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\$2.5 Million Awarded to Four Local Organizations for Trauma-Informed Wellness Services for Sacramento's Black Community

Funds will support community-based organizations' activities focused on mental health

Sacramento, Calif. – The Center at Sierra Health Foundation in partnership with Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services today announced \$2.5 million awarded to four Sacramento organizations for outreach, engagement and prevention services to African American / Black community members. Funding will focus on people of all ages and genders, with special consideration for children, youth and transition-age youth (ages 0 to 25) who have experienced or been exposed to trauma. Programs will incorporate an understanding of African American/ Black cultural heritage, including norms and traditions, the broad and multifaceted definition of family, and historical trauma.

Trauma-informed Wellness Program grants have been awarded to Improve Your Tomorrow; ONTRACK Program Resources, Inc.; Roberts Family Development Center; and Rose Family Creative Empowerment Center. Grants will support activities from January 2021 through June 2023. Awarded partners were required to demonstrate experience in providing trauma-informed community outreach and engagement and support services that address mental health and wellness of the African American/Black community, as well as a deep understanding of community members' experience around trauma, racial discrimination, and mental health or behavioral health issues.

“Sacramento's Black community has long advocated for a real commitment to its potential, power and wellness. We are proud to bring funding and trusted community resources together in this program for culturally relevant healing – not only during a pandemic that has disproportionately impacted Black people and families but into the future,” said Chet P. Hewitt, President and CEO of Sierra Health Foundation and The Center.

To strengthen the impact of this program and leverage existing efforts to promote emotional and physical health of the African American / Black community, prioritizing under-resourced neighborhoods with the highest rates of poor health and wellness outcomes. Neighborhoods of focus are Arden-Arcade, Del Paso Heights-North Sacramento, Fruitridge-Stockton Boulevard, Meadowview, North Highlands-Foothill Farms, Oak Park, Rancho Cordova and Valley Hi.

The project will also use a new partnership with Safe Black Space (SBS) to enhance the response to COVID-19 trauma and wellness services. Safe Black Space (SBS) will lead community healing circles; conduct surveys to better understand the most pressing issues facing Black communities; and develop a series of webinars with tips, tools, and strategies to enhance project partners' and community leaders' capacity to provide effective culturally affirming services and support in countering the adverse impact of exposure to racial trauma while also supporting their own emotional needs.

“This past year has been extremely challenging. Diverse communities around the country are disproportionately impacted by COVID. Our communities are experiencing understandable increased anxiety and depression as a result of health and economic stressors. This program couldn't be more relevant to the times to address the trauma experienced by the African American / Black community,” said Ryan Quist, PhD, Behavioral Health Director of Sacramento County Department of Health Services.

The Trauma-informed Wellness Program is funded by the Sacramento County Division of Behavioral Health Services through the voter approved Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and is managed by The Center at Sierra Health Foundation. In 2018, Behavioral Health Services and local stakeholders formed the Cultural Competence Committee Ad Hoc Workgroup, which conducted community listening sessions to give African American community members an opportunity to reflect on how trauma has impacted the community. This funding opportunity follows the workgroup's recommendation for prevention and early intervention programs to address the mental health and wellness needs of the African American/Black community inclusive of LGBTQIA+ community members.

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About The Center at Sierra Health Foundation: *The Center works to promote health and racial equity in communities throughout California with local, state and national partners. Learn more at www.shfcenter.org.*