

Sac Cultural Hub Media Foundation's Black Physicians Forum Discusses Violence as a Public Health Issue in the African American Community

Dr. Roger A. Mitchell, Jr., MD, FASCP – Chief Medical Examiner, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Washington D.C. opened the 2017 Black Physicians Forum (BPF) with a clear message “We cannot arrest our way out of violence... Law enforcement is an acute response to fix an immediate situation. They don’t fix the underlying problems.” Over the last few decades law makers have tried unsuccessfully to stem violence in the African American community through fear and punishment. Speakers at the 7th Annual Northern California Black Physicians Forum came to aid community leaders in shifting perspectives and understanding violence as a public health issue in the African American community.

“Some of you may not agree with me, but there is no such thing as bad people. No one wants to kill anyone in their right mind. There are things that have happened to them,” said Dr. Mitchell. Violence in all communities is a symptom of larger structural violence and trauma that impedes individuals, families, and communities from meeting basic needs and achieving their potential. Models and strategies for resisting structural violence and healing trauma in African American communities are being successfully implemented across the nation and it takes investment from non-traditional as well as traditional voices in this area. “We see our budget as a moral document. When 65% of budget goes to law enforcement and incarceration we are making a statement,” said Dr. Mitchell.

An expert panel of speakers then shared with attendees successful actions that interrupt the conduits to violence. Actions such as advocacy, increased employment, mentorship, research allocations, stable housing, access to transportation, Ceasefire, and community relationship building that are more effective methods for reducing violence and improving health within the African American community. These are just some of the ways government officials, community leaders, law enforcement, business, advocates, elders and individuals can push forward.

Sac Cultural Hub Media Foundation extends great appreciation to our Keynote Speaker, MC/Host, Panel Presenters as well as our sponsor partners:

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Keynote Speaker: Dr. Roger A. Mitchell, Jr., MD, FASCP, Chief Medical Examiner Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Washington D.C.



Panel Presenter: Danielle Williams – Community Organizer Sacramento Area Congregations Together (ACT)



MC/Host: William Jahmal Miller, MHA, Deputy Director, Office of Health Equity, California Department of Public Health



WERE YOU THERE?



Panel Presenter: Larissa Estes – Program Manager, Health System Transformation Team, Prevention Institute Oakland, California



Panel Presenter: Howard Pinderhughes, PhD – Associate Professor Social & Behavioral Sciences Department at University of California, San Francisco, School of Nursing

