

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Institute for the  
Advancement  
of **Minority**  
Health



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# *CEO Statement*



Greetings,

As we reflect on the past year, we are reminded that health is shaped by far more than clinical care alone. The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age continue to play a profound role in shaping health outcomes across our communities. Factors such as access to quality education, stable housing, nutritious food, economic opportunity, and safe environments are deeply interconnected with the health and well-being of individuals and families.

Across the nation, persistent disparities in these social determinants contribute to unequal health outcomes, disproportionately affecting minority and underserved populations. These inequities are not inevitable. They are the result of longstanding systemic challenges that require intentional, collaborative, and sustained action to address.

The Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health remains steadfast in its mission to confront these challenges head-on. Over the past year, we have strengthened partnerships, expanded community-based initiatives, and advanced policy and systems-level strategies aimed at improving both social conditions and health outcomes. Our work recognizes that meaningful progress requires addressing root causes, not just symptoms.

Through targeted programs, we have worked to increase access to preventive care, support community health workers, and elevate the voices of those most impacted by health disparities. We have also prioritized data-driven approaches to better understand the complex relationship between social determinants and health outcomes, ensuring that our interventions are both effective and equitable.

Importantly, our efforts extend beyond direct services. We are committed to fostering cross-sector collaboration to create environments where all individuals can achieve optimal health. By addressing barriers such as economic instability, limited access to care, and structural inequities, we are working toward a future where health equity is not an aspiration, but a reality.

While challenges remain, the progress we have made this year demonstrates the power of collective action and community-driven solutions. We are grateful for the continued support of our partners, stakeholders, and the communities we serve. Together, we are building a stronger foundation for healthier, more equitable communities.

As we look ahead, the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health will continue to lead with purpose, innovation, and a deep commitment to advancing health equity. We invite you to join us in this critical work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra Carr Melvin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sandra Carr Melvin  
Chief Executive Officer

# Who We Are

The Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health was established in 2019 to reduce health disparities among disadvantaged and underserved minority populations in Mississippi through the establishment of community-based partnerships that utilize the health equity framework as the foundation for the development of culturally appropriate solutions.

**Vision:** A Mississippi where every individual has equitable access to the healthcare, resources and opportunities that allow them to lead fulfilling lives and contribute fully to their communities.

## Values:

### HEALTH EQUITY

- Focus on wellness not illness or disparity
- Community mapping to increase access
- Addressing Social Drivers of Health
- Changing policies, systems, and environments

### EMPOWERMENT

- We don't own other people's power. We support opportunities for every individual to use their own power to drive change
- For each person, family, or community we engage we have a responsibility to invest resources that build capacity long

### RESPECT

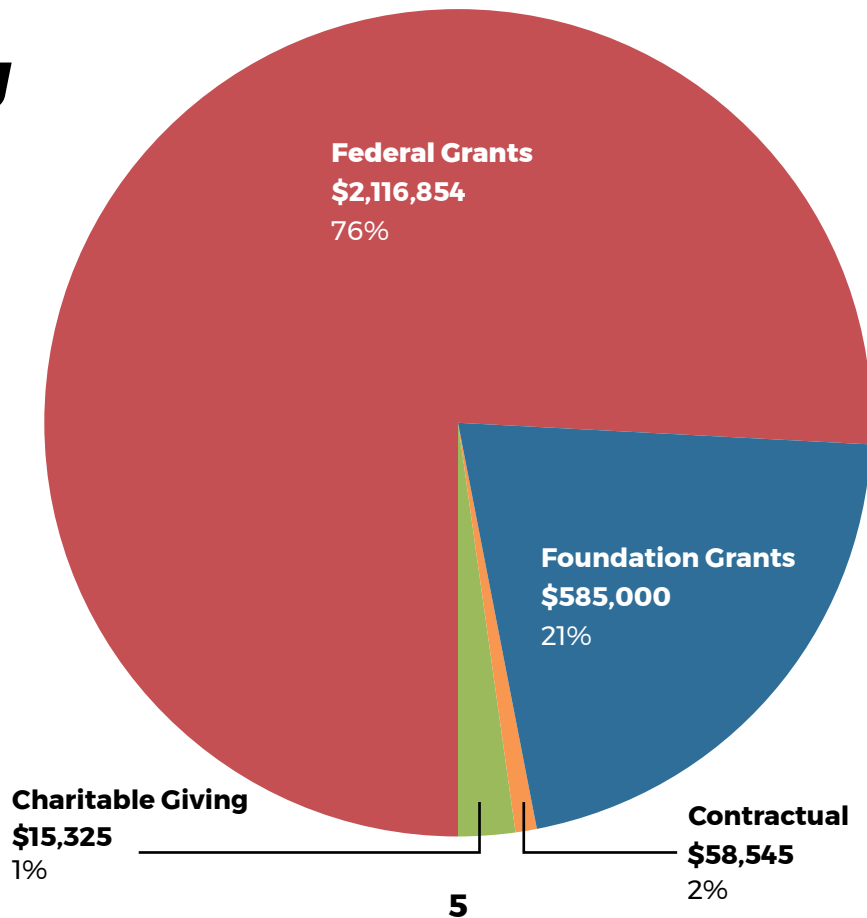
- Responsibility to those Internal and external to the organization
- Honoring the culture and experiences in all communities
- Reciprocity and bi-directional relationship
- Providing space for people to be engaged for action not compliance



# Community Partners

- Aaron E. Henry Community Health Center
- Billy Brumfield Men’s Shelter
- Boys and Girls Challenge Club of Cleveland
- Care4me Health Services
- Community Health Pier
- Delta Community Solutions
- Delta Health Alliance
- Delta Health Center
- Delta Health Systems
- Diaper Bank of the Delta
- Epps Institute
- Greenville Renaissance Scholars Funding
- Healthy Community Development
- Healthy Living Family Medical Center
- Healthy Places by Design
- Magnolia Medical Foundation
- Mallory Health Systems
- Mississippi NAACP
- Molina Healthcare of Mississippi
- Mom.Me
- MS Move
- MSDH – WIC, Oral Health, Preventive Health, Health Equity
- MSU PROMISE Initiative
- Northwest MS Regional Medical Center
- One Voice
- Pickles and Popsicles
- Plan A Health
- Precision Cuts Barbershop
- Queen Olive Headstart
- Rho Epsilon Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated®
- S+S College of Hair
- Sacred Heart Southern Missions
- Shaw High School
- Six Dimensions, LLC.
- South Sunflower Hospital
- The Links, Incorporated® – Jackson (MS) Chapter
- The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi
- The S.H.E. Project
- “The Shop” Barber and Salon
- Tougaloo College
- Tougaloo College/Delta Health Partners
- Turner A.M.E. Church
- University of MS Medical Center
- Word and Worship Church
- You Are Not Alone Prostate Cancer Support Group

## Funding



# Maternal and Child Health

Since its inception in 2019, the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health has been committed to reducing health disparities among disadvantaged and underserved minority communities in Mississippi. Central to this work is the development of community-based partnerships that use a health equity framework to create culturally responsive solutions. The Institute has reached thousands of individuals, distributed over 20,000 educational materials, and provided diapers, wipes and personal hygiene items via the Baby Depot. Through its Maternal and Child Health (MCH) initiatives, the organization continues to advance its vision of improving health outcomes in vulnerable communities across Mississippi.



## Impact

The 2021 Mississippi State Department of Health's Infant Mortality Report showed that infant mortality is closely related to important social determinants of health, such as poverty, education, and race. With Mississippi having one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country, racial disparities are significantly higher in Black infants than their white counterparts. The 2017-2021 Maternal Mortality Report (released November 2024) indicated that community organizations can assist in decreasing the state's maternal mortality numbers by providing resources to educate men and women on the many factors that contribute to maternal mortality. These factors include education on interpersonal violence (IPV), emotional/mental abuse, signs and symptoms for pregnancy-related complications, and how to detect urgent issues. Therefore, the Maternal and Child Health program focuses on implementing

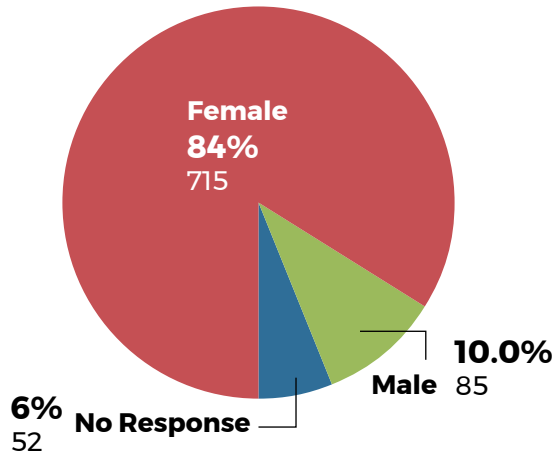
evidence-based strategies to reduce the risk of maternal and infant mortality, improve access to care and information about risk factors, and promote reproductive health and family planning services.

From January 2024-December 2024, the MCH Program reached over 852 maternal and child health participants in the MS Delta. The demographic makeup of these participants consisted of 715 females, 85 males, and 52 participants who did not respond to their gender. A cumulative summary of the MCH participants from January 1, 2024, to November 30, 2024, is listed with cumulative numbers and percentages.

## Numbers of Participants - 852

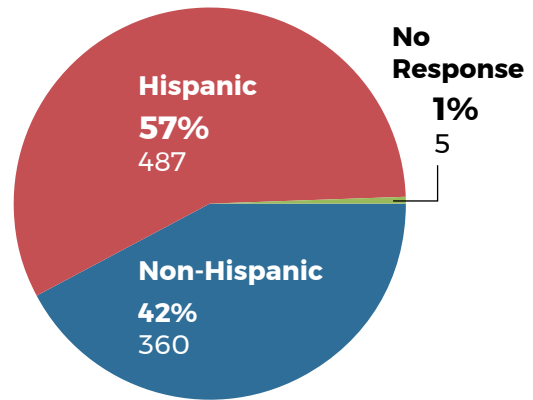
### Gender Distribution

Among MCH Participants



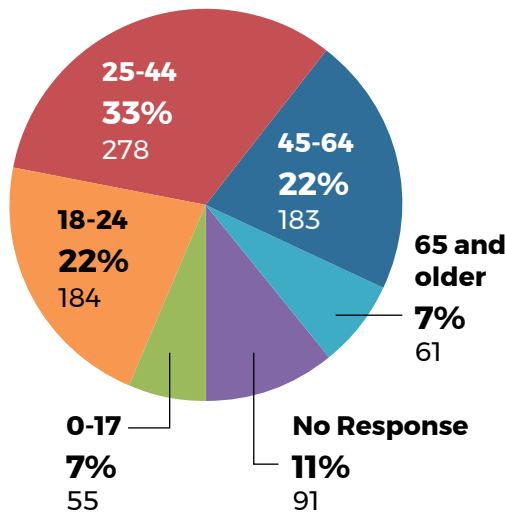
### Ethnicity

Among MCH Participants



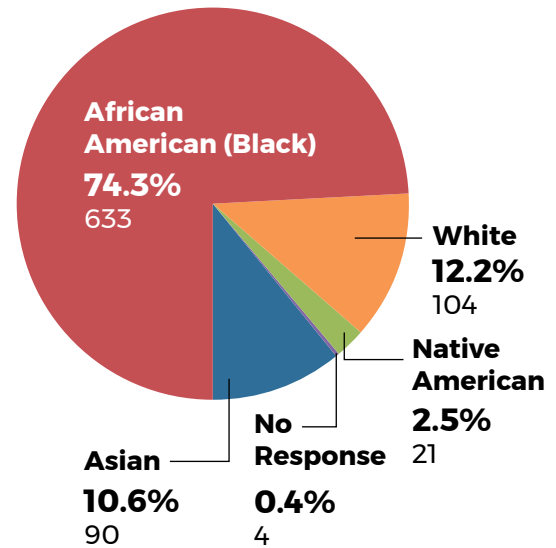
### Age Distribution

Among MCH Participants



### Race Distribution

Among MCH Participants



## Partners

- Aaron E. Henry Community Health Center
- Community Health Pier
- Delta Health Alliance
- Delta Health Center
- Delta Health Systems
- Diaper Bank of the Delta
- Turner A.M.E Church
- Mississippi NAACP
- Healthy Community Development
- Healthy Living Family Medical Center
- Healthy Places by Design
- Magnolia Medical Foundation
- Mallory Health Systems
- Molina Healthcare of Mississippi
- MSDH-WIC, Oral Health, Preventive Health, Health Equity
- MLM
- Mom.Me
- MSU PROMISE Initiative
- Northwest MS Regional Medical Center
- The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi
- Pickles and Popsicles
- Plan A Health
- Sacred Heart Southern Missions
- The S.H.E. Project
- Six Dimensions, LLC.
- South Sunflower Hospital
- The Links, Incorporated®- Jackson (MS) Chapter
- Tougaloo College/Delta Health Partners
- Word and Worship Church

# Maternal and Child Health





# Men's Health Program



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health has been addressing health disparities<sup>9</sup> in underserved and disadvantaged minority communities since the organization was founded in 2019. This work is done through a community based participatory approach in which members of the community and community-based organizations are directly involved in the implementation of health interventions. The Institute's outreach efforts have reached thousands of men and women through its various program's. The Men's Health Equity program has provided over 100 men with blood pressure and blood glucose screenings. This program has also distributed over 3,000 educational materials to men in the areas of heart health, prostate cancer, sexual health, and tobacco prevention.

## Impact

In the 2023 Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) BRFSS Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance (BRFS) report, 49.0% of Black (non-Hispanic) adults reported ever being told they have high blood pressure (hypertension). Men report hypertension at 48.1%. Black adults also had the highest combined overweight/obesity prevalence at 77.8%. These risk factors strongly increase Black men's risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and premature death.

Compared to white Mississippians, Black men face higher prevalence of hypertension and obesity-related risk factors, higher CVD (cardiovascular disease) and cancer mortality rates, disproportionate burden from HIV, and much higher homicide firearm death rates. Structural drivers like poverty, limited

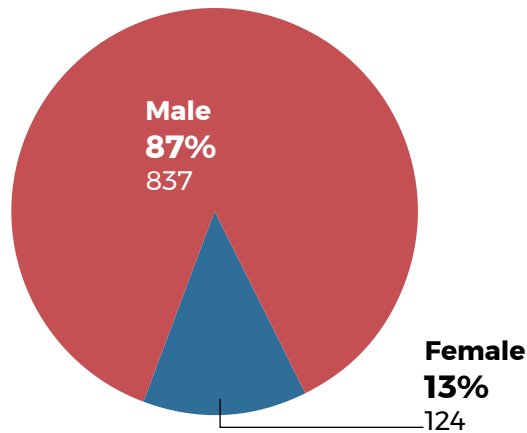
access to care, insurance gaps, and geographic location indicate these are system-level disparities, not simply individual choices.

From January 2024-December 2024, the Men's Health Program reached over 800 men across central Mississippi and the MS Delta region. The demographic makeup of these participants consisted of 837 males and 124 females. A cumulative summary of the Men's Health Program participants from January 2024, to December 2024, is listed on the following page with cumulative numbers and percentages.

## Numbers of Participants - 961

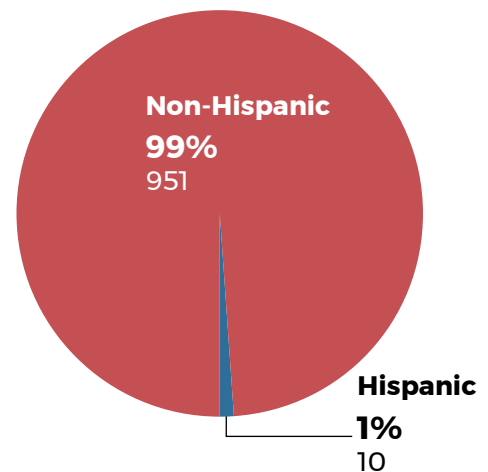
### Gender Distribution

Among Men's Health Program Participants



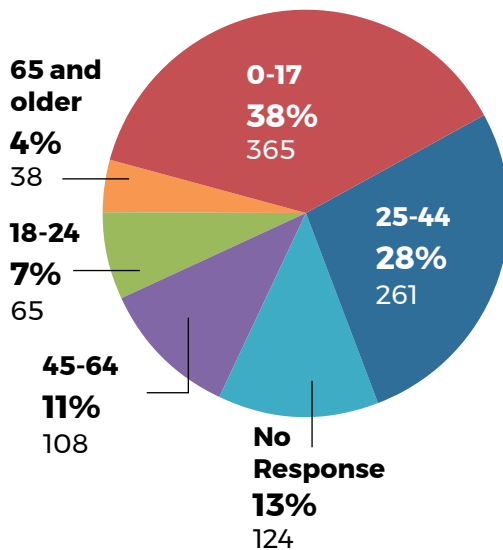
### Ethnicity

Among Men's Health Program Participants



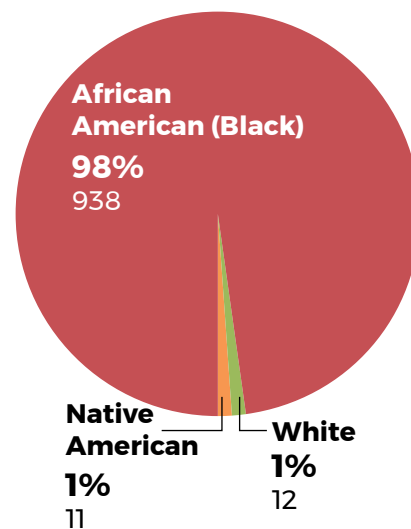
### Age Distribution

Among Men's Health Program Participants



### Race Distribution

Among Men's Health Program Participants



## Partners

- Care4me Health Services
- Epps Institute for Health
- Jackson Medical Mall
- Jackson State University
- Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center
- MS MOVE
- Mississippi State Department of Health
- Mississippi NAACP
- Open Arms Medical Services
- Owens Health and Wellness Center
- Precision Cutz Barbershop
- Reddix Medical group
- Rho Epsilon Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated®
- Shaw High School
- Southern Poverty Law Center
- Tougaloo College
- "THE SHOP" Barber and Hair Salon
- Turner Care Health Services
- The Village Kitchen
- UMMC Mind Center
- West Bolivar High School
- YANA Prostate Cancer Support Group

# Men's Health





# ***Black Men's Health Equity Conference***



# Chronic Disease And Health Equity Summative Report

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

**The Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health is committed to advancing health equity by confronting systemic barriers and reducing health disparities affecting disadvantaged and underserved minority communities in Mississippi. Grounded in a health equity framework, the Institute emphasizes culturally responsive strategies and community-driven solutions that empower individuals, strengthen neighborhoods and promote fairness in health outcomes. Through strong partnerships with local organizations, the Institute has engaged thousands of residents, distributed more than 30,000 educational resources, and provided essential items to meet immediate needs.**

**In its tobacco prevention and cessation initiatives, the Institute works to reduce tobacco-related inequities by increasing access to evidence-based cessation resources, delivering culturally tailored education, and advocating for policies that protect vulnerable populations. Outcomes include improved quit rates among minority communities, increased awareness of tobacco-related health risks, and reduced exposure to secondhand smoke—ultimately contributing to long-term reductions in tobacco-related morbidity and mortality across Mississippi.**



## Impact

The Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health has received funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the Mississippi Department of Health to advance health equity by reducing tobacco-related health disparities among African American males ages 12 and older in the Mississippi Delta. This initiative addresses systemic barriers such as limited health literacy and access to care through culturally tailored education, community health events, and health screenings.

Black men in Mississippi experience some of the poorest health outcomes in the nation, with disproportionately high rates of hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and mental health challenges (CDC, 2024). Tobacco use compounds these risks, and emerging trends such as youth vaping introduce additional dangers, including exposure

to harmful metals like lead that impair brain development (CDC, 2023). These inequities underscore the urgent need for accessible health education and resources focused on tobacco prevention, cessation, and overall wellness.

During the January–December 2024 performance period, the Tobacco Prevention Program, in collaboration with the Men’s Health Equity Program, engaged African American males ages 12 and older across the Mississippi Delta through targeted outreach, screenings, and culturally relevant education. While the primary focus was on Black men, Black women also benefited from services at select events. By addressing tobacco use within a broader health equity framework, the Institute is working to reduce preventable disease and improve long-term health outcomes in historically underserved communities.

**May 2024 - December 2024**

**Community Outreach Events**

16

**Counties in MS Delta**

8

**Inventory of Items Distributed**

2,359

**Number of Participants Reached**

527

**September 2024-November 2024**

**Chronic Disease and Health Equity Events**

16

**Counties in MS**

5

**Inventory of Items Distributed**

1,587

**Number of Participants Reached**

384

**Counties Served**

- Adams
- Bolivar
- Carroll
- Claiborne
- Coahoma
- Desoto
- Forrest
- Grenada
- Harrison
- Hinds
- Holmes
- Humphreys
- Issaquena
- Jefferson
- Jefferson-Davis
- Lafayette
- Lawrence
- Leflore
- Panola
- Pontotoc
- Quitman
- Sharkey
- Sunflower
- Tallahatchie
- Tate
- Tunica
- Walthall
- Warren
- Washington
- Yazoo



## *Chronic Disease And Health Equity*







# HIV Prevention Program Demographic Report

The Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health has been addressing health disparities in underserved and disadvantaged minority communities since the organization was founded in 2019. This work is done through a community based participatory approach in which members of the community and community-based organizations are directly involved in the implementation of health interventions. The institutes outreach efforts have reached thousands of men and women through its various program's.

## Impact

According to the CDC in 2023 the Southern Region of the United States accounted for 51% of HIV diagnosis. African Americans accounted for only 22% of Southern US PrEP users. Among heterosexual males in Mississippi 12.9% were diagnosed with HIV compared to 84.9% of females who were diagnosed through heterosexual contact. The Mississippi Delta Region has the highest prevalence of HIV diagnosis compared to other regions in Mississippi.

The Delta Comprehensive HIV Prevention's (DCCHPP) intervention focused on decreasing the number of newly infected HIV cases among heterosexual males and females ages 13-49 in the Mississippi Delta and Mississippi Central. This initiative implemented interventions such as providing self-testing kits for at-risk individuals, rapid HIV/STI testing, condoms and educational materials, using community-based

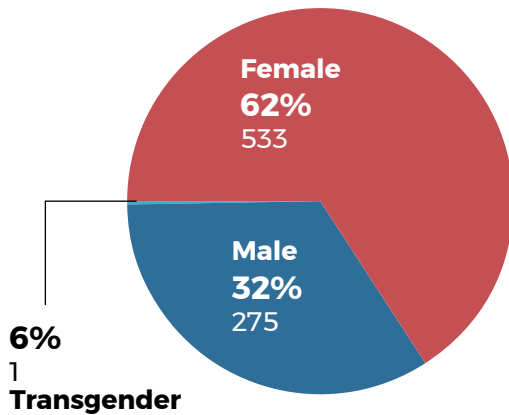
participatory approaches to join with the community as full and equal partners in all process phases.

From January 2024-December 2024, the HIV Prevention Program tested over 800 men and women across central Mississippi and the MS Delta region. The demographic makeup of these participants consisted of 275 males and 533 females. Over the course of 23 events, the HIV Prevention Program distributed over 6,000 condoms with 785 people being referred to PrEP and Linkage Services. Four hundred seventy three people persons were referred to health benefits navigation, evidence-based risk reduction interventions, behavioral health services, and social services. A cumulative summary of the HIV Prevention Program participants from January 2024, to December 2024, is listed below with cumulative numbers and percentages.

## Numbers of Participants - 854

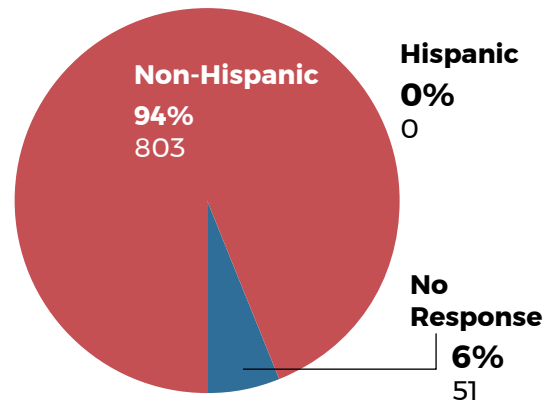
### Gender Distribution

Among HIV Prevention Participants



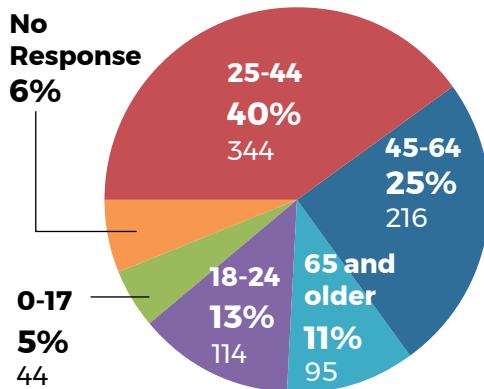
### Ethnicity

Among HIV Prevention Participants



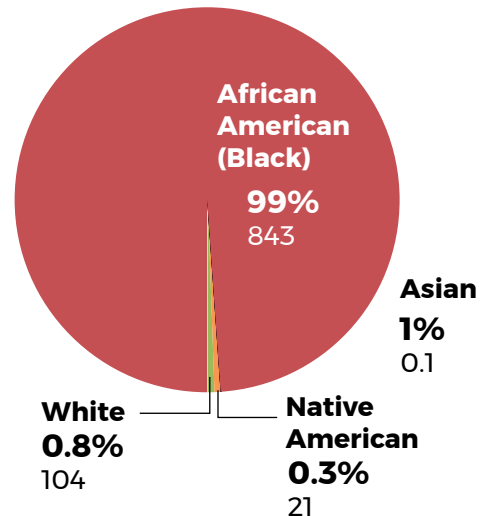
### Age Distribution

Among HIV Prevention Participants



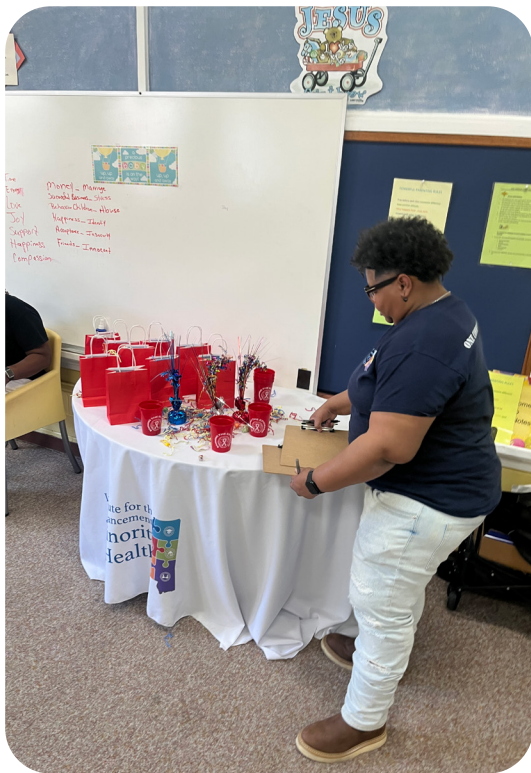
### Race Distribution

Among HIV Prevention Participants



## Partners

- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Rho Lambda Omega Chapter
- Aaron Henry CHC
- Body in Balance
- ButtaScrubs
- CLM Healthcare
- Jackson Free Clinic
- Jackson PRIDE
- Just Right Motivation
- Home2Suites by Hilton
- Magnolia Medical Center
- Shaw Family Medical
- SHE Project
- Sky Integrating Medical
- Southern Health Alliance
- Speak N' Life Insurance Consultants
- Ruby's Seafood
- Shine a Light on Lung Cancer
- New Horizon Ministries
- The Greater New Kingdom M.B. Church
- Tobacco Coalition
- Town of Inverness
- UMMC
- Upper Room Fellowship Ministries



# Social Media Analytics

In 2024, the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health strengthened its digital presence across multiple platforms to connect communities with trusted, culturally relevant health information. Facebook and Instagram platforms demonstrated strong audience growth, engagement, and content performance, with notable activity spikes during Q2. While Facebook maintained higher overall reach and impressions, Instagram showed stronger engagement efficiency and follower growth trends, indicating increasing audience responsiveness to content.

## Facebook

Reach: **60,821**  
Impressions: **175,352**  
Engagements: **1,816**  
New Followers: **1,458**  
Reactions **1,135**  
Comments: **316**  
Shares: **365**

## Instagram

Reach: **46,040**  
Impressions: **48,343**  
Engagements: **2,471**  
New Followers: **2,373**  
Likes: **1,802**  
Comments: **188**  
Shares: **481**

## Website

**Website Visits: 11,000**



## Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health Board of Directors



**Rep. Chris Bell**



**Nicholas Lott**



**Dr. Michael L. Jones**



**Cassandra Hawkins**



**Dr. Talya Straughter**



**Luis Espinoza**



**Allytra Perryman**

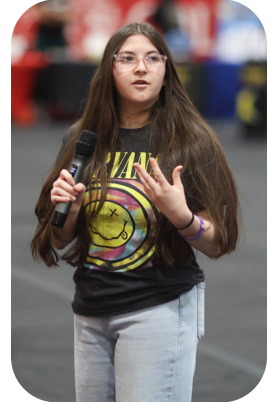


**Rep. Tracey Rosebud**



**Tanya Funchess**

# Institute in Action!



# Institute in Action!



**It's Too Hot to be Positive**

Stay Cool.  
Be Smart.  
Use Protection.

To secure at home self-test kits, contact [iamh@advancingminorityhealth.org](mailto:iamh@advancingminorityhealth.org)

Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health

