



PROJECT NAF SUPPORTS BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH

Mount Zion Community Development, Inc. continues its legacy to impact maternal and child health through its Project NAF (Nurturing Asheville and Area Families) equity program. Project NAF implements a research-based parenting curriculum, using evidence-based strategies that reduce infant mortality and low birth-weight births for Black pregnant and post-partum women and their infants in Buncombe, and its expansion in Henderson and Madison Counties.

Project NAF provides support to Black/African American pregnant and postpartum mothers, infants, and their families to access prenatal, perinatal, and early childhood education resources to promote healthy births, reverse infant mortality rates, and increase positive health outcomes.

Notably, our organization has a 24+ year history of supporting reproductive health rights of historically excluded communities. In addition, our project results have been recognized by the National Community Initiative Model to Eliminate Health Disparities, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and received accolades as a Community Model by the NC Child Fatality Task Force.

BETTER HEALTH THROUGH BETTER UNDERSTANDING



A 2003 assessment found that 58% of African Americans had basic or below basic health literacy, compared with 28% of non-Hispanic whites. Learn more at [minorityhealth.hhs.gov/nmhm](http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/nmhm).

PROJECT NAF COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

- Jacquelyn Odom: Former Participant  
Denise Duckett: BCHHS Pregnancy Care  
Nancy Farmer: Sparc Foundation  
Charlene Galloway-Pea: Mt. Zion Church of Asheville, Inc.  
Anne Kouri, Mars Hill University  
LaToya McDaniel, Current Participant  
Tim Splain, Asheville City Police Department (Male Advocate)  
Trina Stokes: Advent Health  
Royanna Williams: Business Owner, Former NAF Participant

ECHO (Enhancing Collaborative Health Options & Opportunities)

Working Together to Reduce Black Maternal Mortality

Black Maternal Health Week is recognized each year from April 11-17 to bring attention and action in improving Black maternal health.

During Black Maternal Health Week you can support pregnant people in your life to reduce factors that contribute to pregnancy-related complications and death. Pregnant people and their families can:

- Talk to a healthcare provider if anything doesn't feel right or is concerning.
- Know and seek immediate care if experiencing any of the urgent maternal warning signs, including severe headache, extreme swelling of hands or face, trouble breathing, heavy vaginal bleeding or discharge, overwhelming tiredness, and more. These symptoms could indicate a potentially life-threatening complication.
- Share recent pregnancy history during each medical care visit for up to one year after delivery.
- Connect with healthcare and social support systems before, during, and after pregnancy.

Most Pregnancy-Related Deaths are Preventable

Each year in the United States, hundreds of people die during pregnancy or in the year after. Thousands more have unexpected outcomes of labor and delivery



with serious short- or long-term health consequences. Every pregnancy-related death is tragic, especially because more than 80% of pregnancy-related deaths in the US are preventable. Recognizing urgent maternal warning signs, providing timely treatment, and delivering respectful, quality care can prevent many pregnancy-related deaths.

Racial Disparities Exist

Black women are three times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than White women. Multiple factors contribute to these disparities, such as variation in quality healthcare, underlying chronic conditions, structural racism, and implicit bias. Social determinants of health prevent many people from racial and ethnic minority groups from having fair opportunities for economic, physical, and emotional health.

Source: CDC

MESSAGE FROM SAPHIRE DE'BELLOTT

Listening Can Be Your Most Important Tool

Hear her concerns. It could save her life.

Healthcare providers can:

- Ask questions to better understand their patient and things that may be affecting their lives.
- Help patients, and those accompanying them, understand the urgent maternal warning signs and when to seek medical attention right away.
- Help patients manage chronic conditions or conditions that may arise during pregnancy like hypertension, diabetes, or depression.
- Recognize and work to eliminate unconscious bias in themselves and in their office on an ongoing basis.
- Respond to any concerns patients may have.
- Provide all patients with respectful quality care.

Hospitals and healthcare systems can:

- Identify and address unconscious bias in healthcare.



Sapphire De'Bellott

- Standardize coordination of care and response to emergencies.
- Improve delivery of quality prenatal and postpartum care.
- Train non-obstetric care providers to ask about pregnancy history in the preceding year.
- Train non-obstetric care providers to ask about pregnancy history in the preceding year.

States and communities can:

- Assess and coordinate delivery hospitals for risk-appropriate care.
- Support review of the causes and opportunities for prevention behind every pregnancy-related death.
- Identify and address social factors influencing maternal health such as unstable housing, transportation access, food insecurity, substance use, violence, and racial and economic inequality.

Source: [www.cdc.gov/HearHer](http://www.cdc.gov/HearHer).

MOUNT ZION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC.



Dr. John H. Grant, Founding Chairman, President, CEO of Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.



Belinda K. Grant, Chief Executive Director of Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.

MOUNT ZION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Staff

Belinda K. Grant:  
Executive Director  
(828) 776-1428  
[belindakgrant@mzcd.info](mailto:belindakgrant@mzcd.info)



Sapphire De'Bellott: Project NAF  
Outreach Worker (828) 776-1429;  
[sapphire.debellott@mzcd.info](mailto:sapphire.debellott@mzcd.info)

Ms. Rosa B. Hearst: Receptionist  
Natalia V. Munoz-Schneider:  
RN, BS, BSN, CCM

Mr. Henry Glaze:  
Transportation Coordinator

Board of Directors

Linda Glaze: Chair, Chief Operating Officer  
Rev. Scott Rogers: Vice Chair  
Michelle Harper, Treasurer and Fundraising Co-Chair  
Cynthia Yancey, MD: Fundraising Chair  
Leroy Simpson, Member  
Tracey Rice Johnson, Member

Project EMPOWER (Education Means Power)

In collaboration with community partnerships, including The Partnership for Substance Free Youth in Buncombe County.

Our programming is made possible through the support of our generous funders.



Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church of Asheville, Inc.

