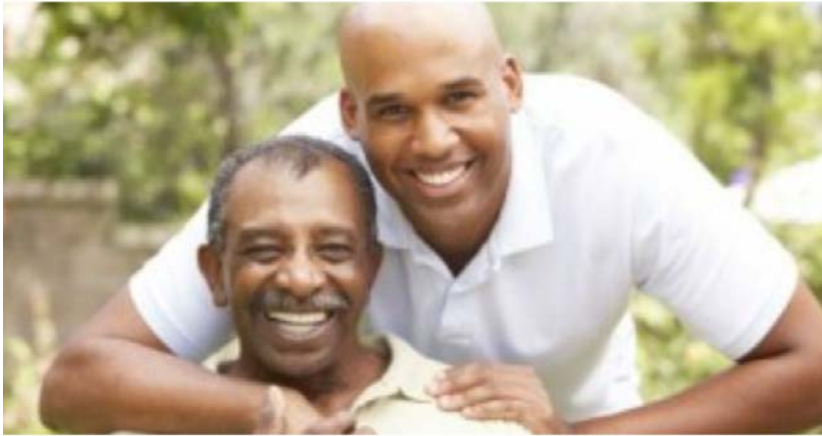


COVID-19

AKArama Foundation Hosts 'Caring for Caregivers During COVID-19'

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AKArama Foundation & Leadership Mentoring Opportunities Foundation to Host Virtual Forum on "Caring for Caregivers During COVID-19"

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*Public invited to free Zoom event for information on self-care, finances and legal matters*

Being a caregiver can be rewarding and a labor of love as providing aid to someone with compromised health is gratifying. However, it can exact a tremendous financial, physical and emotional toll. Caregivers have borne the brunt of the added stress associated with COVID-19. With social distancing, wearing masks and constant hand washing added to the demands of their responsibilities, their lives are in constant flux.

Recognizing the demands of caregiving during this pandemic, the AKArama Foundation – the charitable arm of Theta Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., – is joining forces with the Leadership Mentoring Opportunities Foundation – the charitable arm of Lambda Mu Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc, — to host the virtual forum: "Caring for Caregivers During COVID-19." The event takes place Friday, November 20 from 7PM to 8:30 PM. The entire community is welcome to attend by registering to receive a sign-in link at <http://bit.ly/AKAramaLMOCaregivers2020>.

Veletta L. Bell, AKArama Foundation President, charged the Women's Healthcare & Wellness Committee with the task of convening the Forum. The Committee is led Dr. Causandra McClain Hall, Chairman, and Tamiko Clark, Caregivers Sub-Committee Chairman. They joined and collaborated with the Leadership Mentoring Opportunities Foundation, whose president is Linda Harrell, and Chairman is Robin Garcia. The two Foundations prepared and assembled a dynamic program.

The purpose of the Forum is to offer a platform that will provide support, empowerment and self-care for caregivers. The topics to be covered and the experts sharing advice and resources on those subjects are:

- Self-care for Caregivers –Presenter – Jenil Bennett, Community Health Worker, Share Network (University of Chicago Medicine Caregiver support group).
- Stretch Your Dollar & Reclaim Your Time – Presenter – Tessa McEwen, Social Worker University of Chicago Medicine Center for Comprehensive Care and Research on Memory Disorders, Share Network (University of Chicago Medicine Caregiver support group)
- Navigating Legal DOs & DON'Ts/Lived experience – Presenter – Attorney Tanya Woods – Caregiver, Executive Director Westside Justice Center

Members of Theta Omega and Lambda Mu Omega chapters, who are caregivers, will share personal stories and offer suggestions to caregivers as a result of past experiences and lessons learned.

The dramatic realities that inspired President Bell to act on this topic come from an Alzheimer's Association study that reveals that:

- 82% percent of caregivers say their stress is higher now because of the coronavirus.
- 74% of caregivers are more concerned about their financial health and their family's finances than before the coronavirus.
- 37% said the shelter-in-place for their family was creating additional tension about keeping the loved one at home
- 24% said it was hard for them or another family member to be close to a loved one with Alzheimer's 24 hours a day. Equally significant, according to 2015 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures, is that caregiving affects Blacks more.
- African-American caregivers experience higher burdens from caregiving and spend more time caregiving on average than their white peers, with 57 percent of African-American caregivers meeting the standard of "high-burden" and averaged spending 30 hours per week caring for their loved one. That's compared to 33 percent of white caregivers, who averaged 20 hours per week,

The Forum aligns with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's national Women's Healthcare and Wellness Target, which embraces Care for the Caregivers. Friday, November 20th, is the date the Sorority has designated as AKA's National Caregivers Impact Day. In addition to the information shared, the day is set aside to celebrate caregivers.

The agencies sponsoring this Forum include the AKArara Foundation, SHARE Network, the University of Chicago Medicine, We Are Woodlawn and, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

Kimberley Egonmwan, AKArara Foundation Vice President, noted that events like the Virtual Forum support the sorority's commitment to 'serve all mankind.'

President Bell added that the value that this event represents lies at the Sorority's core. "The AKArara Foundation is committed to addressing real-life issues that the community addresses daily. This Forum captures and embodies our mission."