

ABIPA – ASHEVILLE BUNCOMBE INSTITUTE OF PARITY ACHIEVEMENT

Miracle at 220 Continuum

By JéWana Grier-McEachin, Executive Director



This week I was thinking that this last year could literally be a Mahogany Hallmark movie.

A terrible storm brings destruction to a small town. Community members band together to feed each other and begin the work to rebuild. The new community center makes sure there is a safe place to gather, where neighbors get their essential needs—food, supplies, and warm coats to protect from the chill.

At Christmas, Santa and Mrs. Clause make a special stop in the town to make the dreams of the kids in pajamas come true. Peace is restored within the sacred walls from all of the events the people come to. From renewal retreats and huge trainings from Yale, to workshops on food preservation, diabetes classes, wedding receptions, birthday celebrations, fall festivals, health fairs, and galas, the capacity swells.

I see visions of white vans' rotating wheels, criss-crossing counties while delivering 174,727 meals. This year, ABIPA spent \$324,000 with BIPOC vendors to redistribute profits—a huge investment not to be scoffed at.



JéWana Grier-McEachin. Photo: Red Angle Photography

Flurries of meetings, emails, lists, and intentional shopping allowed us to spend \$25,000 with local farmers—those beautiful food baskets were fresh and popping!

But just like in the movies, where we can predict the beginning and see the plot, a whole lot of money needs to be raised so that the good work of serving more than 7,500 people does not stop.

How much do we need?

What can you do? \$1,000,000. I know you just said, "WHEW!"

We are cultivating a culture of health, and a space where people matter, a place to learn, and simply with dignity, gather. The amount is overwhelming until we take it bit by bit. Just like a house is built brick by brick and dollar by dollar, we can get there quick.

Whatever you can do, it really does matter. There is no donation to large and no donation to small. Send donations to ABIPA, PO Box 448, Asheville, NC 28802.

*Merry Christmas
& Blessings to All!*



Celebrating 21 Years of Being the Community Health Connection for Asheville and Beyond

Help Us Celebrate Our Birthday by Gifting ABIPA a Donation of \$21

Tax-deductible donations can be made by sending a check to ABIPA, PO Box 448, Asheville, NC 28802, or donate online at www.abipa.org. Thank you for your support!

Holiday Blues

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

Holiday Blues is a real thing!



Kelly White, MHE, MPH. Photo: Red Angle Photography

I think it is more important now than ever that we highlight the mental challenges that may come up for a lot of us this holiday season. First, it's ok that many of us have post-traumatic stress from the last year, especially if life feels like things are still not back to where they were before.

January came and went and now when it seems that the year just began, it is almost over. Around Thanksgiving and Christmas is when the holiday blues creep up on us when we least expect it.

The holiday blues can be characterized by a depression that comes on during the holiday season. Someone may experience signs of depression—they may be withdrawn from others, or not want to go about their normal daily activities.

What are some things we can do to help us get through the holiday season? Especially on those days when we may be feeling down, or when our stress

levels are through the roof.

Try managing expectations. If you are the main host and everyone tends to gather at your place, try splitting the load or delegate some of the duties you have been asked to handle. Learn to say no when you have too many irons in the fire.

Take care of your body. Get much needed rest and carve out time to exercise. Go out and get a massage, or set aside some "Me Time" where you can sit quietly and read that book you may have been meaning to get to. Remember, self-care is not selfish! We cannot take care of others if we are down.

Connect with others. Find time to connect with people who are supportive. Or, try volunteering at a local organization.

Always be sure to reach out to your healthcare provider if you have any feelings that become overwhelming. Lastly, become familiar with some of our local mental health and wellness resources.



Upcoming Events at ABIPA Life's Center

Sunday Game Day

Sunday, December 14

From 2–6 p.m. we are breaking out the cards and game boards for a relaxing day of friendly competition. Free and open to all.

Scarlott Sankofa Community Celebration

Saturday, December 20 at 7 p.m.

A night of music, reflection, and fundraising celebrating the work of ABIPA and other community partners. Free; donations accepted.

Community Christmas & Sunday Shop

Sunday, December 21

From 7–10 p.m. join us for our 2nd Annual Community Christmas Experience and a special Sunday Shop. Bring the kids in PJs! Santa & Mrs. Claus will be available for professional

portraits that you can purchase this year. Register your children for gifts by scanning the QR code.



ABIPA
A Community Christmas
At the ABIPA Life's Center
220 Continuum Drive
Fletcher, NC 28732
Join us for our 2nd Annual Community Christmas Experience & Special Evening Sunday Shop
Sunday December 21st
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm
Professional portraits with Santa will be available to purchase
Register your children for gifts here

ABIPA

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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.



ABIPA Life's Center, 220 Continuum Drive, Fletcher, NC 28732