

The 6th Annual
Conference
on the Health
of the African
Diaspora

New York City African CBO Forum: Transformation through Collaboration



School of Medicine

<http://www.med.nyu.edu/ichr/chad/>



Farkas Auditorium,
NYU Langone Medical Center,
550 1st Avenue
(Between 30th and 33rd Streets)

Saturday
February 19, 2011
9:00AM – 6:30PM



Center for the Health
of the African Diaspora

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

From the Director of CHAD



This conference is an effort by CHAD and leaders of a number of community based organization in New York City focused on serving African Immigrants. It evolved over many months of discussion on an identified need to form strategic collaboration among community based organizations and partnership with academic centers, foundations and federal institutions. The need for strategic collaboration has become even more pronounced during these times of financial stress, which has left many community based organizations without sufficient funding to conduct their work.

While acknowledging the need to respond to financial challenges, it is important to seize emerging opportunities in new concepts of addressing public health and health disparities through an integrated approach that brings together academic medical centers, federal institutions of health and organizations engaged in the community to deploy translational solutions that span from basic bench research to implementation of prevention and care in the community.

The arrival of new African immigrants in New York has taken place over many years going back to the days of Colonial Africa. The rate of immigration of this group has spiked over that past few decades making African immigrants one of the fastest growing demographic groups contributing to all facets of life in the city. The vibrant commercial activities, the restaurants and hair braiding salons, the music and film festivals have become common aspects of the rich cultural mosaic of

New York. As one of the most educated immigrant groups, New African Immigrants have also enjoyed faster integration into the professional, managerial and technical workforce of the city. A new wave of immigration in the past two decades brought a large number of disenfranchised and traumatized immigrants from both East and West Africa fleeing war and violence in their native lands.

Community Based Organizations serving African Immigrants have grown in number and scope in tandem with the increase of the African Immigrant population in the city. While an informal referral network serves to inform the community of services available across these organizations, an identified need to develop a formal network among organizations serving African immigrants has not been realized. This conference, sponsored by the NYU Center for the Health of the African Diaspora, will facilitate discussion and formulate action plans to realize a formal network among organizations serving African immigrants, and enhanced partnerships with academic medical centers, foundations and federal programs.

The Center for the Health of the African Diaspora advances the efforts of New York University Langone Medical Center to provide excellent patient-centered medical education and to conduct community focused research through community outreach and engagement.

Today's conference promises a transformative outcome that would enhance the work of organizations that serve African immigrants. On behalf of the Planning Committee, I wish you a wonderful and productive conference.

African immigrants In New York City, Brief Highlight

African Immigration & Demographics (Data from African Services Committee)

First Wave of African Immigrants to the United States

Prior to 1990, African immigrants were quick to gain an economic and social foothold in the United States. African immigrants were more likely than other immigrant populations to have a college or graduate degree, and a high proportion of African immigrants in the US—more than one in three—were employed in managerial and professional specialties. The overall poverty rate among African immigrants in the U.S. was only half the rate for all immigrants. Prior to 1990, most African immigrants were from Anglophone countries, such as Ghana and Nigeria. French-speaking West Africans typically immigrated to France due to language and economic ties established during the colonial period.

Current Wave of African Immigrants

The most recent African immigrants to New York City are not as well established as immigrants arriving before 1990, more closely representing the typical immigrant to New York City. Seeking the opportunities present in an open society, new arrivals nevertheless face serious barriers to finding employment, housing, and access to health care. More than 90 percent of African immigrants arriving since 1990 have not yet succeeded in establishing citizenship.

Language is the primary barrier to effectively accessing healthcare for most African immigrants as more African immigrate from non-English speaking countries. Only a handful of healthcare providers have the capacity to serve African patients in French.

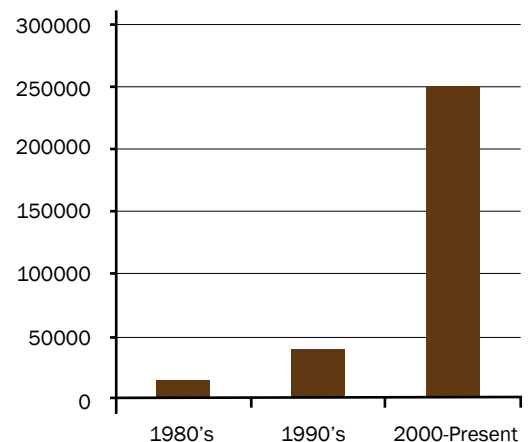


Fig 1. African immigrants living in New York City
U.S. Census Bureau. US Census 2000

In New York City, Africans represent the most rapidly expanding immigrant group.

As of 2007, the number of African immigrants in the United States has grown 40-fold since 1960, from 35,355 to 1.4 million. This made them equal 3.7% of all foreign born in the United States. Most of this growth has taken place since 1990, and all of these numbers continue to grow.

Of the 1.4 million African immigrants in the United States in 2007, the top five countries of origin were Nigeria (13.1 percent, or 185,787), Egypt (9.6 percent, or 136,648), Ethiopia (9.5 percent, or 134,547), Ghana (7.4 percent, or 104,842), and Kenya (5.7 percent, or 80,595).

53 percent (751,769) of all African immigrants resided in New York, California, Texas, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. In 2007, New York had the largest number of African immigrants (151,697, or 10.7 percent). Also the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA, was the metropolitan area with the largest number of African born immigrants (196,531, or 13.8 percent).

As of 2007, of all the African immigrants residing in the United States, 54.4 percent were men and 45.6 percent were women. Amongst this, 10.9 percent of them were minors (under age 18), 76.3 percent were of working age (between ages 18 and 54), and 12.8 percent were seniors (age 55 or older)

Health

Data from New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

1. HIV/AIDs in foreign born New Yorkers – Sep 2008

- 17% of foreign born New Yorkers newly diagnosed with HIV in 2006 – 2007 are from Africa
- Among HIV newly diagnosed foreign-born New Yorkers, Nigerian and Ghanaian immigrants were among the top 17 countries.
- Among Africans diagnosed with HIV in 2006-2007, 76% were more likely to initiate care within 3 months
- The mortality rate of Africans diagnosed with HIV was 12.4% lower than non-foreign born persons

2. Health Disparities in New York City

- 3% of immigrants in New York city as of 2000 are Africans (source: U.S Census 2000/ NYC Department of Planning)

3. TB Annual Summary

- In 2005, the rate of TB among NYC patients born in the Caribbean and Latin America was 19.8/100,000; 45.2/100,000 for Asia-born patients; 64.4/100,000 for those from Africa; while patients born in Europe and the Middle East had lower rates: 5.5/100,000 and 12.4/100,000, respectively. This shows Africans in NYC have the highest rate of TB among TB patients in NYC.

Mental Health Concerns Among African Immigrants.

Mental health concerns are poorly characterized among African immigrants. In 2008, a community based organization in Staten Island did a health screening (mainly Liberians) which identified mental health among the top three medical problems of clients but referral to mental health services was rare. While most hypertensive and diabetic clients were receiving medication, only 5% with mental health problems were taking any medication. Improved services are needed to handle better mental concerns and referrals.

Sources

- US Census Bureau. 2006 American Community Survey. Assessed from Aaron Terrazas, African Immigrants in the United States: US in Focus. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, February 2009.
- US Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics. 2007 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics. Assessed from Aaron Terrazas, African Immigrants in the United States: US in Focus. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, February 2009.
- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Mary Mederious Kent. Immigration and America's Black Population. Population Bulletin; Population Reference Bureau. 2007 Dec: Vol. 62, No. 4.
- Venters et al. J Immigrant Minority Health. Volume 8 Issue 1. June 13 2010
- Venters et al. J Immigrant Minority Health. Volume 8 Issue 1. April 4 2009
- African Services Committee

Keynote Speakers



Fatima A. Shama

Fatima A. Shama was appointed Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs in August 2009. Prior to her appointment she served as a Senior Education Policy Advisor in the Mayor's Office where she worked on the renewal of the City's school governance legislation. Ms. Shama helped design the Service in Schools initiative that is part of the Mayor's NYC Service agenda, collaborated on the development of the eighth grade promotion policy, worked closely with the NYPD and other law enforcement agencies to improve safety in our schools, and was instrumental in increasing parent engagement efforts. Ms. Shama joined the Mayor's Office in 2006 to serve as the City's Health Literacy and Language Access Coordinator.

Prior to joining the Bloomberg Administration, Ms. Shama served for four years as Executive Director of the Greater Brooklyn Health Coalition, a group of over 100 multi-service organizations that managed public health programs. The programs addressed the needs of residents in north, central and south Brooklyn, particularly immigrant and underserved populations. Before that she managed the Urban Horizons program at the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation in The Bronx; served as a program officer for Research, Action, Information Network for the Bodily Integrity of Women, an international health and human rights NGO; and was the Program Development and Public Relations Manager for the Arab-American Family Support Center in Brooklyn.

Ms. Shama earned a Bachelor of Arts from Binghamton University, attended Temple University School of Law, and completed her Masters of Public Administration from Baruch College's School of Public Affairs Executive Program. She also completed a management program at the Institute for Not-for-Profit Management at Columbia University's Graduate School of Business.

Commissioner Shama was born in the Bronx to immigrant parents, her mother is Brazilian and her late father was Palestinian. She speaks Arabic, French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish and lives on the east side of Manhattan with her husband and three sons.



Imam Souleimane Konate

Imam Souleimane Konate is currently Imam of the Masjid Aqsa in New York City, a position he has held since 1996. His congregation of 1,500 includes a large West African immigrant group. Born in Lakota, Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Imam Konate studied Islamic studies Back Home from his Uncle, and studied Islamic studies at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt between 1979 and 1983. Imam Konate went on to earn a master's degree in communications, in 1990 from King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. After moving to the United States, Imam Konate founded the Council of African Imams in America in 2000. He currently serves as the Council's General Secretary. Imam Konate co-founded the Harlem Islamic Leadership Council in 2000, of which he currently serves as Vice President.

Agenda

9:00-9:15 Welcome: **Mariano J. Rey, M.D.**, Sr. Assoc Dean for Community Health Affairs; Director, Institute for Community Health and Research

9:15-9:45 Setting the Stage: **Imam Souleimane Konaté**

9:45-10:15 New York City Commissioner of Immigrant Affairs, **Fatima Shama**

10:15-10:30 Q and A with Commissioner

10:30-10:45 BREAK

10:45-12:00 Building Partnerships - Panel Discussion

- Partnerships among CBOs - **Vanessa Leung**, Deputy Director, Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
- Partnerships with Foundations - **Maria Mottola**, Executive Director, New York Foundation
Clarisse Mefotso Fall, Executive Director and Founder of Africa Hope Committee, Inc.
- Partnerships with Federal Entities - **Olugbenga Ogedegbe**, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the NYU Center for Healthful Behavior Change at New York University School of Medicine
Joseph Ravenell, Assistant Professor of Medicine, NYU School of Medicine and Co-Director the Bellevue Hospital Primary Care Resistant Hypertension Clinic
- Partnerships with Academic Institutions - **Andrew Rasmussen**, Assistant Professor of Medicine; Research Director, Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture
Adeyinka M. Akinsulure-Smith, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, City College of the City University of New York; Program Psychologist the Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture

12:00-1:00 LUNCH

1:00-2:30 Facilitated Break Out Groups

1. Partnerships with CBOs
2. Partnerships with Foundations
3. Partnerships with Federal Entities
4. Partnerships with Academic Institutions

2:30-2:45 BREAK

2:45-3:15 Group Reports

3:15-3:45 Action Planning

3:45-4:00 Closing Remarks

6:00 Reception

Conference Planning Committee: Mary Kay-Diakite (African Services Committee), Passyna Bula-Bula (CAMBA), Jonatta Moore (African Refuge), Tamiru Mammo (New York City Mayor's Office), Clarisse Mefotso Fall (African Hope Committee, Inc.), Andrew Rasmussen (NYU), Mekbib Gameda (NYU), Adeyinka Akinsulure Smith (NYU)

Panelists and Planning Committee Members



Adeyinka M. Akinsulure-Smith

Adeyinka M. Akinsulure-Smith holds a Doctorate of Philosophy in Counseling Psychology from Columbia University. She is a licensed Psychologist originally from Sierra Leone. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at City College of the City University of New York. She has extensive clinical experience working with war trauma survivors, refugees, asylees and asylum seekers, survivors of sexual violence, persons afflicted with and affected by HIV/AIDS and culturally diverse populations. Dr. Akinsulure-Smith has been providing individual and group psychotherapy as well as psychological assessments for patients at the Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture since 1999. She has been involved in human rights investigations in Sierra Leone with Physicians for Human Rights and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, Human Rights Division. In 2010, she was retained by Trial Chamber III ("the Chamber") to serve as a joint expert on gender crimes and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder ("PTSD") for all parties and participants in a case before the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Dr. Akinsulure-Smith is a proud co-founder of Nah We Yone, Inc., a non-profit organization created in 1997 to proactively respond to war victims from the various communities within the African Diaspora. From 1997-2010, Nah We Yone served over 500 African refugees and asylees and their families in New York City, offering them direct services and referrals to legal, mental health, and social services. Dr. Akinsulure-Smith and her co-founders at Nah We Yone are 2003 winners of New York City's prestigious Union Square Awards. In 2005, she received Teachers College, Columbia University's "Early Career Award." The Hunter College Center for Community and Urban Health's Research in HIV Intervention Skills for the Community, selected Dr. Akinsulure-Smith in 2009 to receive a four-year fellowship, funded by National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

Passyna Bula-Bula

Passyna Bula-Bula is currently a Career Advisor for CAMBA's Refugee/ Asylees Services Program within the Workforce Development Department. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC also former Zaire), she has been working on the immigrant communities' social adjustment in New York and alleviation of poverty in Africa. She has extensive counseling experience working with refugees, asylees, asylum seekers, and culturally diverse low-income populations. She formerly served as a Loan Officer at First New York Mortgage and; as an Agent Assistant at New York Life Insurance Company. At both positions she raised the awareness of the African community on financial literacy and planning. During her studies in Belgium, Passyna completed several seminar papers on child labor in underdeveloped countries and gender issues for the University "Notre Dame de la Paix" of Namur (Belgium). An important aspect of her work includes her studies conducted on women in the Delta Valley of Senegal and the impact of access to irrigated land on women. While in her native country, she was involved in rural community micro-credit projects for Family Health, Welfare and Human Right Associations.

Ms. Passyna is a graduate of the University "Notre Dame de la Paix" of Namur (Belgium), where she earned a Bachelor degree in Business Administration and Masters in Economics with concentration on Economics of Development. In 2010 Ms. Passyna received CAMBA's "Dedicated Services Award" for her outstanding service over the last 5 years.



Mary Kay Diakite

Mary Kay Diakite is a Ph.D. Candidate at Rutgers University School of Social Work, focusing on Social Policy with a specialty in immigration policy and anti-terror legislation. She is fluent in French and Bambara. Currently, she works as a Family Social Worker for African immigrants living with HIV/AIDS in New York City. For the last eleven years, she has been working with refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, survivors of torture and detainees. She has run school-based programs for refugee and immigrant children in three public school districts. After 9/11, she was recruited to work with Arab, Muslim and South Asian communities in Northern New Jersey and witnessed first-hand the backlash perpetrated on these communities. A former Peace Corps Volunteer, she served in Mali, West Africa from 1996-1998. She has spent the last three summers conducting Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) cross border conflict resolution workshops in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Rwanda.



Vanessa Leung

Deputy Director, Coalition for Asian American Children and Families Vanessa joined CACF in November 1999. She oversees CACF's policy initiatives by partnering with decisionmakers and community organizations and is responsible for the development of a pan-Asian children's advocacy agenda to

improve policies, funding, and services for the Asian Pacific American community. Previously, Vanessa was CACF's Education Policy and Program Coordinator. She authored CACF's in-depth report on the status of Asian Pacific American students in the public school system entitled Hidden in Plain View. Vanessa has worked alongside other advocates, including the New York Immigration Coalition and Advocates for Children, to call for changes to improve safety in our schools as well as equitable access for parents, winning the addition of Chancellor's Regulations on interpretation and translation services in the public schools and an increase to \$12 million for such services. She spearheaded a high school youth leadership project,

the Asian American Student Advocacy Project (ASAP) that trains a diverse group of high school students to advocate for the needs of Asian Pacific American students. In February 2007, Vanessa was named to City Council

Speaker Christine Quinn's Middle School Taskforce to investigate and develop recommendations to improve the persistently low academic achievement of New York City's middle school grades.

She has recently been appointed by the Public Advocate, Bill de Blasio, for a two year term on the Citywide Council on English Language Learners. Vanessa received her Masters of Arts degree in developmental psychology at Columbia University's Teachers College and her bachelor degree from NYU. She also completed the Institute for Not-for-Profit Management's Middle Management Program of the Graduate School of Business of Columbia University and the Immigrant Civic Leadership Program of Coro New York Leadership Center.

Clarisse Mefotso Fall

Clarisse Mefotso Fall is the Executive Director and Founder of Africa Hope Committee, Inc. She is also a BIA Accredited from the Bureau of Immigration Appeals to oversee and process immigration application. She is an innovative and experienced public Health Educator and specialist with over 10 years experience in Domestic, national and international Non-profits, focusing on the improvement of quality of lives of underserved and underprivileged poor communities. Her experience includes working with immigrant communities, developing and implementing theoretical models geared towards improving poor communities; participatory action research and community survey. These also include project design, strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs including women's health, HIV/AIDS and other health issues; development and production of health materials/information for media campaign and communication.

Clarisse Mefotso Fall attended LaGuardia Community College as a Student Nurse and then transferred to college of Mount Saint Vincent to become a Public Health Educator. She earned her Bachelors in Health Education at the College of Mount Saint Vincent in 1997. As a health educator, Ms Fall worked for the Brooklyn Perinatal network for 5 years, and during that time, she returned to college of Mount Saint Vincent and completed her Masters Degree in Public Health in the area of Health Policies and Systems. She interned with the DOH, American Diabetic Association, Public Schools and later with the Brooklyn Borough President's Office and there, she worked closely with Dr. Yvonne Graham, the Deputy Brooklyn Borough President. Through her internship with Dr. Graham, she developed a specific work plan for the formation of the African Hope Committee.

Ms. Fall is a recipient of several proclamations since 2004 for her outstanding dedication to the African Immigrant Community from the Brooklyn Borough President, Marty Markowitz, the Former Manhattan Borough President, Virginia Field and from Scott Stringer, the current Manhattan Borough President, as well as several citations from former councilmember Bill Perkins and councilmember Robert Jackson . In 2007 and 2008, the organization also received proclamations from Mayor Michael. R. Bloomberg. In 2010, the United States Census Bureau recognized African Hope Committee as a valued partner and supporter in raising awareness and inspiring participation in the 2010 census. Ms. Fall is the 2005 Union Square Award Recipient. She has great skills in community Mobilizing/organizing/network building at local, national and international level. Ms. Fall is a great mentor and through her position, she has trained and mentored countless college and university students, graduate students as well as women and young girls and whole families to whom Ms. Falls has provided advise and support on childbearing and rearing. Her passion for improving the quality of lives of African immigrant in the U.S. and abroad has driven her interest to return to school to complete her PHD in public health. Clarisse Fall is originally from Cameroon, a wife, mother and a dedicated professional.



Tamiru Mammo

Tamiru Mammo is currently a Senior Health Policy Advisor for the New York City Mayor's office, within the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services. He formerly served as a Public Health Advisor for the New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), in which he advised on immigrant health issues; coordinated the Interagency Task Force on Language and served as a liaison to the African immigrant communities living in New York City.

Prior to his work for the City of New York, Tamiru was a researcher for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where he evaluated the systems of screening and follow-up treatment of new immigrants diagnosed with communicable diseases. Tamiru is a graduate of the School of Public Health at Columbia University, where he earned a Masters in Public Health and the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health where he earned a Masters of Health Sciences.



Gbenga Ogedegbe



Gbenga Ogedegbe is an Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the NYU Center for Healthful Behavior Change at New York University School of Medicine. After completing his internal medicine residency at Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York, he went to Weill Medical College of Cornell University for his fellowship training in Health Services Research and Clinical Epidemiology. He received his MPH from Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. Prior to his current position, Dr. Ogedegbe was a faculty member at both Cornell Weill Medical College and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.

He is a member of numerous scientific committees and expert panels of the National Institutes of Health including the 8th Joint National Committee, which develops guidelines for the evaluation and treatment of hypertension. He was recently appointed to the Institute of Medicine's Committee on Living Well with Chronic Disease: Public Health Action to Reduce Disability and Improve Quality of Life. Dr. Ogedegbe is a Fellow of the American Heart Association, American Society of Hypertension and American College of Physicians. He currently serves as President of the New York Chapter of the American College of Physicians (Manhattan District).

Dr. Ogedegbe is one of the leading experts on healthcare disparities research, with a focus on implementing strategies to reduce disparities in cardiovascular diseases among minority populations. He has significant experience in the conduct of both observational studies and clinical trials of community-based interventions targeted at improving hypertension control in African Americans. To this end, he has forged partnerships with network of community-based primary care practices, senior centers, DOH office of minority health, and faith-based organizations. Dr. Ogedegbe is either Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on numerous NIH-funded projects and he has co-authored over 80 publications, abstracts, and book chapters. Dr. Ogedegbe practices at the Bellevue Hospital Ambulatory Care Practice where he co-directs the Hypertension Specialty Clinic.

Andrew Rasmussen

Andrew Rasmussen, PhD is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at New York University School of Medicine and the Research Director at the Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture. His work primarily concerns displaced populations (refugees, IDPs, asylum seekers) and the evaluation of programs that aim to aid these communities. A clinical psychologist by training, his research has been presented widely in national and international scholarly journals and conferences. Dr. Rasmussen is the recent recipient of a K23 Career Development Award (K23HD059075) from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD, an institute of the NIH) to study how political violence affects the families of those exposed to it.



Joseph Ravenell



Dr. Joseph Ravenell is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at New York University School of Medicine. He is a board-certified internist and hypertension specialist with a strong track record in community-based programs and interventions to improve healthcare delivery in Black men. Dr. Ravenell co-directs the Bellevue Hospital Primary Care Resistant Hypertension Clinic, which he co-founded in 2009. He was a Co-Investigator on the first NIH-funded cluster-randomized trial testing a barbershop-based behavioral intervention to improve BP control in Black men. Dr. Ravenell is currently Project Leader on an NIH-funded trial of barbershop-based interventions to improve blood pressure control and colorectal cancer screening among Black men. He is Principal Investigator of a new NIH grant to test community-based strategies to improve blood pressure control and colorectal cancer screening in 24 Black churches in New York City. He also holds a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Harold Amos Medical Faculty Development Award and American Heart Association Pharmaceutical Roundtable Career Development Award for Implementation Research, both of which focus on improving physician management of hypertension in diverse populations.





Center for the Health of the African Diaspora

The goal of the Center for the Health of the African Diaspora (CHAD) is to improve the health of people of African descent through enhanced research and education in health disparities and improved opportunities for sharing best practices and collaboration among individuals and organizations active in addressing these inequities. CHAD has evolved over the years into a tremendous resource in New York City on issues related to the Health of the African Diaspora.

CHAD was established in 2006 to join the Center for Asian American Health and the Center for Latino Health under the umbrella of the Institute for Community Health and Research (ICHR).

The Center's community partners are located throughout Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. Programs and activities of CHAD have been supported in the past by NYU Africa House, Mentoring in Medicine, Inc., the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, and the Clinton Foundation.