

voice

IN OUR OWN

National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May 2020

Marcela's Voice



Greetings!

As we move into eleven weeks of quarantine, social distancing, and staying at home, we are all facing our “new normal” of wearing face masks, holding virtual family dinners, and participating in virtual celebrations. Honoring birthdays, educational accomplishments, and other significant milestones are pushing our creativity to new limits and adding a lot of “firsts” to our agendas and calendars.

The In Our Own Voice family has been adjusting and finding bright spots during these dark times. One upbeat moment for us earlier this month was hosting our virtual graduation for our inaugural class (2018-2020) Next Generation Leadership Institute fellows. Staff members and fellows gathered virtually to honor the dedication and commitment that our nine fellows, from five Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), displayed throughout the program. These students are bold champions of Reproductive Justice and courageous campus leaders.

Serving as the keynote speaker, I told the graduates that these are uncertain times. Not just because of the Coronavirus that we know so little about, but

also because of the economic downturn we have seen because of the pandemic. We each face a “new normal” that has not yet been defined. We, who walk in a Reproductive Justice Life can and will define our own “new normal.”

Over the past two years, our fellows have devoted their time, energy, and abilities to lifting up RJ on their campus and within their broader communities. Each fellow has strengthened their leadership, communication, and movement building skills throughout the program.

When we launched the Next Generation Leadership Institute two years ago, our goal was to build a pipeline to ensure that the voices of students from HBCUs are at the forefront of the RJ movement, while providing training and resources to students to become the next generation of RJ leaders. We were not sure how our plan would evolve, but we wanted to ensure that activists on HBCUs had the opportunity to fully participate in this one-of-a-kind fellowship. The 2018-2020 class fulfilled our mission with flying colors.

To learn more about our fellows and the Next Generation Leadership Institute, check out this [blog](#).

In the next month we will announce the second class of the Next Generation of Leadership Institute fellows. Stay tuned!

Respectfully,

Marcela Howell

Founder & President

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



Policy Update

Government Affairs is hosting a series of policy and leadership development

webinars during this time period where partners are working remotely. On May 21, we hosted [Advocacy Strategies and 501\(c\)\(3\)/\(c\)\(4\) Compliance During an Election Year](#) for 21 participants featuring guest speaker, Tomás Garduño, Integrated Voter Engagement Coach, Groundswell and Lexi White, Senior Policy Manager, In Our Own Voice. If you missed this webinar, you can view the full recording [here](#):

Save the Dates for our June Webinars:

Maternal Health, Climate Change and Birth Outcomes: Environmental and Reproductive Justice Intersections

WHEN: Friday, June 19 at 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. EST

Hosted by: In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda, Black Women's Health Imperative, and Human Rights Watch

Speakers will lift up the intersections between maternal health, climate change, and birth outcomes. This webinar will share key findings, ideas, and opportunities to take action. Attendees will gain an understanding of Reproductive Justice implications, available epidemiology, and policy and community interventions.

REGISTER TODAY!

Reproductive Justice Polling in the South: What Black Women Think in Tennessee and Mississippi

WHEN: Thursday, June 25 from 12-1:00 p.m. EST

Hosted by: In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda and SisterReach

Featuring: Marcela Howell, founder and president, In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda, Cherisse Scott, founder & CEO, SisterReach, and Sen. Raumesh Akbari. Moderator: Israel Cook, SisterReach If/When/How policy fellow.

In Our Own Voice conducted a survey of Black women across the South about their experiences related to parenting, decision-making, and abortion access. During this webinar we will share the results from Black women in Tennessee and Mississippi. Attendees will better understand the lives and views of Black women in the South on issues related to Reproductive Justice.

REGISTER TODAY!

Following Our Fellows

Giovanteey Bishop serves as the manager of the Next Generation Leadership Institute. She shares her final farewell to the 2018-2020 inaugural cohort:



"It has sincerely been a pleasure working with each of you during the 2019-2020 academic school year. I have learned so much throughout the program from all our Next Generation Leadership Institute graduates. It has been a real honor to lead and serve this phenomenal group of young leaders. The most rewarding aspect of our journey together has been seeing each of our fellows grow as leaders. Graduates are prepared to serve as active change agents towards advancing Reproductive Justice within their scope of work and future endeavors. All nine of the Next Generation Leadership Institute 2020 graduates have left a lasting imprint on our hearts at In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda. We are proudly passing the RJ torch to these students. I am excited for our graduates as they embark on the next chapter of excellence."

Giovanteey Bishop, Next Generation Leadership Institute-Program Manager

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.



COMPLETE THE SURVEY!

On average, there is a baby born every eight seconds in the United States, and that hasn't changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Black Women for Wellness](#) is hoping to capture the stories of pregnant people and those who have given birth recently.

You don't have to provide your name or contact information if you're not comfortable doing so. None of your identifiable information will be shared.

The Black Women's Health Imperative Presents

Black & Well TV

Black Women, COVID-19 and HIV
Where Do We Go From Here?

AIDS United **BLACK WELL**

THE HOST
LINDA GOLER BLOUNT, MPH
President & CEO, BWHI

GUEST
VENITA RAY
Deputy Director, Positive Women's Network

GUEST
VALERIE ROCHESTER
Vice President for Program Strategy
AIDS United

GUEST
LEISHA MCKINLEY-BEACH
National HIV/AIDS Consultant

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH
4-4:45pm

BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH IMPERATIVE

Tune in live - www.crowdcast.io/blkwomenshealth

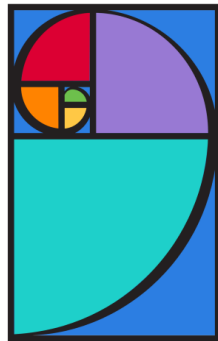
For Surviving COVID-19 Resources - www.coronavirus.bwhi.org

Black Women's Health Imperative's President and CEO, Linda Goler Blount will host a discussion on Black women, COVID-19, and HIV on "[Black and Well TV](#)". Tune in on Fri., May 29 at 4:00 PM EST.

Sign up for "Black Women, COVID-19 and HIV, Where Do We Go From Here?"

New Voices has awarded more than \$30,000 since March for COVID-19 community-based responses in communities of color through its Social Justice Rapid Response Fund. The organization continues to provide FREE diapers, pull-ups, wipes and menstrual products to Black women, femmes, girls and folx in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Columbus

[Learn More!](#)



SisterLove is urging support for two action campaigns around Title X and the the Global Gag Rule. Click on the buttons below to learn more about both campaigns and how you get involved.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT TITLE X!](#)

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GLOBAL GAG RULE!](#)



SisterReach is still 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.

[GET YOUR FREE KIT](#)

IN THE NEWS

- [“How This Fellowship Is Encouraging Black Women HBCU Students To Become The Next Generation Of Reproductive Justice Leaders,” Blavity, April 30, 2020](#)
- [“Josephine St. Pierre: A Suffrage Champion and Founding NAACP Member,” The Washington Informer](#)



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