

voice

IN OUR OWN

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

National Black Women's
Reproductive Justice
Agenda

April 2020

Marcela's Voice



Greetings!

I hope you and your families are staying safe and healthy. For the team at In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda, this is week seven for us working from home. Like you and so many others, our living rooms and kitchens have become make-shift offices and video conferencing has replaced our usual office banter and collaboration.

While our work environments may have changed, our work advocating for Black women,

girls, femmes, LGBTQ+ and non-gender conforming folx has not. More than ever, we are working to ensure that the voices of Black women are amplified. We are modifying the tools that we use to reach the general public, state and national legislators, and the media. This month, I have published [three opinion pieces and was quoted in an article](#), all highlighting COVID-19's impact on Black women, families, and communities. I was also honored to participate in a webinar hosted by one of our partner organizations, Black Women for Wellness, titled "Abortion Access Before and After COVID-19". The presentation also included the movie premiere of [Grapefruit](#) a fictional story about the dangers of crisis pregnancy centers.

The virtual transition from office to home has been both easy and difficult. The easy part was sending everyone home with orders to stay safe and practice social distancing. The hard part was making sure that our staff and partner organizations had all the tools and resources they needed to successfully transition from work office to home office. Once we moved past those barriers, we immediately had to gear up to fight with governors from Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas. These governors are using the COVID-19 pandemic to further their anti-abortion agendas by restricting abortion access. In some states we have been successful in challenging these restrictions, but in others women continue to be denied access to essential health care like abortions.

As long as these egregious attacks on our reproductive health and rights occur, we will continue to fight back. We are prepared to take on this fight from our living rooms, kitchen tables, and home offices. We couldn't do this work without the support of our partner organizations and our HBCU fellows, which is why we're dedicating this issue of our newsletter to them. They are our heroes as they continue to support their local communities in the midst of this pandemic.

Respectfully,

Marcela Howell

Founder & President

In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda

Following Our Fellows

We bid a warm farewell to the 2018-2020 class of our Next Generation Leadership Institute fellows. It has been a pleasure to work with this phenomenal group of young leaders. This program has cultivated nine bold student leaders from Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCU) from across the nation. Upon completion of the program, fellows are equipped with the knowledge and skills to apply the Reproductive Justice framework within the scope of their careers and advocacy efforts. We applaud their commitment to learning and dedicated leadership. We understand that leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. Although the 2018-2020 Next Generation Leadership Institute is coming to a close, we will continue to highlight the accomplishments of our fellows. Stay tuned!

WE ARE STILL ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2020-2022 COHORT

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Are you interested in becoming a Reproductive Justice spokesperson?

APPLY NOW FOR THE 2020-2022 IN OUR OWN VOICE:
NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE AGENDA

NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The application is live!
<http://bit.ly/NextGenRjapp>

CLICK HERE TO APPLY -- DEADLINE APRIL
30!

Congratulations to the 2020 Graduates!

Congratulations to our four graduating seniors, Zhana Bishop, Emily Laurore, Michiyah Thomas, and Aman Tune on your great success. We are proud of your achievements and wish you luck in all your future endeavors.



Zhana Bishop
Spelman College

Zhana plans to attend Boston University School of Public Health to obtain a masters degree in Public Health with a concentration in Community Assessment, Program Design, Implementation, and Evaluation.



**Emily Laurore, Spelman
College**

Emily plans to attend Emory Law School



Michiyah Thomas
Hampton University

Michiyah plans to enter the Teach for America program and earn her Master of Arts degree in Teaching.



Aman Tune
Hampton University

Aman plans to attend the London School Economics to obtain Master of Public Administration degree and work as an entry consultant at a political risk management consulting firm.

The Next Generation Leadership Institute is designed to provide a leadership pipeline specifically for the Black women's Reproductive Justice movement. The Institute is a two-year paid fellowship program that serves as a formal pipeline for training activists on Reproductive Justice and the intersectional issues that impact the lives of Black women, femmes, and girls. Fellows are selected from HBCUs and are trained in advocacy, community organizing, and strategic communications to become young leaders in the Reproductive Justice movement.

Our Partners In Action

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our state partners are working hard to ensure community access to crucial information and services during this difficult time. All partners participated in the 2020 Black Maternal Health week, engaging in digital actions, speaking on webinars, and highlighting the impact COVID-19 has on Black Maternal Health. Additionally, they continue to support their local communities in various ways.



Black Women for Wellness

launched its You Deserve Better Campaign in partnership with Courage California to drive awareness and action about the deceptive practices of Crisis Pregnancy Centers and hosted a virtual film screening of *Grapefruit* and discussion about abortion access in the time of COVID-19 and beyond.



Check Out Grapefruit!

The Black Women's Health Imperative Presents

Black & Well TV

The Front Lines of Reproductive Health For Sisters In Need

THE HOST
LINDA GOLER BLOUNT
President & CEO, BWHI

GUEST
BYLLYE AVERY
Founder, Black Women's Health Imperative

GUEST
DR. ANGELICA GETER FUGERSON
Chief Health Officer, City of Atlanta

GUEST
SHANICIA BOSWELL
Founder, Black Moms Blog

FRIDAY MAY 1ST
4-4:45pm

Tune in live - www.crowdcast.io/blkwomenshealth

For Surviving COVID-19 Resources - www.coronavirus.bwhi.org

Launched a [website on surviving COVID-19](#), which includes culturally relevant tools, tips on safety and emotional wellness, financial literacy, and other resources. BWHI has also created "[Black and Well TV](#)" hosted by President and CEO, Linda Goler Blount to address the various issues that intersect with COVID-19. Next episode is May 1.

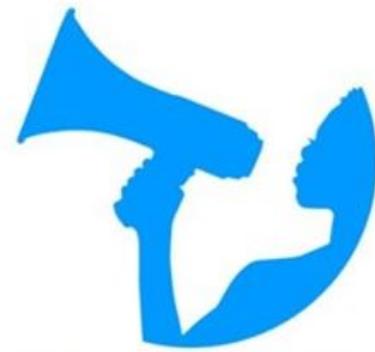
Watch the video about Black & Well TV!

New Voices

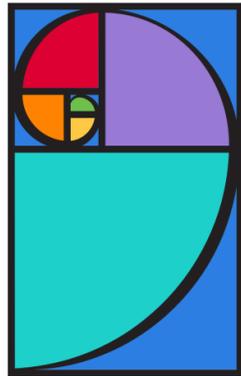
Launched the New Voices COVID-19 Community Relief Initiative for Black women, femmes, girls and folx in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Cleveland,

and Columbus who are in need of FREE diapers, pull-ups, wipes and menstrual products including pads, tampons and liners.

[Learn More!](#)



NEW VOICES



SisterLove

Continues to support community members in need of information pertaining to HIV and AIDS awareness. April marked National Youth HIV and AIDS Awareness Day and SisterLove hosted a live virtual resource share centering young people, HIV prevention, and reproductive health resources in Georgia.

[LEARN MORE!](#)



SisterReach hosted a [Social Justice Preacher Series](#) online to highlight white supremacy and theological manipulation, particularly in this time of crisis. The organization is also offering **FREE** safe sex kits delivered right to your mailbox. Memphis residents can request curbside pick-up from the SisterReach offices. The organization will fulfill all orders until items are out of stock. Orders from Memphis residents will receive priority.



SPARK Reproductive Justice NOW! is planning its first national conference, #JusticeNow2020 in Nov. For more details about what you can expect at the conference and learn more about the call for proposals and scholarships. Click [here](#). Early bird registration closes on May 1.



Continues to work with other reproductive health, rights and justice organizations across to Texas to fight against the Governor's attempts to halt abortion access during this critical time and is mobilizing to fight efforts to open up Texas prematurely in a way that would put vulnerable communities at risk.



Created [a fund](#) to ensure sex worker safety, security, & wellness during COVID-19. They are centering queer, trans and gender non-conforming folx, people of color, and poor people to receive funds as their first priority and would like to dedicate these funds to offset the cost of food and shelter.

IN THE NEWS

- [Why Elected Leaders Must Provide Special COVID-19 Provisions For Black Women, Families And Communities, Blavity](#)
- [Black Maternal Health Week Highlights COVID-19's Impact on Black Pregnancy, Supermajority News](#)
- [Black Women Demand Action on Black Maternal Health Crisis, Ms. Magazine](#)
- [Wage gap compounds COVID-19 burden on Black women, Atlanta Daily World,](#)

- [Judges Block States From Banning Abortions Amid COVID-19 Crisis, COLORLINES](#)
- [How The Coronavirus Is Underscoring Importance Of Full Participation In The 2020 Census,” Blavity](#)



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