



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## The Center for African American Health Increases Services to Support those Impacted by COVID-19 and Racial Inequities

*The Public Phase of CAA Health's Capital Campaign Hopes to Raise \$2 Million by May 2021*

**DENVER, Colo. (Nov. 10, 2020)** – When The Center for African American Health (CAA Health) moved into its own free-standing building on January 30, 2020, they had big plans to renovate, offer new on-site programming and classes, and rent space to other community-led organizations. The approximately 21,250 square foot building, located at 3350 Hudson Street in Denver's northeast Park Hill neighborhood is part of the Holly Area Redevelopment Project, which provides space to community-focused entities. Before CAA Health could even host its grand opening ceremony, however, the facility was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CAA Health launched a capital campaign in April 2019 to help fund the purchase of the new building, renovations, and expansion of programming and services. To date, the campaign has raised more than \$2.5 million thanks to the generosity of community leaders including:

- The Colorado Trust
- The Gates Family Foundation
- The Buell Foundation
- The City and County of Denver (DEDO)
- The Colorado Health Foundation
- The SCL Health Foundation
- The Caring for Colorado Foundation
- The El Pomar Foundation
- Colorado Health Access Fund (The Denver Foundation)
- Boettcher Foundation
- Anschutz Foundation
- Marco Abarca

Now entering the public phase of their campaign, CAA Health's goal is to raise an additional \$2 million by May of 2021. The funds will allow CAA Health to

purchase the \$4.7 million building that it is now leasing and complete the renovations necessary to help address the urgent health access needs facing African Americans in metro Denver. To learn more about CAA Health's capital campaign, click on the [case statement link](#), which outlines the history, goals, and future expansion plans.



*Figure 1 - Director of Development, John Reid receives a donation of masks outside of CAA Health's new building.*

Established in 1997, CAA Health’s mission is to improve the health and well-being of African Americans who have higher rates of illness, disability, and premature death from diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Last year, CAA Health served approximately 9,500 individuals through programs, events, and services, and its goal upon moving into the new facility was to expand services and programs by 25% in 2020.

Given the disproportionate impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the African American community, CAA Health’s management team and board worked quickly to adapt programming and re-envision usage of the facility space for the short-term. Since April, the parking lot at CAA Health has become a hub for offering onsite health and community services with full safety protocols in place including:

- Partnering with Denver Public Health and Denver Health to serve as a **community-based COVID-19 testing site**, which provided more than 500 individuals with free and easy access to COVID-19 testing.
- Hosting two **voter registration events** to support Get Out The Vote efforts.
- Offering a **drive-thru farm stand** in partnership with Sprout City Farms to provide access to affordable, healthy produce to the local community.
- Sponsoring drive-thru **flu vaccine clinics**, in partnership with Denver Public Health, to provide flu vaccines free of charge to the community.
- **Distributing personal protection equipment**, including 12,000 masks, and other critical supplies to families, food banks, homeless shelters, churches, and nonprofit organizations.
- CAA Health has distributed more than \$85,000 in emergency relief assistance to community members for food, rent, prescriptions and utilities.



*Figure 2 - Medical professionals from Denver Public Health provide COVID-19 testing to community members in the parking lot of The Center for African American Health.*

In addition, CAA Health has transitioned many of its programs and services to an online format, including diabetes and cardiovascular disease management classes, wellness programs for seniors, health insurance literacy, and referrals to community resources. CAA Health also launched two new programs in 2020 via virtual platforms – behavioral health and job training and development assistance – and served as a Census Outreach Center, helping to ensure that hard-to-reach communities participated in the 2020 Census.

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#### **About The Center for African American Health**

The mission of The Center for African American Health (CAA Health) is to improve the health and well-being of African Americans who have higher rates of illness, disability, and premature death from diseases such as



cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Established in 1997 and re-envisioned in 2005, CAA Health evolved from the health programming of the Metro Denver Black Church Initiative, which for more than a decade collaborated with black churches to offer health programs throughout the African American community, as well as programs for at-risk youth, academically struggling students, and ex-offenders. Since 2005, CAA Health has provided prevention and disease management programs focusing on diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, wellness programs for seniors, health insurance literacy, and a variety of health education topics as well as referrals to community resources. By leveraging their extensive community partnerships and relationships, CAA Health has provided evidenced-based, grassroots health education, health promotion, disease prevention and disease management programs to thousands of individuals throughout metro-Denver.