

The COSHAR Foundation Partners to Deliver Innovative Health Outreach which targets African American Families at the 99th Annual Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Tournament in Charlotte, North Carolina (March 3rd -5th, 2011)

“Protecting, Preserving and Reforming Your Personal and Family’s Health” The CIAA Health Pavilion will reach thousands of African Americans with health information, screenings and a call to personal action.

*“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane”
Dr. Martin Luther King*

Bowie, Maryland—The COSHAR Foundation has an extensive history of developing and implementing innovative health outreach with impact on different scales and platforms including the largest gatherings of African Americans in the country. The foundation once again has been tapped to partner in a major health education and screening event for 2011 and is aggressively planning the final stages of this initiative in Charlotte, North Carolina at the Annual Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) tournament. The 99th Annual CIAA tournament is one of the largest gatherings of African Americans in the United States. In 2010, over 186,000 persons attended the tournament. Its rich historical significance is unsurpassed and is an excellent opportunity for collaborations. The CIAA features themed pavilions that showcase African American businesses and organizations. Pavilion themes include health, education, economic empowerment, teen issues, and family values.

“It is imperative that we address health and empower persons with education, outreach and motivation to adopt healthy lifestyles by “meeting them where they are,” said Sharon Allison-Ottey MD, Executive Director & Director of Community Outreach for The COSHAR Foundation, a co-host of this event. “ African Americans will attend the CIAA from all over the country. We will provide them with the necessary information, screenings and tools necessary to become more engaged and empowered in their health.”

The CIAA event has traditionally hosted a health pavilion that is one of the most popular aspects of the tournament. In 2010 The Fykes Foundation and partners provided education and health screenings for approximately 2000 people at the CIAA tournament. Gordon Fykes, the founder of The Fykes Foundation, acknowledges the tremendous impact that has been made during this event, “The Fykes Foundation is proud to have been selected as the coordinating organization for the CIAA/Food Lion Health & Wellness Pavilion for a second consecutive year. We learned valuable lessons in 2010 which we are integrating into our 2011 model, one of the lessons was that African and Latino Americans are eager for more information, direct outreach and will provide free testing in this setting. This year we are expanding and increasing our reach to meet the greater need.”

The theme for 2011 is “Protecting, Preserving and Reforming Your Personal and Family’s Health” and with the “buzz” of healthcare reform, the conveners will focus participants to personally reform their own health. The purpose is to increase health awareness, empowerment and action in the African American family with particular emphasis on disease prevention, detection and education focused on illnesses/processes that predominate in this population. The objectives are achieved through interactive discussions and workshops with physicians, nurses, pharmacists, fitness experts, health advocates, dentists, health professionals and other experts. Further, we will house displays and informational booths on a variety of topics hypertension, diabetes, depression, HIV / AIDS, heart disease, cancer (prostate, colon, lung, etc.),

smoking cessation, obesity, erectile dysfunction/ sexual health, and other conditions. Additionally there are emphasis on preventative health, nutrition, exercise, stress management and other health related issues.

“There are numerous opportunities for partnership with other organizations, companies, associations who want to reach our target population. “ Dr. Allison-Ottoy states, “Health information is not one size fits all and must be delivered in culturally relative and diverse manner, especially when you are addressing minority populations who suffer an unfair burden due to health disparities. Just as the basketball players will be aggressively shooting hoops at the CIAA, we will be aggressively shooting at moving the mark on health disparities. ”

The foundations have engaged several leading experts, organizations and other concerned partners in this endeavor. These organizations have stepped up to the challenge to provide a venue for health education, screening and outreach as well as a direct loop back to the healthcare providers. The 2011 health pavilion will include interactive workshops, information booths and venues for direct contact with healthcare professionals and health organizations. Further, the hosts will continue to integrate health/wellness into activities that will serve to drive participants to the health pavilion’s activities including proposed events “Laugh4Life Comedy & Gospel Concert” featuring national recording artists with focus on health/wellness messaging. There are opportunities for additional partners and organizations committed to health and wellness. If you would like to participate in this event or obtain more information contact 301 773 4811 or email: ciaa@fykesfoundation.com or sottoy@cosharfoundation.org

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About The COSHAR Foundation

The COSHAR Foundation Inc. is a 501 c 3 organization that is committed to “impacting the health of the world, one community at a time” through innovative programs that focus on intervention and measurable outcomes. The COSHAR Foundation headquarters is located in Bowie, Maryland (adjacent to Washington, DC) and has offices in Los Angeles, New York and in North Carolina. The COSHAR Foundation has a well established history of successful initiatives which utilize culturally sensitive vehicles that met the needs of a diverse audience.

One of the major and extensive arms of The COSHAR Foundation is our National Health Ministry Network (NHMN) which consists of more than 24,550 churches/synagogues/mosques and other religious entities and over 310 community organizations in the United States. The NHMN is not a religious entity but rather a resource for the faith and community organizations. It is important to note that the NHMN has representatives in every state and US territory across the spectrum of faiths/religions and The NHMN members allow the foundation to reach well over 29 million lives in an impactful way in their community. The foundation is able to introduce and promote national, regional and local initiatives, health events and advocacy issues through its dynamic network. Further, the foundation has an extensive network of trained volunteers, both health professionals and non health professionals, whom are readily available, committed and trained to interact with member of the faith community. Visit the foundation at, www.cosharfoundation.org or contact us via phone at 301 773 4811.



About Sharon Allison-Ottoy, MD (aka Dr. Sharon)

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Sharon Denise Allison-Ottoy, MD is an energetic and engaging speaker, author, health educator/physician and health strategist/consultant. Dr. Allison-Ottoy serves as Executive Director and Director of Health and Community Initiatives of The COSHAR Foundation. Dr. Allison-Ottoy completed a three year residency program in Internal Medicine (Adult Medicine) and two year fellowship in Geriatric Medicine at Union Memorial Hospital. She received her medical degree from East Carolina University School of Medicine. Dr. Allison-Ottoy is a proud alumna of North Carolina Central University where she earned dual degrees in Biology and Chemistry with minors in Physics, African American History and English with honors.

She has served as health strategist/director for several large scale health initiatives targeting minority communities. A frequent media personality, Dr. Allison-Ottoy has appeared on numerous local and national television programs. She hosted a popular radio program for several years and is a frequent guest on nationally syndicated as well as regional/local radio programs across the country. Dr. Allison-Ottoy is the monthly writer of Gospel Today magazine’s, *Health in Action* column. She’s been quoted and interviewed by several print publications including Redbook, Essence, Heart and Soul, Jet, Ebony, USA Today, Black Enterprise, The Wall Street Journal and numerous other media outlets. Because of the colorful and “down to earth” manner in which she addresses health, relationships and offers motivation; Dr. Allison-Ottoy is a well-recognized and requested speaker for conferences, universities/schools, churches, corporations, community groups and a host of other outlets. Dr. Allison-Ottoy is a bestselling author with the novel, “All I Ever Did Was Love a Man” and the self help book, “Is That Fried Chicken Wing Worth It? Not a Diet a Mindset.” Further, she has created the nationally distributed greeting card and novelty line “Cards by Dr. Sharon”. Visit Dr. Sharon at www.drsharononline.com or www.cardsbydrsharon.com.