

NAESM National African American Leadership Conference on Health Disparities and Social Justice June 25-29, 2025



Thursday, June 26, 2025

Institutes

ROOM	TIME	PRESENTER	OVERVIEW
Seminar Room 2nd floor	9:00am – 12:00pm INSTITUTE I	Gerald Garth, MBA Diamond Xavier Paulk AMAAD Institute	“I Am My Sister’s Keeper: AMAAD Institute’s Authentic Approaches to Trans* Support” I Am My Sister’s Keeper: AMAAD Institute’s Authentic Approaches to Trans* Support” will look at AMAAD’s dedication to uplifting the transgender community through a holistic and inclusive approach. This workshop will explore AMAAD’s comprehensive programs designed to foster leadership, provide stable housing, ensure whole-person care, and promote community and faith-based wellness through the power of authentic support and the importance of creating safe spaces where transgender individuals can thrive.
Room 210 2 nd floor	9:00am – 12:00pm INSTITUTE II	Rev. Dr. Tommie Watkins, Jr., LMSW The Watkins Group, LLC	“Examining How Trauma, Religious Trauma, Stigma, and Shame Impact Spirituality, Health, and HIV Prevention” There has been no real discussion concerning Race-Based Traumatic Stress (RBTS), trauma, and its impact on HIV prevention and wellness for Black Men. Though discrimination in all its forms is indeed a historically rooted factor of both past and present life specifically in American society, race-based discrimination is spoken of, but not HIV-related stigma still fails to be adequately addressed. What, then, can be an accurate definition of racism, sexism, classism and the intersection of HIV-stigma and trauma.
Room 215 2 nd floor	9:00am – 12:00pm INSTITUTE III	Dr. R. Wayne Woodson, Ph.D. NAESM, Inc.	“Power, Purpose, Philanthropy: A Fundraising Blueprint for Black Public Health Workers” As the nonprofit sector faces increasingly complex challenges, fundraising methods must evolve to ensure sustainability and impact. This presentation will address the shifts in fundraising strategies in response to the changing funding climate across the country, particularly in light of recent federal cuts to funding for critical social services. We will explore how traditional fundraising methods, such as individual giving, corporate partnerships, and foundation support, are being reimagined to meet the needs of marginalized communities and respond to social justice movements. Participants will gain insights into the rise of digital fundraising, the importance of diversifying revenue streams, and strategies for cultivating donor relationships in an era of economic uncertainty and reduced government support.

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Room 219 2 nd floor	9:00am – 12:00pm INSTITUTE IV	Dominique Morgan The Halo Academy	“Funding the Systems, Missing the Cause: A Wake-Up Call for Donors” Many donors have unintentionally sidestepped HIV and AIDS—not because they don’t care, but because they never saw it as part of their mission. In today’s political climate—where HIV-related research, prevention, and care are being actively dismantled, this is no longer acceptable. This interactive session meets donors where they are: not yet engaged, but ready to be activated. It will connect the work they already fund (housing, education, incarceration, youth development, reproductive justice, mental health) with the lived impact of HIV in the communities they serve. Through immersive mapping, storytelling, and reflection, donors will discover that HIV is not “mission creep”—it’s a mission connector. And we won’t leave them there. Through guided reflection, donor action planning, and an organizational strategy worksheet, this session will also support attendees in navigating internal pushback and continuing their journey through the Halo Academy, powered by Dominique Morgan and NAESM.
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Workshops

ROOM	TIME	PRESENTER	OVERVIEW
Room 210 2 nd floor	3:30pm – 5:00pm Workshop I	Quami Crawford Trans Machine Production	“Getting to The ART of things” The goal is to see that ART Therapy can heal but also manifest within an individual their resilience and can help one’s self esteem emerge. Creative expression can lead to better outcomes in one’s experience with getting diagnosed and coping with the everyday experiences. Art also can allow for advocacy through different medium art forms. We aim at LHRTA art initiative to help bridge the gap in some social disparities by offering artist assistance, so the art and creative sparks are kept alive.
Room 211 2 nd floor	3:30pm – 5:00pm Workshop II	Nevaeh Anderson Reyna Patterson SisterLove, Inc.	“Project PREFERRED: How SisterLove is aiding in the fight for Transgender and Gender Diverse Equity” By focusing on collaboration, leadership development, and the removal of systemic barriers, Project: PREFERRED aims to establish a trusted provider network that champions equitable access and equal protection. Project: PREFERRED (Popular Radical Engagement Forging Effective Reproductive & Racial Equity and De-Colonization) was established in 2020 as a collaborative initiative aimed at improving reproductive and racial equity within healthcare and service delivery. Its mission is to create bridges between CIS-led and Trans-led organizations, centering the needs of Black Cisgender, Transgender, and Gender Diverse Individuals.
Room 215 2 nd floor	3:30pm – 5:00pm Workshop III	Mallery Jenna Robinson Transgender Excellence Academy	“Transgender Empathy Training” Transgender empathy training focuses on fostering understanding, respect, and inclusion for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. It’s designed to educate participants on gender identity, the challenges faced by the transgender community, and how to create supportive environments.

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Room 214 2 nd floor	3:30pm – 5:00pm Workshop IV	Antwone Williams-Rowans NAESM, Inc.	“Empowering Faith Leaders to Combat HIV Stigma and Support Prevention Efforts” The mission of this initiative is to provide effective training for African American faith leaders to increase cultural competency, reduce HIV stigma, and empower congregations to support HIV prevention efforts among at-risk populations.
Room 212 2 nd floor	3:30pm – 5:00pm Workshop V	Gillette Harris Us Helping Us People into Living	“Strutting for Our Healing: The Transformative Power of Ballroom for Black Queer Folx” Black Queer folx face unique challenges in a world that often denies their authentic expression, making self-confidence and strength essential elements of healing and resilience. Ballroom culture emerges as a revolutionary space that disrupts rigid societal norms, offering both community and connection. In these safe spaces, participants can embrace their true selves, finding wholeness through artistic expression and movement. Join international Ballroom Legend Icon Gillette Oricci for an interactive workshop exploring how music, movement, and self-expression serve as tools of empowerment. Participants will learn the fundamentals of European Ballroom Runway, FACE, VOGUE, and Realness categories while discovering how to incorporate these elements into their personal healing and liberation journeys. Through hands-on instruction and demonstration, attendees will unlock their inner essence and experience the transformative power of ballroom culture.
Room 217 2 nd floor	3:30pm – 5:00pm Workshop VI	Laura Bogart RAND/Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science Damone R. Thomas Healing with Hope Corporation Cheryl L. Bedford Women of Color Unite Dr. Kathy Goggin San Deigo State University Ian Klinger APLA Health	“Training Videos for Rise, and Evidence-Based Adherence Intervention for Black Clients” This workshop will introduce an implementation toolkit for Rise, and evidence-based culturally congruent peer counseling program shown to improve adherence for Black clients, including Black sexual minority men. Rise is included in the CDC’s Compendium of Evidence-Based interventions and Best Practices for HIV Prevention. A community-academic team from California and Alabama collaborated to create an implementation toolkit for a status-neutral Rise, including training videos, which will be debuted at NAESM and made publicly available.

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Room 219 2 nd floor	3:30pm – 5:00pm Workshop VII	Antonio Newman Jr., MBA Alphonso Mills This is Your Moment Network	“We’re Going Viral: Launching This is Your Moment (TiYM) Network Multimedia for Health, Culture, & Change” Marginalized communities, particularly Black queer individuals, often face barriers to accessing quality healthcare due to social determinants that influence education, access, and health outcomes. Media, especially social and digital media—offers a powerful tool to dismantle stigma and misinformation. This is Your Moment (TiYM) Network was created to elevate real stories, normalize sexual health conversations through facts and positivity, and serve as a platform for Black & Brown creatives to inform and empower their communities.
Seminar Room 2 nd floor	5:00pm – 6:30pm Workshop VIII	Hakim Asadi, LMSW James Williams-Woods, III, MSW NAESM, Inc.	“Self-Efficacy and Resilience in Advocacy” Advocacy and community mobilization play a pivotal role in fostering equity and social transformation for marginalized groups, particularly Black and LGBTQ+ communities. This presentation delves into the transformative power of self-efficacy and self-empowerment through the lens of emotional intelligence. By cultivating deeper relationships with their emotions, individuals can dismantle internalized limitations imposed by societal labels tied to health, socioeconomic status, and identity. This workshop introduces a holistic advocacy framework that centers emotional resilience, self-awareness, and collective strength. Participants will explore how embracing a multidimensional sense of identity can shift personal narratives and empower communities to confront systemic barriers. By celebrating the intersectionality of talents, identities, and experiences, this framework promotes healing and self-determination. Through storytelling, collaborative exercises, and reflection, attendees will develop strategies to harness their emotional capacity for self-advocacy while fostering inclusive, supportive environments. The goal is to inspire a culture of empowerment, where emotional intelligence serves as a foundation for personal growth and community solidarity. This session highlights how Black and LGBTQ+ individuals, often at the crossroads of systemic inequities, can lead transformative change by nurturing their inner strengths and mobilizing their unique voices within the broader tapestry of social justice.

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Room 210 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop IX	Gerald Garth, MBA Chanel Lumiere AMAAD Institute	“AMAAD Institute: Navigating Housing for Black LGBTQ+ Angelenos” The AMAAD Institute is committed to addressing homelessness and housing instability among marginalized communities, particularly LGBTQ+ individuals and people of color. In the workshop, AMAAD Institute: Navigating Housing for Black LGBTQ+ Angelenos, Gerald Garth and Chanel Lumiere will discuss the institute's comprehensive housing programs, which include emergency placement, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. These programs are bolstered by collaborations with local organizations, government agencies, and community stakeholders, ensuring a holistic support system. Gerald and Chanel will highlight the institute's best practices, challenges, and explore potential next steps for organization's aiming to provide inclusive and supportive housing solutions for marginalized communities.
Room 211 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop X	Christian D. Green, M.A. Sanctuary of Hope Dr. Donta Morrison, Ph.D. Red Rainbow	“Your Trophy is Not Your Pillow” This workshop will focus on how ballroom culture kids, particularly those experiencing homelessness, can become powerful advocates for themselves and their communities. Ballroom culture has long been a lifeline for LGBTQ+ youth, offering a space of acceptance, empowerment, and survival. For many ballroom culture kids, homelessness is a harsh reality they face due to family rejection, discrimination, and societal neglect. This session will explore how ballroom culture can serve as a platform not only for personal expression and resilience but also as a means for advocacy and change. The workshop will delve into the specific challenges faced by ballroom kids, ages 16-26, who are experiencing homelessness, and how advocacy within their community can be a solution to these challenges.
Room 212 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm	Justin Smith, MS, MPH Positive Impact Health Centers	“A Portal To Connection and Community: The Development of NPOWER365 – An App to Promote Flourishing among Black Same Gender Loving Men”

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	Workshop XI	Devin English, Ph.D. Emmanuel Chavez Rutgers School of Public Health	Black same gender loving men (BSGLM) continue to experience significant barriers to achieving optimal health outcomes across the HIV care continuum. Novel HIV interventions that are accessible to, developed by, and are rooted in the strengths and assets of BSGLM are needed to address these barriers. In this Workshop, we will present on the formation and implementation of an app-based mobile health (mHealth) intervention called NPOWER365 , developed through a community-based participatory research partnership between NAESM, Positive Impact Health Centers, and Rutgers University that builds upon community priorities and strengths, confronts the impact of multilevel oppression, and promotes psychological and HIV-related health among BSGLM. Cross-agency partnerships are important for the development of sustainable, innovative HIV programs.
Room 215 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XII	Timothy D. Jefferson, HS-BCP JASMYN	“Navigating Homelessness in the Black LGBTQ+ Experience” Homelessness is a pervasive issue that disproportionately impacts marginalized communities, with Black LGBTQ+ individuals facing a unique set of challenges. Black LGBTQ+ individuals often encounter a confluence of racial, sexual, and gender-based discrimination, which exacerbates their vulnerability to housing instability. The intersectionality of these identities leads to distinct barriers in accessing support services, including systemic racism within shelter systems, a lack of LGBTQ+-inclusive housing, economic inequities and the mental and emotional impact of homelessness in addition to physical health. This workshop will explore the intersection of homelessness and Black LGBTQ+ individuals, examining the structural and social factors contributing to their disproportionate risk. It will also highlight the critical need for targeted interventions, such as culturally competent and LGBTQ+-affirming services, that recognize the intersectionality of race and sexual/gender identity. By addressing these unique challenges, society can better support Black LGBTQ+ individuals experiencing homelessness, promoting policies that foster inclusion, safety, and long-term stability.
Room 217 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XIII	Francisco Caro Equitas Health	“Make Space & Take Space: Creating/Mobilizing Affinity Spaces to Address Health disparities amongst marginalized groups” Health disparities don’t exist in a vacuum—they’re shaped by systemic barriers, lack of culturally responsive care, and the ongoing effects of discrimination. Make Space & Take Space is all about how affinity spaces—intentional communities built around shared experiences and identities—help bridge these gaps. These spaces

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			aren't just support groups; there are places of empowerment, connection, and advocacy that allow marginalized individuals to take control of their health and well-being. In this session, we'll break down how affinity spaces function in public health, especially in areas like HIV prevention, harm reduction, and sexual health. We'll talk about how making space for marginalized voices—and ensuring people feel empowered to take space—can lead to better health outcomes and stronger communities. Through real-world examples, interactive discussions, and skill-building exercises, participants will leave with a deeper understanding of how to create, sustain, and integrate affinity spaces in their own work. Whether you're a healthcare provider, community advocate, or just someone passionate about health equity, this session will give you practical tools to help foster inclusive, affirming spaces that make a real impact.
Room 214 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XIV	J. Christopher Johnson, BA Mobilizing Millennials Organization	“Mobilizing Action: Strategies for Building Effective Advocacy Movements” Advocacy and community mobilization are vital tools for driving social change, particularly in marginalized and underserved communities. This presentation explores strategies, challenges, and best practices in organizing grassroots movements, influencing policy, and fostering sustainable community engagement. By leveraging collective power, we can address disparities, amplify voices, and create long-term impact.
Room 219 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XV	Robert L. Miller Jr., PhD., M.Phil., LMSW University of Albany	“HIV + BGM Discernment on long term treatment options” Viable HIV medication regimen support HIV + Black gay men's durable viral suppression. Treatment options have evolved. The FDA approved long-acting HIV therapies. The monthly or bi-monthly injection potentially replaces daily HIV pill consumption. But treatment uptake among HIV Black gay men lag compared to other sub population. The workshop emanates from a recently conducted study with the following aims: (1) Illuminating thoughts on cues to action considering their experience of HIV symptomology and testing history, (2) revealing experiences with barriers and supports in achieving HIV viral suppression and the meaning they attribute to their viral suppression; and (3) highlighting

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			decision-making process of the acceptability and utilization of long acting injectables in sustaining their viral suppression. The workshop will use the presented study data to encourage reflection, generate and solicit bio-psycho-social-spiritual reactions influencing thoughts and discernment pertaining to treatment uptake.
Room 210 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XVI	William Wheaton, BS Nakysha Hoskins Positive Impact Health Centers	“Crossing The Burning Sands of Innovation by Reimaging Outreach” Nontraditional, innovative outreach is crucial to ending the HIV epidemic. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are using Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) strategies to engage populations not typically involved in HIV prevention.
Room 211 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XVII	Sara Habibipour Erica Robinson Health Matters Clinic	“Understanding Healthcare Access and Experiences in Skid Row, Los Angeles” Skid Row, a predominately Black male population, exemplifies health inequity, with an average life expectancy of 47 years, far below the countywide 82. Despite expanded street medicine/mobile health services, major healthcare barriers persist.
Room 212 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XVIII	Dr. Nathaniel Currie, DSW, MSW, LCSW NAESM, Inc. Robert Suttle Robert Suttle Consulting	“How HIV Criminalization Creates, Triggers, and Perpetuates Black Male Trauma” Rarely discussed within agency, practice, policy, and community environments are the direct connections between disease criminalization and adverse mental health conditions. This presentation explores the direct connection between trauma experience/exposure or re-experience/re-exposure and oppressive HIV criminalization, linking the two through clinical symptomology, behavior, and public health deficits. Recognizing that 62% of Black people have personally experienced a traumatic event in their lifetime and 72% have witnessed a traumatic event happen to a close friend or family member², research has shown that trauma exposure and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have a direct effect on a person’s cognition, decision making, mind-body connection¹, sensory sensitivity³ and social-relational ability (e.g. listening actively, communicating effectively, and self-advocating), and that oppressive systemic, political, and policing policies, such as HIV criminalization, have the propensity to exacerbate diagnostic sequelae. These concepts are further explained by the historical ties to social, political, and clinical

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			harm experienced by Black men/Black male bodies. From the legacy of medical experimentation and unethical public health surveillance to the systemic policing and criminalization of Black masculinity, the legal targeting of people living with HIV reflects broader structures of racialized control⁴. HIV criminalization laws disproportionately punish Black men⁵⁻⁷, reinforcing narratives of dangerousness and unworthiness while exacerbating barriers to care, employment, and community belonging. The intersection of racialized criminalization and the trauma of state violence compounds existing disparities in health and justice, further alienating Black men from necessary support systems. This presentation will offer a fully realized practice concept, practice rationale, and will end with a call to action, urging practitioners, policymakers, and advocates to address the mental health consequences of HIV criminalization and work toward systemic reform.
Room 217 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XIX	Christine Easley, MSW, LSW Michael Martin Drain, MS, BA Step Up, Inc.	“Bridging the Gap: The Role of Black Female Clinicians in Addressing Mental Health, HIV, and Reentry Disparities in Indiana” This abstract will focus on my distinctive discernment as a black female clinician, examining the challenges pertaining to mental health, HIV and reentry challenges within the black community. Disparities including, suicidal rates, mental health services, accessibility, overdose death as well as financial barriers to proper care. I plan to emphasize the importance of understanding cultural competence, identifying the specific needs in the black communities, and providing insight and strategies to improve culturally sensitive care for people living with HIV, those struggling with mental health and those reforming into society post incarceration.
Room 214 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XX	Dr. R. Wayne Woodson, Ph.D. NAESM, Inc.	“Influencers for Health: Engaging Content Creators, Sex Workers, and Social Media Advocates to Normalize PrEP and HIV Care” The increasing prevalence of content creators, sex workers, and social media influencers in shaping public opinion presents a unique opportunity to normalize the promotion of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and HIV care. This presentation will explore strategies for connecting with these influential groups to raise awareness, focusing on reaching diverse and often marginalized populations. By leveraging their broad reach and trusted voices, organizations can combat stigma and create safe spaces for open conversations about sexual health.

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			We will examine how content creators and influencers, particularly those who identify within LGBTQ+ and sex worker communities, are already serving as powerful advocates for health issues. These groups often have unparalleled access to audiences, including young people, people of color, and those at higher risk for HIV. In particular, sex workers and influencers can provide key insights into the barriers their communities face in accessing care and how digital platforms can be used to bridge gaps in education and service delivery. Participants will leave with actionable strategies for collaborating with influencers to create authentic campaigns, develop messaging that resonates with these communities, and dismantle the barriers to care that exist due to stigma and misinformation.
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Friday, June 27, 2025

Posters

Grand Ballroom A & F lobby level	4:00pm – 6:00pm Poster I	Phillip Rideoutt Isabel Lechuga NASTAD	“Using Lived Experience to Mobilize Viral Hepatitis and Harm Reduction Community Advocacy”
Grand Ballroom A & F lobby level	4:00pm – 6:00pm Poster II	Keyanna Taylor, MPH, MS Lauren Simao, MS Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Division of HIV and STD Programs	“Feel well, Live well, Expand Options (FLEX) Card Program: Health impacts of a modified guaranteed income program for people with HIV (PWH)”
Grand Ballroom A & F Lobby level	4:00pm – 6:00pm Poster III	Eden Moore UCLA Fielding School of Public Health	“Recent incarceration and HIV viral load and care engagement in a national virtual cohort”

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Saturday, June 28, 2025

Workshops

Room 210 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XXI	Garrett Mason Legend Elite	“Art as Therapy: How Movement Heals and Can Be Used to Advocate” Dance has long been a powerful tool for expression, storytelling, and healing, particularly within Black culture, where movement serves as both a historical record and a form of resistance. Rooted in African traditions and evolving through hip-hop, jazz, and ballroom culture, dance continues to be a means of self-liberation and collective empowerment.
Room 211 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XXII	Brian Ragas San Francisco AIDS Foundation	“Syndemic Approaches to HIV Prevention & Care: Integrating Psychosocial Support, Substance Use, and Mental Health for Black MSM in San Francisco” Black men who have sex with men (MSM) living with HIV in San Francisco experience multiple, overlapping health challenges, including substance use and mental health disorders. The syndemic effect of these issues—exacerbated by stigma, systemic barriers, and historical trauma—contributes to poor health outcomes, including reduced engagement in care and treatment adherence. Addressing this requires integrated, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed approaches.
Room 212 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XXIII	Dr. Donta Morrison, Ph.D. Donta Morrison, LLC Martinez Sellers, MFT Marsell Wellness Center	“The Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on HIV Care Access” People living with HIV (PLWH) who experience intimate partner violence (IPV) often encounter significant barriers to accessing and maintaining HIV care. The trauma associated with toxic relationships can undermine their willingness to seek specialized medical services, increasing the risk of poor health outcomes. To address this issue, it is essential to provide PLWH experiencing IPV with comprehensive mental health support led by certified IPV counselors who are also well-versed in HIV care, retention strategies, and the unique needs of those most at-risk.
Room 215 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XXIV	Kytara Epps Center for HIV Law and Policy Chauncey McGlathery, J.D. American Academy of HIV Medicine	“Pushing Health Departments to Address the Public Health Threat of HIV Criminalization” Although cooperation with law enforcement by health departments has broadened HIV criminalization's reach in some settings, health departments have also reduced the harms of HIV criminalization by educating policymakers and providers, directly supporting PLWH impacted by criminalization, and reforming institutional policies in other settings. This workshop will explore the role of state and local health departments in ending HIV

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		Andre C. Wade, MPA Silver State Equality Institute Ronnie L. Taylor FreeState Justice	criminalization. An introductory presentation will explain HIV criminalization, including its origins, scope, and disproportionate public health and other harms on Black, brown, and LGBTQ+ folks. A public health professional will briefly share their work to train and support health departments and medical providers in addressing HIV criminalization. Two grassroots coalition members will then describe their coalition's work to secure the support of health departments for legislation reforming and repealing their criminalization laws. Through targeted discussion questions, the presenters will encourage attendees to contemplate strategies for reducing the harms of HIV criminalization by working with their state and local health departments. The bulk of the session will include a moderated discussion to assist with strategy development. The conversation will convey useful resources and networks to assist attendees in implementing these strategies within their communities.
Room 217 2 nd floor	10:45am – 12:15pm Workshop XXV	C. Jerome Woods Black LGBT Project	"My Life, My Story: The Truth and Transparency of Who I Am" A participatory, interactive, and engaging workshop that allows attendees to better understand who they are, whom they may serve, be hired by, and be better advocates for themselves and others while listening, writing, expressing, and query.
Room 214 2 nd floor	10:45am - 12:15pm Workshop XXVI	Travii Walker NAESM, Inc.	"The Legendary Haus of Chosen Family" The workshop will cover chosen families occupying the ballroom space and transform ballroom events into more than just competitions. They become celebrations of identity, solidarity, and survival. Ballroom thrives on this foundation, where chosen families empower individuals to express themselves freely through performance, fashion, and dance. This unique dynamic underscore the importance of chose families in providing support, emotional shelter and fostering community in the face of social exclusion.

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2 nd floor	Workshop XXVII	Global P3, LLC	This presentation, titled "The Role of Spirituality in Healing," explores the transformative power of spirituality as a vital component in addressing health disparities among marginalized communities, specifically African Americans and LGBTQIA+ individuals. By examining the intersection of spiritual practices, community support, and psychological well-being, this session aims to highlight how these elements foster resilience and empowerment in the face of systemic challenges.
Room 211 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XXVIII	Gerald Garth, MBA Vision Church of Los Angeles	“Vision Church Los Angeles: At the Intersections of Care” Vision Church Los Angeles (VLA), under the leadership of Bishop Sammie Haynes, sets to be a place for all people. VLA is committed to promoting wellness, community, and mental health through a faith-based approach and integrates spiritual care with practical support, addressing the holistic needs of its congregation and the broader community. Under the direction of Gerald Garth, Interim Associate Pastor, Vision Los Angeles offers a variety of programs, including mental health workshops, wellness seminars, and community outreach initiatives, in collaboration with healthcare professionals and local organizations. These efforts have led to significant improvements in the mental health and overall well-being of participants, fostering a stronger sense of community and support among congregants, and linkage to care. Led by Gerald Garth, this workshop will highlight the power of combining faith with holistic wellness strategies, best practices, and provide insights to help other faith-based organizations, parishioners, and supporters in addressing the holistic needs of their communities, demonstrating the importance of integrating spiritual and practical support for overall health and wellness.
Room 212 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XXIX	John Anthony Fuller, BS Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, Emory University	“Centering the Margins: Advancing Cancer Screening and Prevention for Black Same Gender Loving People Living with HIV” Cancer-related health inequities among people living with HIV persist—especially among Black same-gender-loving (SGL) individuals, a culturally affirming term used to describe Black people with a same-sex sexual orientation. Black SGL people experience heightened anal cancer risk due to intersecting factors such as

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			HIV and HPV coinfection, condomless anal sex, multiple sexual partners, and substance use. Despite these risks, limited data collection on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) hinders accurate representation in research and public health surveillance. This 90-minute workshop will highlight preliminary findings from a cross-sectional analysis (n = 150) exploring the relationship between HIV-related stigma and anal cancer screening among Black SGL people in Georgia. The session will use frameworks including intersectionality theory, structural stigma, and cancer health equity models to contextualize the psychosocial and structural barriers influencing screening behaviors. Findings underscore the need to center Black SGL voices in cancer prevention efforts. Quantitative results link stigma to lower screening uptake, reinforcing the importance of culturally responsive care and peer-led outreach. Through dialogue and interactive activities, attendees will explore how structural inequities shape health behaviors and consider strategies to promote inclusive, equity-driven interventions, community mobilization, and research accountability.
Room 215 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XXX	Stewart Marshall Gulley Helping in Your Own Back Yard	“Stay In Your Own Lane: Unlocking Purpose, Power, and Prosperity Through Focus” The Wake-Up Call I’ve lived many lives — author, business owner, coach — but before any of that, I was a young man full of big dreams... and even bigger distractions. I remember chasing every opportunity that looked shiny — every lane that seemed faster than mine. But every detour came with a price: lost time, mental stress, and financial strain that didn’t just affect me... it affected my family. It took hitting a wall — mentally, emotionally, and spiritually — to realize I was designed for a specific lane. My lane. The one God handcrafted for me. And when I finally embraced it, everything changed. I wrote "Stay In Your Own Lane for the Entrepreneur" because too many young men are gifted... but drifting. Called... but confused. In this session, I’m not here to entertain you. I’m here to help you unlock your calling, avoid costly delays, and start driving in the only lane designed to carry your destiny.

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Room 214 2 nd floor	2:15pm – 3:45pm Workshop XXXI	Ryan Dunston APLA Health	“Black Queer Talk (BQT): Building Safe, Empowering, and Sex-Positive Spaces for Black Queer Men” This interactive workshop immerses participants in Black Queer Talks (BQT), a community-driven, sex-positive space for Black queer men (18-39). Through discussions, hands-on demonstrations, and real-world applications, attendees will explore strategies for cultivating safe, affirming spaces beyond nightlife. Guided conversations will address building Black queer community, reclaiming "queer," and fostering deeper connections. An interactive sexual health segment will cover condom and lube selection, HIV/STI prevention, and sex-positive kink exploration. A Black queer therapist will lead a discussion on trauma, emotional wellness, and mental health resources. The session will conclude with a Guided Connection Exercise: Embracing Platonic Intimacy in Black Queer Spaces, where attendees share a sustained embrace to reinforce touch, trust, and solidarity. Normalizing non-sexual physical connection fosters safer, more supportive Black queer spaces beyond the workshop.
Room 219 2 nd floor	Workshop XXXII	Kyle Gordon, MHA Dr. Daniel Driffin, DrPH, MPH Louis Shackelford, MPH HIV Vaccines Trials Network	Reducing HIV through Community Engagement and Broadly Neutralizing Antibodies (bnAbs) Learning Objectives: 1. Participants will learn essential information about The HIV Vaccine Trials Network. 2. Participants will discuss the historical and contemporary uses of vaccines to prevent illnesses. 3. Participants will learn about community focused engagement strategies HVTN uses to increase engagement strategies
Room 214 2 nd floor	6:00pm – 7:30pm Workshop XXXIII	CRIBB PROJECT PRESENTATIONS	

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Friday, June 27, 2025

Plenary I

Grand Ballroom B, C, D, E lobby level	Breakfast Plenary 9:00am – 10:30am	<i>Moderator:</i> Dr. R. Wayne Woodson, Ph.D. Acting Executive Director & CEO NAESM, Inc. <i>Panelists:</i> Alphonso Mills, Executive Director TiYM Network K. Keith Editor in Chief & CEO Gaye Magazine David Brandyn Program Coordinator Los Angeles LGBT Center South	“Mobilizing a Media Militia” In an age where media shapes our narratives and drives public discourse, our work cannot thrive without strategic partnerships with media outlets and platforms. This dynamic session, "Mobilizing a Media Militia," explores the critical role of media in advancing social justice and equity, particularly in the fight against HIV and in championing the rights of LGBTQ+ communities. Panelists will share how media can be leveraged to challenge stigma, combat misinformation, and promote inclusive narratives that uplift marginalized voices. The discussion will highlight strategies for building alliances with traditional outlets, digital platforms, podcasts, and grassroots community media, offering insights on crafting compelling stories that resonate and drive change. Participants will gain practical tips on identifying media allies, creating impactful campaigns, and using media as a powerful tool to enhance advocacy, mobilize communities, and advance the cause of health equity and social justice.
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NAESM National African American Leadership Conference on Health Disparities and Social Justice June 25-29, 2025



Plenary II

Grand Ballroom B, C, D, E lobby level	Lunch Plenary 12:30pm – 2:00pm. Powered by: Gilead Sciences, Inc	<i>Moderator:</i> Gerald Garth, MBA Executive Director AMAAD Institute <i>Panelists:</i> Gabriel Maldonado, MBA Founder and CEO TruEvolution Derrick Butler, MD, MPH Chief Medical Officer To Help Everyone (T.H.E.) Health and Wellness Centers Leon Maultsby, DBH Faculty Instructor and Associate Director Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science	“Rising to the Challenge: Black Leadership and Advocacy in Shaping Equitable Systems for HIV Treatment and Prevention” As HIV prevention and care face mounting political and funding challenges, the leadership of Black gay, bisexual, and trans-serving organizations is more critical than ever. In this timely conversation, leaders from across HIV advocacy and healthcare will explore how we meet this moment—not just to protect past progress, but to accelerate what’s possible. Panelists will share culturally relevant strategies to expand prevention, strengthen treatment, enhance engagement and reimagine systems. In today’s landscape, moving this work forward will take more than resilience—it demands data-driven insights, community-rooted power, and sustained, collective action.
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NAESM National African American Leadership Conference on Health Disparities and Social Justice June 25-29, 2025



Saturday, June 28, 2025

Plenary III

Grand Ballroom B, C, D, E lobby level	Breakfast Plenary 9:00am – 10:30am	<i>Moderators:</i> Dr. R. Wayne Woodson, Ph.D. Acting Executive Director & CEO NAESM, Inc. Monroe Alise Engagement Manager NAESM, Inc. <i>Panelists:</i> Amari McGee Founder To Better Understand, Inc. 2AM Ricky Recording Artist, Songwriter, Activist	“Rewriting Masculinity: Trans Men, Safety, and the Power of Showing Up” Too often left out of LGBTQ+ advocacy and gender-based violence conversations, transgender men face unique and complex challenges around safety, identity, and visibility. This panel brings together trans men, advocates, and allies to explore how communities can show up for transmasculine individuals with intention, protection, and pride. Panelists will delve into how evolving ideas of masculinity impact trans men’s experiences—shaping their access to safety, affirmation, and community support. Through discussions of physical, emotional, and psychological safety, the session will examine how race, class, and systemic inequality influence vulnerability and resilience. Together, we’ll confront how masculinity, within and outside of LGBTQ+ spaces, can be shifted to create more inclusive and affirming environments. The panel will provide a deeper understanding of how to honor and elevate the leadership, humanity, and visibility of trans men.
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NAESM National African American Leadership Conference on Health Disparities and Social Justice June 25-29, 2025



Plenary IV

Grand Ballroom B, C, D, E	Lunch Plenary 12:30pm – 2:00pm	<i>Moderator:</i> Dr. R. Wayne Woodson, Ph.D. NAESM, Inc. <i>Panelists:</i> Dr. Marlon M. Bailey, Ph.D., MFA NAESM, Inc. Diamond Xavier Paulk The AMAAD Institute Travii Walker NAESM, Inc. Antwone Williams-Rowans NAESM, Inc.	“Healing the House: Ending the Silos that Divide and Harm Us” This compelling panel conversation will explore the transformative power of unity within the LGBTQ+ community. Drawing on lived experience, grassroots activism, and frontline public health strategies, panelists will share how vibrant and diverse cultural networks can be intentionally mobilized to link community members to life-affirming care, resources, and support. The discussion will highlight innovative models for outreach and engagement that recognize the unique needs and strengths of the ballroom community, queer and trans people of color, and other marginalized LGBTQ+ subgroups. Emphasis will be placed on peer-led approaches, culturally grounded interventions, and collaborative methods that uplift leadership from within the community. Attendees will gain practical insights into how cross-sector partnerships between health systems, higher education institutions, service organizations, and community leaders can drive measurable improvements in outcomes related to HIV prevention and care, housing access, mental health, and social connection. The session will challenge divisions and underscore the power of collective action in shaping a future where no one is left behind.
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Sunday, June 29, 2025

Plenary V

The Brasserie lobby level	Closing Plenary 10:00am – 12:00pm	Dempris Gasque NAESM, Inc.	“The Way Forward – Welcoming and Honoring a New Generation of Leaders”
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