

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

- President Barack Obama



You can make a difference! Join us!

AACI Monthly Meetings:
Meetings are held on the 2nd
Tuesday of every month from
10:30 am - 12:00 pm

Stipends are available for
community members and
clients, who attend our
meetings.

For more info email
AACI.Initiative@Gmail.com

Visit SMCHealth.org/AACI to learn more

The African American Community Initiative is supported by San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, Office of Diversity and Equity. It is one of the nine Health Equity Initiatives funded by the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63). For more info and our meeting schedule, visit www.smchealth.org/AACI



SAN MATEO COUNTY
AFRICAN
AMERICAN
COMMUNITY
INITIATIVE

African American Community Initiative



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH
**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**



African American Community Initiative

The African American Community Initiative (AACI) is committed to helping African Americans become more empowered to advocate for equity and access to behavioral health services. We also support African-American community members on their road to recovery and mental wellness within our community.

The AACI members include community members, providers, and clients, who work together to support the African American community in San Mateo County. Together, with AACI members and partners, AACI hosts several annual events to lift up the heritage and pride of the African American community.

Our Mission & Vision

Our mission is to become a known resource for African American community members facing challenges finding and utilizing behavioral health services, while addressing inequities faced by African Americans in our county. ©

Our vision is to build a community-driven support system for reducing behavioral health treatment disparities, and the stigma associated with mental health challenges by:

- Bridging the gap between the health system and our community.
- Recognizing the strengths and resilience of our community and increasing cultural humility and acceptance among providers.
- Increasing awareness of behavioral health issues while promoting wellness.

How We Support You

- Provide training opportunities) on how to identify early warning signs of mental health challenges and how to assist youth and adults who may be experiencing a mental health crisis (Adult, Youth, and Teen Mental Health First Aid.
- Support caregivers of our youth by connecting them to free parenting classes(Parent Project ©).
- Provide resources on affordable housing, food, and other services that promote wellness.
- Assist in addressing grievances or challenges experienced when seeking/receiving services at San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.
- Provide opportunities to collaborate on and address behavioral health disparities impacting the African-American community.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Because of stigma...

- Research found that only a quarter of African-American community members seek mental health care, and many may delay care. Additionally, another investigation found that 90% of African Americans (over the age of 12) did not receive treatment for a substance use disorder.
- A mental health impairment is not recognized as an illness that one can recover from within the African-American community.
- Low income and disproportionate access to physical health and behavioral health services contribute to health disparities in the African American Community

