

# ABIPA – ASHEVILLE BUNCOMBE INSTITUTE OF PARITY ACHIEVEMENT

## You Are Black History

By JéWana Grier-McEachin, Executive Director

*I love that Black History Month coincides with Heart Health Month.*

Although so much of our history is heart breaking, the journey and triumphs, both past and present, and our promising future, provide heartfelt inspiration to keep pushing.

Did you know that we are three years away from the 100th anniversary of the first celebration of Negro History Week? Launched in February 1926 by Carter G. Woodson, Negro History Week was the precursor of Black History Month.

The African diaspora, the world-wide collection of communities descended from native Africans or people from Africa, has had such an impact on the world that it is often understated and underestimated. Another fact that you may not be aware of is that Ireland and the United Kingdom celebrate Black History Month in October.

This month I would like to honor history made by the late Lieutenant Willie A. Allen, who passed 12 days after his 75th birthday last month.

Lieutenant Allen served in Vietnam as a member of the United States Army. He retired in 2001 from the Buncombe County Sheriff and Asheville Police departments after 30 years of service. He served under three different sheriffs in various roles.



JéWana Grier-McEachin. Photo: Pro16 Productions

Lt. Allen was the first Black Lieutenant in the Buncombe County Sheriff's Department. During the celebration of his life, Sheriff Quinton Miller credited Lt. Allen with being one of the trailblazers and mentors whose shoulders he stands on and has relied upon as a guiding light.

Lt. Allen was instrumental in launching the Big Brothers Big Sisters program in our area in addition to the DARE program, another of his multiple accomplishments. He loved, protected, and served his God, his family, his community, and his country.



Lieutenant Willie A. Allen

### "Uptown Funk"

has 115 beats per minute, the right tempo for Hands-Only CPR.

1 Call 911.

2

Push hard & fast in the center of the chest



Learn CPR. Save a Life.



Everyone reading this page has either made history or are in the process of making history. This month we celebrate you and others whose names will never be in a history book, but will be uplifted by the legacies shared through oral history and things captured on pages like these produced by *The Urban News*.

**Listen to ABIPA's Body & Soul Radio Show on WRES 100.7 FM, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. on wresfm.com.**

**ABIPA, 56 Walton Street, Asheville**

Mail: PO Box 448, Asheville, NC 28802

Office (828) 251-8364 • Fax (828) 251-8365

Facebook.com/ABIPA.CARES • www.ABIPA.org



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Kelly White, MHE, MPH. Photo: Pro16 Productions

## Your Heart's Power

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

*February is Heart Health month!*



Who would have thought that something the size of your fist can be one of the most important and powerful tools in the body. Our hearts go through everything with us: it's broken when we are sad, it's excited when we are jumping for joy, and it can flutter when we are in love!

Allow me to share a few fascinating fun facts about what our heart does on its own without us having to even think about it.

- Your heart will beat about 115,000 times each day.
- Your heart pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood every day.

- An electrical system controls the rhythm of your heart.
- The heart can continue beating even when it's disconnected from the body.

The heart can sometimes seem to be "out of sight, out of mind" so it can easily be taken for granted. Our heart can also fail us without question if we do not take care of it or if we have an unknown health condition.

Some of the things we can do to help our hearts stay strong without much thought include eating a balanced diet full of fruit and veggies, getting 30 minutes of exercise daily, and seeing your doctor on a regular basis.

Make sure that you are in your healthiest state. Use this month to jumpstart your way of thinking about your heart and all that it does for you. What life changes, if any, would you like to make? What is something you can add so that you can continue to depend on your heart without a second thought?

Source: Healthline

## Announcements

### Lunch & Learn Events

Held the 1st and 2nd Wednesday of each month from 12 noon until 1 p.m. at Linwood Crump Shiloh Recreational Complex, 121 Shiloh Road in Asheville.

### Diabetes Self Management Classes

February 22 until March 29. Held every Wednesday from 2-4 p.m. in the Maple Crest Community Room, 9 Lee Walker Lane, Building 20 in Asheville.