

Leadership Retreat at Bartram's Garden, November 2018

Annual Report 2018

Coalition of African & Caribbean Communities

6328 Paschal Avenue, Suite A Philadelphia PA 19142

Phone: 267 787 1302 / 215 729 0800 x 822 Email: info@africom-philly.org Website: africom-philly.org

Follow Us on Twitter: @Africom_Philly Facebook: Africom-Philly

Executive Officers President & Chief Operating Officer Eric Edi, PhD. Vice-President Lanfia Waritay, PhD Education Committee Chair Mr. Camille Kamkaing P.R Officer / Youth Coordinator Mr. Samuel M. Cole, MBA Health & Social Service Chair Ms. Aminata Sidibé Children Engagement Chair Mrs. Astan Sacko Board of Directors 2018 -2020 Officers Chair Mrs. Zemoria Brandon 1st Vice- Chair Vera Tolbert, PhD 2nd Vice Chair Philip Udo-Inyang, PhD Secretary Sr. Florence Enechukwu Treasurer Mr. Giordani Jean Baptiste Members Ms. Raphiatou Noumbissi Mr. El Hadji Ndiaye Rev. John Jallah Mr. Siddiq A.

2018 Interns: Viviana Padilla Sankofa Academy Charter School Awa Nianghane Stankofa Academy Charter School Anthony Davis Boyz Latin High School Emmajah Versher Girls' High School Blessing Bwititi Oberlin College, Ohio Bior Nok Medical Student

"Reaching higher goals and empowering many immigrants and refugees"

Welcome to AFRICOM's 2018 Report! 2018 will surely be remembered as the year when, at the Coalition of African and Caribbean Communities (AFRICOM), we reached milestones in our efforts to make the Coalition sustainable. efficient, partnership-driven, and mostly communitycentered. Back in 2015, we made it a priority to include systematically the voices, ideas, and suggestions of the communities we serve as foundations of our annual agendas and programs.

This unique way of engaging young, adult, and senior African and Caribbean immigrants and refugees has made AFRICOM a dynamic, diverse, and power-building organization.

In November 2018, we held the First Annual Board of Directors/Executive Officers' Retreat at the beautiful Bartram's Garden, on 5400 Lindbergh Blvd. The highlight of this historical leadership retreat is that not only did we feel energized but also, we formulated a new mission statement for the Coalition. The new mission is to organize so that immigrant and refugee men, women, children, youths, and senior citizens feel a sense of empowerment, belonging, and self-sufficiency.

We are satisfied with what we achieved because we created opportunities for African and Caribbean immigrants to be the agents of the change they want to see in the Greater Philadelphia area.

For 2019, we are committed, to invest more resources in community-organizing, leadership training, and capacity building for member organizations. The Samuel Fels Fund grant we received in January 2019 and the incredible collaboration Bartram's with Garden underline the relevance of the direction we have embarked on. We will break new grounds in 2019.

This direction requires support and engagement from member organizations, community leaders, volunteers, partners and funders.

We cannot thank enough the volunteers and work-ready students, who gave us their

precious time and enthusiasm in 2018. We also thank the schools, agencies and organizations that sent them to us. They were tremendously inspirational.

There are opportunities to help and get involved.

We invite you to get involved. Join the family. Together with you, we will reach higher goals and empower many immigrants and refugees."

We wished you a happy and productive year 2019.



Mrs. Zemoria Brandon, Chair of the Board of Directors



Eric Edi, PhD, Chief Operating Officer

Membership and scope of work

AFRICOM is a coalition of 20 and plus African and Caribbean community-based, faith-based organizations, small businesses, and individuals. AFRICOM works with multiple local and statewide partners to address the barriers which prevent African and Caribbean immigrants from reaching their full potentials.

The Coalition works across the Greater Philadelphia area where African and Caribbean immigrants live and own their bread-winning businesses.

In 2018, the Coalition emphasized on community-organizing, collective powerbuilding, and leadership training. We focused on identifying and working to change the social, economic, racial, and political barriers.

Every year, the Coalition strives to provide valuable services to up to 1,000 people including specifically low-income families and individuals.



Attendees at first Immigrant Workers' Academy sponsored by the Office of Immigrants' Affairs, May 5, 2018.

The Population we serve

90% and more of the individuals and families we serve are immigrants and refugees from Africa and the Caribbean Islands.

Most of these individuals and families live in the Greater Philadelphia area. In Philadelphia, studies show that the number of African immigrants increased more than any other immigrant groups 2000 and 2016¹.

In Pennsylvania

893,769² foreign-born people in PA
73,069 (8%) African-born immigrants in PA
129,258 (14%) Caribbean-born

In Philadelphia

210,076 (14% of total population) are foreignborn.

32,219 (2.1%) of Philadelphians are from the Caribbean Islands.

35,648 (2.3%) of Philadelphia residents were born in Sub-Saharan Africa with West Africans representing the largest contingents³.

Many African and Caribbean immigrants live in Southwest Philadelphia, West Philadelphia, Olney, South Philadelphia, North East Philadelphia. Outside Philadelphia, Delaware County, Bucks county, Montgomery county, and Chester county.

Occupation

Sectors of employment for the population we serve include: transportation, (taxi-drivers), homecare and personal care, education, hairbraiding, small business, nursing, cleaning, daycare, restaurants, etc.

³ American Community Surveys, 2017

¹ Pew Charitable Trust, 2018

² Migration Policy Institute Data available www.mpi.org

Our 2018 Achievements

Our programs and projects ultimately aim to empower African and Caribbean immigrants and refugees to alleviate the burden of poverty by accessing the information, resources, and services they need. Thanks to the tireless efforts of our staff, consultants, and volunteers, we implemented a communitydriven agenda and achieved the following:

Immigration and legal assistance

In 2018, a substantial funding from The Philadelphia Foundation-based PA Is Ready Fund allowed the Coalition to hold more than **19** public and social media events, which included **16** informational Know Your rights sessions and **3** combined Legal screening and clinic events. More than **361** individuals and families received services. **3** community navigators received training or reinforced their capacities. In addition, the Coalition hosted **4** leadership training related to deportation defense and safe community building. About **80** community leaders and activists from diverse immigrant communities attended the trainings that AFRICOM hosted.

- **20** individuals referred to Legal Service Partners
- **8** citizenship and LPR applications completed
- **3** people received financial assistance from the Legal Assistance Fund.
- **3** successful asylum applications filed
- AFRICOM attended PICC annual convening in Harrisburg, PA
- AFRICOM's representative attended NIIC 2018.
- AFRICOM participated in events addressing on immigration policies and just immigration reform.



A view immigrant and refugee advocates at a two-day training at AFRICOM, July 2018



Dr. Eric Edi at NIIC 2018 with PICC organizations members, Arlington Virginia – Dec 2018



AFRICOM- NSC Legal clinics served African and Caribbean immigrants and refugees in the Greater Philadelphia Area.

Health and Social Welfare

AFRICOM facilitates African and Caribbean immigrants and refugees' access to healthcare and health information.

In March and April, AFRICOM hosted 2 health forums. **40 community leaders** participated in the forums.

In September, AFRICOM hosted the 17th Annual Health Fair. More than 200 people including children and adults and 20 vendors and service providers attended the fair at Kingsessing Recreation Center. The Wawa foundation donated 200 ¹/₄ pints refreshments

AFRICOM successfully assisted a new family of 3 win their case against CYS

157 Public Benefits Applications were completed for low-income and limited-English proficient families. These include:

- CCIS: 23 LIHEAP: 15 CRP: 20
- CAP Rate: 18 SNAP: 25
- Employment verification: 56

90 people including youths, adults and senior citizens participated in AFRICOM's 5 listening sessions meant to assess African and Caribbean communities' needs around mental health, gambling, and alcoholism.

Family and friends' Day

AFRICOM sponsored and supported the annual Friends and Family Day with AFAHO. Close to **100** participants mothers, children and volunteers attended the event

17 individuals and families were referred to Philadelphia Health centers and AFAHO for direct health services.



Kingsessing Recreation Center was the venue of the 17th Annual Health Fair, Sept 2018.



A view of adult participants at a need assessment listening sessions, May 2018

2 families received housing assistance

Senior Citizens

- We helped establish PCA African and Caribbean Elder Advisory Board to better serve the needs of our elderly populations.
- We co-hosted AGAPE's Annual Appreciation dinner that served 60 senior citizens.

Education and Culture

In collaboration with diverse partners, AFRICOM conducts education and culturerelated activities specifically for youth and children.

School District Information

In 2018, AFRICOM participated in diverse initiatives with the School District of Philadelphia to:

- Address language access questions for non-English speaking parents and students
- Raise awareness about early childhood education
- Promote job opportunities
- Help new students enroll and navigate the school district's portal

87 free tickets were distributed to youths, ages 4 to 17 to attend sports, entertainment and educational events.

Shades of AFRIKA - Fashion show

30 youths and children participated in the AFRICOM-sponsored Sierra Leone Youth Association Fashion show at Temple University. The event showcased talented immigrant designers. "Shades of Afrika 2018" raised awareness about "Female Circumcision."

Annual Soccer Tournamaent

4 Teams representing Ethiopia, Sudan, and Guinea/ Sierra Leone participated in the annual community soccer tournament. This year, AFRICOM and The Southwest Community Development Corporation (SWCDC) co-hosted the competition.



A view of the audience at the annual SLYA Fashion Show: Shades of Afrika, sponsored by AFRICOM



Children and youth were happy to be part of the fashion show, Temple University, April 2018



S. Cole (President of SLYA) and the planning committee thanked the audience for supporting to promoting African Culture, April 2018

Community organizing: Building immigrant local power

"We need to do a better job organizing our communities to fight for change" Steve Paul

The call to action in 2018 was: "No longer allowing policies to silence African and caribbean immigrants and refugees."

AFRICOM was involved in **8** campaigns and collective actions with hundreds of activists and organizations through letter-writing, petition signing, and rallies, and immigrant rights campaigns. Some of the campaigns included:

- Fairwork week Campaign
- End family separation at the Borders
- No "Shithole" countries
- Public Charge rule campaign
- TPS Caravan Campain
- Drivers' license campaign
- Support Natural hair braiders' campaign

42 Cross-section African and Caribbean community leaders and members gathered in a emergency meetings to craft community response to President Trump's comments about Africa countries and Haiti.

122 African natural hair braiding shop owners were organized to support a legislation, which will eliminate the unnecessary requirements of a Specialty license in Pennsylvania.

70 total number of braiders and supporters who attended first hearing at Hilton Hotel with Democratic Legislative Committee.



African Natural Hair Braiders after hearing before PA Senate Democratic Legislative Committee, Dec 2018



5 natural shop owners and managers testified before the PA Senate Democratic Committee



Eric Edi, C.O.O was AFRICOM's voice in the successful Fair Workweek Coalition



Capacity-Building

Achieving our goals and reaching higher levels also meant investing in capacity building by leveraging human and material resources. Through its partners and diverse networks, AFRICOM hosted the first Immigrant Workers Academy and the first leadership Retreat.

The Immigrant Workers' Academy was a joint program with the Office of Immigrant Affairs, the African Family Health Organization (AFAHO) and ACANA.

40 immigrant workers from Africa, the Caribbean Islands and South America joined the empowering 3 hour-Academy to learn about rights in the workplace, paid-leaves,

The First Leadership Retreat brought together members of the Board of Directors, Executive officers, and representatives of some community organizations.

15 people participated in the enriching program, which will become an annual tradition at AFRICOM.



A view of small group discussions at Immigrant Workers' Academy



Board Chair, Mrs. Zemoria welcoming participants at Immigrant Workers' Academy, May 5, 2018



Samuel Cole, Sis. Florence, and Dr. Udo-Inyang at Leadership Retreat, Bartram's Garden, November 2018

Volunteer and Internship program

Volunteers and interns are the backbones of our accomplishments.

90% of our initiatives are volunnteer-led

This year, in addition to the core staff/volunteers, over **12** high schools, undergraduate, and graduate students lent their time and skills to AFRICOM. In return, these interns and volunteers learned about African and Caribbean immigrant communities' needs, assisted with office management, project planning and reporting, program development and grant writing.



Blessing B. an International Student (Zimbabwe) at Oberlin College, Ohio, was completed 8 weeks of internship AFRICOM (summer 2018)



Anthony D. (Boys Latin), Summaya H. & Emmajah V. (Philadelphia High School for Girls) contributed valuable time to AFRICOM.

Members of AFRICOM also volunteered and provided technical assistance to member organizations and other institutions.

5 organizations and institutions received assistance with:

- grant writing and grant application,
- 501 c 3 application,
- tax filing,
- space for community meetings and gathering.
- Program development



Senegalese Association of Philadelphia Leadership meeting at AFRICOM, September 28, 2018

Legislative Advocacy

In 2018, AFRICOM met with and hosted local, regional and federal legislators to establish lines of communications and address the welfare of African and Caribbean immigrants and refugees in the Greater Philadelphia area.

4 meetings took place with lawmakers and representatives of law enforcement agencies including:

- Meeting with the office of State Representative Jared Solomon
- Meeting with Congressman Brendan Boyle
- Meeting with the Assistant District Attorney's Office
- Meeting with US. Congressman Dwight Evans



Board Chair Mrs. Zemoria B. & Dr. E. Edi visited Congressman D. Evans, July 30, 2018

People say

Here are empowering statements from the people we served

"thank you Mr. Eric for all that you have done foor us" *L.W. mother wo received assistance with CYS case.*

" I called your office last week to tell you that Newmann Goretti Catholic School accepted to offfer my child tuition remission. Thank you so much. The kids will thank you themselves one day" *M.K hair braider needing assistance communicating with tuition office*.

"you took the time to come to my place to listen to me. This means a lot. I wish to get my children back." *J., mother involved in custody battle.*

BARTRAM'S GARDEN

With 45 acres along the Tidal Schuylkill River in Southwest Philadelphia, in what was once known as Lenapehoking, Bartram's Garden is Philadelphia's outdoor classroom and river garden. Since 1893, the non-profit John Bartram Association has nurtured this legendary landscape and shared the Bartram family's legacy of stewardship, creativity, and discovery with visitors of all ages.

John Bartram was an 18th-century naturalist and explorer who wished to make a "complete discovery" of native growth in America. His journeys into the new American wilderness fostered a transatlantic plant exchange that transformed landscapes in the colonies and Europe. His lifelong work and discoveries guide Bartram's Garden today as we creatively connect people to the wonders and lessons of nature.

Today the Garden is a free public park and a National Historic Landmark welcoming 95,000 neighbors each year. Join us for everything from urban farming to boating, family-friendly outdoor performances to bike rides on our riverfront trail, fishing to art classes. More details and a calendar of events are available at **bartramsgarden.org**

Financial Highlights

A detailed copy of the internally audited and board-approved financial statement for the year 2018 will be available on our website. www.africom-philly.org

"Credibility matters"

Over the years, AFRICOM has developed a culture of fiscal responsibility and accountabilty.



83% of our revenues were based on grants from private foundations.



42% of our expenses are on community programs

31% of our expenses represent salaries and honorariums for staff and volunteers

Funding

We dearly thank our funders. Their support make our achievements possible

The Samuel Fels Funds The Alfred and Mry Douty Foundation The Union of Benevolent Association The Philadelphia Activity Fund The Wawa Foundation The Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition (PICC) The Philadelphia Foundation Tickets for Kids Charity Bartram's Garden Sudanese Community Association Green Standards Bread and Roses Community Fund National Network of Library of Medicines The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging The Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN) Sanctuary Suppers



We started 2018 with a successful fundraising dinner at Flambo organized by Sanctuary Suppers, January 2018

Partners

At AFRICOM, we believe in leveraging community resources by partnering with numerous organizations and agencies.

Bartram's Garden, The University of Pennsylvania, Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School, African Family Health Organization (AFAHO), African Caribbean Cancer Consortium (ac3) ,The Southwest Community Development Corporation MinutemanPress, Haitian Coalition of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Department of Health, Philadelphia Autism Project, United African Organization, Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church, Nationalities Services Center, Office of Councilwoman Jenny Blackwell, Office of Councilwoman Helen Gym, Office of Councilman David Oh, New Sanctuary Movement, Funtimes Magazine, American Heart Association, The Sickle Cell Disease Association -Delaware Valley Chapter, Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY), Radio Xalaat, African Caribbean Business Council (ACBC), African Small Pot Restaurant, African and Jamaican Kitchen, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Office of Immigrant Affairs (OIA), Corrielus Cardiology, Restaurant le Nile, Philadelphia Neighborhood Small Business Council, Office of State Representative Joanna McClinton 191st District, The Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians, Multicultural Family Services, Coalition for Jamaica, Pennsylvania Association of Non-Profit Organizations (PANO), Nilien Insurance

Get Involved

Volunteer/Donate:

Online: www.africom-philly.org By check made to: Coalition of African Communities

> We are a 501 c (3) Public Charity organization Tax I.D # 22 – 3857591