Awareness

Ideally, all fifty states and the U.S. territories will participate in HBCU-CARD. At a very minimum, we anticipate representatives from all 7 of the 10 FEMA regions where HBCUs are located.

V. Distribution and Availability of Promotion Materials

Downloadable marketing materials from the CDC website.

VI. Overall Marketing Effort

Targeted marketing campaign through radio, print and web media.

Event Points of Contact

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INDIVIDUAL HBCU LEADS go here.....