

## **Black Barbershop Health Outreach Program To Address African American Men And Diabetes**

*By Dr. Bill Releford*

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*Event Marks the Launch of Dr. Bill Releford's DAP Foundation to address health care disparities in African Americans*

(LOS ANGELES, Nov. 27, 2007) -- Dr. Bill Releford, founder of the Diabetic Amputation Prevention Foundation (DAP), will offer free diabetes and high-blood pressure screenings to African American men at over 22 black owned barbershops throughout the Los Angeles area, Sat. Dec. 8, 2007, 8 – 12 noon. The Black Barbershop Health Outreach Program, sponsored in part by Bayer Pharmaceutical, One United Bank and KJLH 102.3 radio station, will utilize the existing community based infrastructure of black owned barbershops to conduct cardiovascular screenings to African American men as well as provide culturally appropriate educational materials about exercise and fitness, obesity, prostate cancer and HIV. Diabetes and high blood pressure screenings will be free to the public in all 22 locations from Watts to Wilshire Blvd. Additionally, a panel discussion will be broadcasted live on KJLH 102.3 FM from a local barbershop in Inglewood.

The Black Barbershop Health Outreach Program is the first event of its kind in Los Angeles and will address the growing concern of undetected cardiovascular disease in African American men. Forty percent (40%) of African American men die prematurely from cardiovascular disease as compared to 21% of white men. Black men suffer far worse health conditions than any other racial group in America. There are a number of reasons for this. They include racial discrimination; a lack of affordable health services; poor health education, cultural barriers; poverty, employment that does not carry health insurance; insufficient medical and social services catering to black men.

According to Dr. Releford, the mission of the DAP Foundation's Black Barbershop Outreach program is to increase public awareness of diabetes and its complications by early detection, information dissemination, and referral to the appropriate medical resource. "Our goal is to screen over 1000 African American men from Watts to Wilshire Blvd. and provide preventive education about the disease and its complications," he explains.

"The Black Barbershop has traditionally been a place where black men from all segments of society could come together to talk about life, family, relationships and now I am hoping we can start talking about our health," explains Donte Kelly, the Black Barbershop Outreach Coordinator.

The DAP Foundation's African American Men's Outreach Program seeks to partner with community groups / organizations to reduce the incidence of health conditions that adversely affect African American males by utilizing education, prevention and early detection by screening activities. Our efforts will be duplicated in other metropolitan areas such as Oakland, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Baltimore and New York beginning in the spring of 2008.

[www.blackbarbershop.org](http://www.blackbarbershop.org)

Category	African American Men's Health
Email	<a href="mailto:bill@blackbarbershop.org">Click to email author</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.blackbarbershop.org">http://www.blackbarbershop.org</a>
Phone	310-412-8009
City/Town	Los Angeles

State/Province California  
Country United States