

Black Excellence Word Search

V Z X U T J S I M O N E B I L E S Y K K
Q Z N L K D S A B M I N S Z F N I Y E B
A L I C E C O A C H M A N B L Y F U T M
D K S F Y S L U S U T H K V O O I M A C
I S R V D O V M D N C N A G R H C C N D
U H J L E P N U J J L Y M S E P D Y J R
G I A B N R A H E O A P A E N N G J I M
T R M A Z E S A X O U E L R C U H M B A
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R E S A L I O M E G E B H N G J P M O T
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Y M D O O C G W P F N E I S O M E O N K
S D M R N K H T E I C O F B Y S R U M I
N D I H D O T Y W S V W V M N J S M H N
X B Z K O B F O J E Q E C C E B J K T G
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Z P V X O M R K J X W S R Q P R I A L R
Y Y S T D A A N D R E W Y O U N G M E X

- Alice Coachman
- Andrew Young
- Bayard Rustin
- Claudette Colvin
- Denzel Washington
- Dorothy Height
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr
- Excellence
- Florence Griffith Joyner
- James Baldwin
- Jesse Owens
- John Conyers Jr
- John Lewis
- Kamala Harris
- Ketanji Brown-Jackson
- Maya Angelou
- Muhammad Ali
- President Barack Obama
- Rosa Parks
- Serena Williams
- Shirley Chisholm
- Simone Biles



SPRING 2025

Brain Health Buzz
Brain health news for African Americans



In partnership with: African Americans Fighting Alzheimer's in Midlife (AA-FAIM), a sub-study of the Wisconsin Registry for Alzheimer's Prevention (WRAP)

From My Heart to Yours

By Dr. Fabu Phillis Carter, Senior Outreach Program Manager

I hope you all participated in some way, large or small, with Black History Month 2025, especially since it was our 99th year of celebration since its origins in 1926. The 100th anniversary of Black History Month will be next year in February 2026, which makes a century of celebrating our contributions to Wisconsin and the world extra special.

African Americans Fighting Alzheimer's Disease in Midlife joined with organizer Ericka Booe, Older Adult Program & Outreach Coordinator at the Madison Senior Center, along with the African Center, the African American Opioid Coalition, Black Women Wellness, NewBridge and Safe Communities for a Black History Month Festival on February 28th, from 1 to 4 p.m. It was joyous with delicious foods from Africa and traditional soul food from America. There was music, a program, bingo and informational tables upstairs. Everyone had an enjoyable time.

March is National Nutrition Month and the theme is "Food Connects Us." At the Get Movin' In Motion exercise class, we will be having fresh fruit and vegetable trays provided by Chef James Bloodsaw, the owner of Just Veggies, his 100 percent Black-owned, family-owned and completely vegan restaurant at 540 State Street. We will also have Sara Karlson from Rooted as our Stay Well Speaker on March 18th right after the exercise class, from 2 to 2:30 p.m. Make sure you come out and hear her discuss preparing for gardening, fresh food nutrition, the exercise garden plots available and to answer any questions you might have.

I am excited to introduce Professor Jennifer J. Manly, our Solomon Carter Fuller 2025 speaker, on April 5th. She is an example of a brilliant Black scientist who is a Professor of Neuropsychology and Neurology at Columbia University. Neuropsychology is the study of the relationship between behavior, emotion, and cognition and brain function. Her research focuses on how inequalities affect how we think and age. Please do not miss the opportunity to hear Professor Manly present her work that affirms our strength and resilience against societal bias. You may have already received your invitation to this event, happening on April 5, 2025, from 9:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Madison College - Goodman South Campus, which is located at 2429 Perry St, 2nd Floor, Madison, WI 53713 . Please register by March 27th. Guests arriving late (after 10 a.m.) might be seated in an overflow room with a live feed of the speakers on a monitor. Please note that arriving after 10 a.m. may also result in missing the brunch buffet. Limited transportation is available so please put that on the registration form. Call 608-235-4745 for questions or concerns.

Currently there are no new updates on our study or funding. I remain thankful for your participation in our studies and being a part of our team to understand and one day prevent memory loss.



Research Volunteer
Appreciation Event:
Honoring Black Study Participants

SAVE THE DATE



July 12, 2025

More information coming soon





Art Thoughts

By Annik Dupaty, MA
ADRC Outreach Program Coordinator

Could Watching Uplifting Movies Reduce Your Stress and Improve Your Brain Health?

Let's start with good news, did you know that a 2016 study found that laughter can actually reduce the levels of hormones in the body responsible for stress? Chronic stress can take a toll on your brain, so it is important to manage stress for overall brain health. When you're stressed, your brain releases cortisol, a hormone that increases blood sugar and metabolism, partly through stimulating insulin release in the blood. But if stress sticks around too long, your brain gets flooded with cortisol, leading to things like anxiety, weight gain, depression, and sleep problems, and too much stress can lead to or make Alzheimer's disease worse. Research shows that stress hits African Americans harder and is a risk factor for Alzheimer's disease. While researchers are still learning about the connection between stress and cognition, it's clear that stress is something we can have at least some control over.

One great way to try to manage stress is by doing relaxing activities, like watching feel-good movies. Think about comedies and other uplifting movies you've seen. How did you feel while watching them? Were you laughing and smiling? Did you get your giggle on with friends and family? Are you still quoting lines from your favorite flick? Did a movie ever make you feel inspired to learn something new, or feel a sense of hope or pride? Make it a habit to watch movies, shows, and online content that bring you joy and inspiration each week. Try to avoid watching films and programs that increase your feelings of stress, tension, or worry. Use the list below to get started this spring and let your laughter and happiness grow!



MOVIE SUGGESTIONS

Akeelah and the Bee (2006)
Black Panther (2018)
Brown Sugar (2002)
Coming to America (1988)
Drumline (2002)
Jumping the Broom (2011)
Queen of Katwe (2016)
Roll Bounce (2005)
Sister Act (1992)
Southside with You (2016)
Sylvie's Love (2020)
The Photograph (2020)
The Wiz (1978)

9 Stress Management Tips



Wisconsin Alzheimer's
Disease Research Center
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH



Research has shown that chronic stress can have long-term effects on the brain, so managing stress is an important factor in overall brain health. When experiencing stress, the brain releases cortisol, a hormone that increases sugars in the blood and increases metabolism, partly through stimulating insulin release in the blood. If stress levels remain high for an extended period, the brain is exposed to too much cortisol, resulting in increased anxiety and blood pressure, increased risk for vascular disease, weight gain, depression, and sleep disruptions. It's essential to find effective ways to manage and relieve stress. Below are some tips to help you reduce stress and support brain health:

1 Practice Mindfulness and Meditation: One of the best ways of managing stress is by practicing mindfulness. Practicing mindfulness a few minutes a day can help improve your overall mood, boost focus levels, reduce stress and anxiety, and improve overall brain function. The Healthy Minds Program App offers meditation training and is available for free.

2 Exercise Regularly: Physical activity releases endorphins, which are natural stress relievers. Scan the QR code for exercise ideas, like the Get Movin' and Men in Motion fitness classes.

3 Get Quality Sleep: Sleeping is one of the most important things you do in your day. Develop a sleep routine and aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Scan the QR code for more sleep tips.

4 Social Connections: Interactions with friends and family can help reduce stress and improve your overall well-being. Laughter releases endorphins and reduces stress hormones.

5 Hobbies: Doing things you enjoy, like listening to music, creating art or gardening, can be a great way to de-stress and promote relaxation.

6 Limit Caffeine and Alcohol: Excessive caffeine and alcohol intake can contribute to stress and disrupt sleep patterns.

7 Healthy Diet: Eat a well-balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Omega-3 fatty acids found in fish, flaxseed, and walnuts are particularly beneficial for brain health and can help reduce stress. Scan the QR code to learn more about the MIND diet for healthy brain aging.

8 Cognitive Challenges: Engaging in puzzles, reading, learning a new skill, or playing brain-training games can help boost cognitive function and reduce stress.

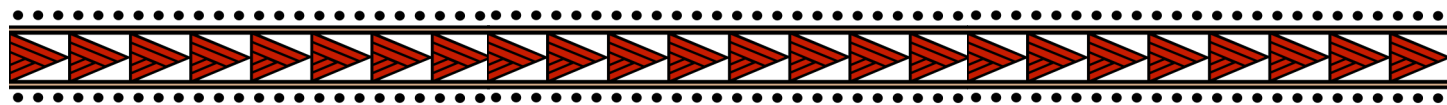
9 Seek Professional Help: If stress becomes overwhelming and begins interfering with your daily life, consider seeking care from a mental health professional. They can provide effective coping strategies and support to manage stress and improve your overall well-being.

Loneliness, depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts are issues that many people face. If you or someone you care about may be at risk, call or text 988 for help.

Visit
adrc.wisc.edu/stress-management
for links to resources or scan the
QR code.

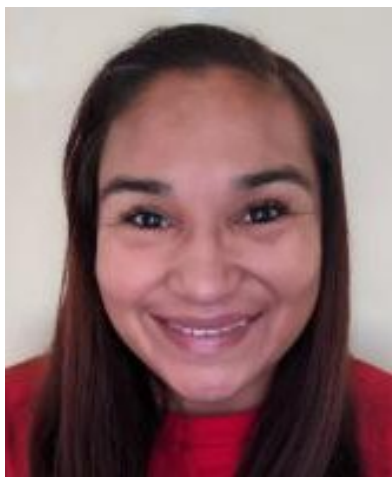


Finding the right combination of these strategies that work for you might take some time; what works to relieve stress can vary from person to person. Be patient and kind to yourself throughout the process.



Oneida Outreach Update

By Sacheen Lawrence, Native American Outreach Specialist

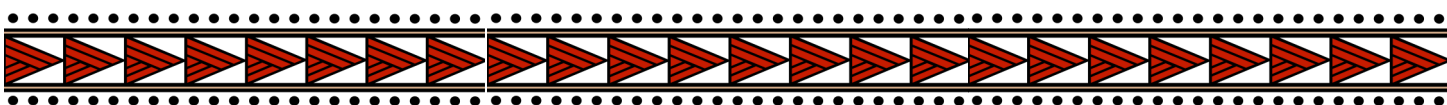


I hope everyone had a great holiday and that 2025 brings good health and happiness. I have several updates to share with you:

- This year, the Oneida community is partnering with the Healthy Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) quarterly education series and bringing the program to the Oneida Community Health Center. The first installment will take place on March 14 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The topic of discussion will be, "Personalized Pathways to Wellness." Visit adrc.wisc.edu/mci to learn more. Please contact Shendola Flores at 920-869-4995 to register.
- We are nearing completion of our 2025 care boxes for our research participants. Keep an eye out for more information.
- We are coordinating "Spring into Brain Health," an exciting community event to be held in May with educational speakers and resources for our community members to learn more about Alzheimer's disease and dementia and how it affects the Native American community. More details coming soon.
- In December, I was able to help out with an event in Madison for new African American study participants that I enjoyed.

I appreciate serving our community and seek culturally relevant activities to share with our research participants. As always, you can reach out to me via email with any questions, concerns, or comments at slawrence@medicine.wisc.edu.

Yaw^ko (Thank-you)



Introducing India Johnson

My name is India Johnson, and I am from Milwaukee. I am studying at UW-Madison and majoring in Global Health with a certificate in Afro-American Studies. I am a new research assistant in the Gleason Lab, and was drawn to it for its innovative work and dedication to assisting marginalized communities while making meaningful efforts to combat systemic health disparities.

Free and
Open to
the Public



Saturday, April 5
9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

Goodman South Campus
Madison College
2429 Perry Street, 2nd Floor
Madison, WI

Solomon Fuller Carter Brain Health Brunch

Building awareness of Alzheimer's disease in the African American community

You are invited to this special event that includes:

- Health & Wellness Fair
- Free brunch
- Keynote address by Dr. Jennifer J. Manly, whose research focuses on mechanisms of inequalities in cognitive aging and Alzheimer's disease
- And much more!



Dr. Jennifer J. Manly
Professor of
neuropsychology
in neurology at
Columbia University,
New York City, NY

Hosted by:



**Wisconsin Alzheimer's
Disease Research Center**
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

AA-FAIM
African Americans Fighting
Alzheimer's in Midlife



Registration is required by March 27, 2025

Scan the QR code or visit
adrc.wisc.edu/scf2025 for more details
Additional questions? Contact Annik Dupaty at
608-265-4790 or andupaty@medicine.wisc.edu

UW experts say risk of developing dementia is predicted to double by 2060

What UW researchers, faculty are doing to reduce risk of this disease
By Abby Nagel

As of 2019, nearly one in two Americans over age 55 are at risk of dementia, according to the Census Bureau’s report. Dementia is the progressive decline in memory and cognitive ability over time and impacts about 6.7 million Americans every year.

Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine Dr. Nathaniel Chin weighed in on what Americans can do to reduce the risk of developing dementia in an article in *Fortune*. According to Chin, continued learning, staying socially connected, managing chronic conditions, protecting hearing and limiting alcohol intake can strengthen neural networks, reducing the risk of developing dementia.

Forty-five percent of dementia cases may be prevented by monitoring these risk factors, according to a study in *The Lancet*. As a result of this discovery, UW experts are attempting to find a way to detect and diagnose Alzheimer’s before symptoms occur.

There is a misconception within the general public on the difference between Alzheimer’s and dementia. Alzheimer’s is characterized by a disease of the brain that usually leads to dementia. It is also a specific type of dementia. In 2023, 6.7 million Americans were diagnosed with



Dr. Nathaniel Chin

Alzheimer’s. Researchers at the UW School of Medicine have discovered a way to diagnose Alzheimer’s before the onset of symptoms through detecting biomarkers in a simple blood test using Wisconsin’s Registry for Alzheimer’s Prevention data.

The Wisconsin Alzheimer’s Institute Director Dr. Cynthia Carlsson is a part of the team of researchers that is testing a patient’s blood for specific proteins indicating whether or not Alzheimer’s disease is present.

“We look for two types of proteins in a blood sample: the autosomal dominant protein Presenilin and Ptau-217,” Carlsson said.



Dr. Cynthia Carlsson

Presenilin is involved in Alzheimer’s disease, and a mutation in the gene that produces Presenilin is a cause of Alzheimer’s. This genetic mutation is the leading cause of Alzheimer’s, according to a study conducted by the NIH. An abnormal spike in amyloid protein, a protein aggregate that causes disease, creates an abnormal spike in Ptau-217 protein. Blood tests can detect this spike in Ptau-217, and this advancement may entail promising results for the medical industry.

“There are 700 participants in the study,” Carlsson said. “We focus on looking at middle-aged adults with no memory symptoms and follow them over time to see if we can detect these changes in the brain earlier.”

(Continued on next page)

Dr. Carey Gleason is the principal investigator of the African Americans Fighting Alzheimer’s in Midlife study at the Wisconsin Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center. The team’s goal is to make early detection of Alzheimer’s accessible to all through the mechanism of a blood test, according to Gleason.

The Census Bureau’s report noted how the risk of developing dementia is significantly higher for marginalized groups. The risk of dementia in African Americans is disproportionately higher than in their white counterparts, according to the report. UW researchers are attempting to bridge this gap. According to WRAP data, Black Americans are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer’s and other types of dementia but often do not get treatment or care until much later into the disease.

The quicker the disease can be identified, the better quality of life a person will have, as treatment can begin before the onset of symptoms. The AA-FAIM was established to bring resources to the community and inspire health promotion, yet the Black community has often been underrepresented in the field of research and is more susceptible to disease.

“Five hundred and fifty African Americans were recruited for this study, over half were recruited here in Madison,” Gleason said. “One hundred Native Americans also enrolled.”

In the study, participants were followed for up to four years and researchers took incremental measurements on the amount of amyloid in the bloodstream, measuring cognitive ability over time. Early into the study, a pattern emerged that a lower amyloid level in the body is associated with a decline in cognitive performance. Though this observation did not meet measures of statistical significance, researchers for AA-FAIM seek to prove this association through further research.

This study would provide a less invasive way to test for Alzheimer’s, and it would be easier for rural clinics to get their hands on blood kits as opposed to the methods of testing for Alzheimer’s that are currently available.

“Under-resourced medical centers do not have the specialty services that urban clinics and hospitals have as they are often more primary care based and lack the technology necessary to diagnose some diseases,” Gleason said. “A simple blood draw and a cognitive exam would help reduce barriers to care for African and Native Americans.”

A recently rescinded executive order by President Donald Trump calls into question the viability of certain research endeavors. Without proper funding, it can be difficult for scientific studies to continue and provide results.

“Our lab is strong in detection methodology and neuroimaging and blood tests capabilities are among the best in the nation,” Gleason said. “We excel with groups who are underrepresented in research and who are more susceptible to disease. We have racial and medical condition diversity. We increase representation across different medical conditions.”



Dr. Carey Gleason



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