



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES POSTPONED

All in-person group education sessions have been canceled until further notice. Be on the lookout for virtual group session opportunities. Visit us online for updates at www.ABIPA.org

Call (828) 251-8364 to schedule ABIPA for your organization or church events.

Donate to ABIPA

Tax deductible donations can be made by sending a check to: ABIPA, PO Box 448, Asheville, NC 28802; or click the donation tab at www.abipa.org. Thank you for your support!

Thank you to our funding partners and community partner agencies for making our work possible.



and the

Buncombe County Service Foundation

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Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement

ABIPA promotes economic, social, and healthy parity achievement for African Americans and other underserved populations in Buncombe County through advocacy, education, research, and community partnerships.

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ABIPA Health Highlights

CELEBRATING 16 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

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Photo: Pro16 Productions

Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story?

By JéWana Grier-McEachin, Executive Director

As I thought about Women's History Month this year, I couldn't get the lyrics "Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story" from the musical Hamilton out of my head.

My girls love the soundtrack from *Hamilton* and belted out the songs during our drive times long before the resurgence of the play in the summer of 2020 on Disney+. There are two main reasons I am sitting with these lines today. I feel that we must shift the mindset of women that we are a minority. Additionally, we should embrace and elevate the position that women are legendarily legacy influencers.

Let's start by reminding ourselves that women are not a statistical minority. We are roughly equal in number to men, but we qualify as a minority group because we tend to have less power and fewer privileges than men. Underlying this unequal treatment of women is sexism, which is discrimination against women.

With less power and fewer privileges than men, women continued to make advances over the last decade. Women increased their earnings, education, fields of occupation, and continued to live longer than men.

That women outlive men is the perfect transition to legendary legacy influencers.

Elizabeth Hamilton, Mamie Elizabeth Till-Mobley, Coretta Scott

King, and Joanne Rogers are four women who lived and preserved legacy in their own impactful ways.

The writings historians have today by Alexander Hamilton can be attributed to the efforts of Elizabeth Hamilton. Eliza organized all of Alexander's letters, papers, and writings. With Eliza's help, John C. Hamilton published *History of the Republic of the United States America, as Traced in the Writings of Alexander Hamilton and his Contemporaries*. The book set the bar for future biographies of Alexander Hamilton.

Eliza remained dedicated to charity work in her 90s. After moving to Washington, D.C., she helped Dolley Madison and Louisa Adams raise money to build the Washington Monument.

Mamie Till insisted that the coffin containing the body of her 14-year-old son, Emmett, be left open, because, in her words, "I wanted the world to see what they did to my baby."

Tens of thousands of people viewed Emmett's body, and photographs were circulated around the country. The Till case became emblematic of the disparity of justice for Blacks in the South. The NAACP asked Mamie Till to tour the

country relating the events of her son's life, death, and the trial of his murderers. It was one of the most successful fundraising campaigns the NAACP had ever known.

Mamie also worked for more than 40 years to help children living in poverty. She was able to use her role as a mother to relate to other people and gain support for her cause of racial justice.

Women uniting around motherhood became a unifying force for other social movements, like the Women's Movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Like Mamie, many women launched other efforts they were passionate about.

Two days after her husband's death, Coretta Scott King spoke at Ebenezer Baptist Church. She said her husband told their children, "If a man had nothing that was worth dying for, then he was not fit to live." She brought up his ideals and the fact that he may be dead, but concluded that "his spirit will never die."

Coretta took on the leadership of the struggle for racial equality herself and became active in the Women's Movement. She founded the King Center and fought for years to make his birthday a national holiday. Every year Coretta

attended a commemorative service at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta to mark King's birthday on January 15.

Coretta finally succeeded when Ronald Reagan, on November 2, 1983, signed legislation establishing Martin Luther King Jr. Day. She later broadened her scope to include advocacy for LGBT rights and opposition to apartheid.

Joanne Rogers, the wife of Fred Rogers, became a guardian of her husband's legacy as the beloved host of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, eventually allowing his life to be memorialized in the 2018 documentary *Won't You Be My Neighbor?*

Joanne shared with the *Los Angeles Times* that her biggest request of the filmmakers was that her husband not come across as a saint but as an ordinary man who made his mark through the simplicity of kindness.

Mrs. Rogers carried on his legacy through nonprofit organizations such as Fred Rogers Productions, and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe. In 2019, when an NBC correspondent asked her what her husband would have thought about the political climate, she pronounced that her husband would have been "appalled" by the unkindness, even cruelty, of the prevailing political climate. She sought to perpetuate his message of "making goodness attractive."

Ladies, continue to launch and live your legacy with the power that is you.

Creating Herd Immunity

by Kelly White, MHE, MPH, ABIPA Health Education Program Manager

Which role will you play in slowing the spread of Covid-19?



Kelly White, MHE, MPH. Photo: Pro16 Productions

19 vaccination, or how many need to be immune to the virus in order to stop or slow the spread of the virus; an estimated 94% to be exact. Dr. Fauci and others are encouraging vaccination to create what is called Herd Immunity.

Herd Immunity is when a large number of people become immune to a disease, making the disease less likely to be spread from person to person. In return, the community becomes protected as a whole, including the people who were not infected by the disease. The term "herd immunity" can be dated as

far back as the 17th century in the small-pox era when Edward Jenner helped to usher in the theory.

Fast forward to today. We have dealt with the Covid-19 pandemic for one year, and now with multiple vaccination options on the table there seems to be little to no faith within the African American community that the vaccination is safe. So, we ask ourselves this: if there is a solution to a problem that is said to be 95% effective against the problem, why is it so hard for us to choose the solution? For some odd reason, we in the African American community are less likely to trust medicine and the science behind it. But why is this?

Some may speak about the feeling of being a guinea pig due to not knowing the full effects of the vaccine beyond protecting us against Covid. Some may go as far to

bring up the horrific events of the Tuskegee experiment, afraid that this may be the same situation. The theories can go on forever, but one thing we can all agree on is that this virus has no eyes or ears, and it has affected many people from all walks of life.

Whether you choose to vaccinate or not, I encourage you to take a moment to do your own research on the Covid-19 vaccinations and decide what is going to be the best route for you to take. You could simply decide to continue to assist in slowing the spread, or you could be one of the 80% who create herd immunity for those in the community who choose not to vaccinate. Either way, we are all hoping to get back to something that looks like normal this year. The thing is, you just have to figure out which role you will play.

Community Vaccinations

Creating Equity in Access

Vaccinations are being offered according to availability of doses throughout the month at the Edington Center, UNCA in partnership with MAHEC, and Advent Health. For more information on getting vaccinated at community sites call (828) 785-2049.