

## **YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix Receives Systems Change Grant from Maricopa County Department of Public Health**

**Glendale, AZ, July 18, 2022** – YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix was awarded a transformational grant by the Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) to address health disparities that were created or worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix will use the US Department of Health and Human Services COVID-19 grant, *Building Healthy and Resilient Communities*, to develop suggestions for policy, systems, and environment change, with specific emphasis on discovering ways to help seniors and LGBTQ youth recover and thrive in the post COVID-19 pandemic environment.

“Our approach is embedded in developing and leveraging radical partnerships with the people we intend to serve and our partnering organizations” says Debbie Esparza, CEO, YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix. “This grant will enable us to create more safe spaces for courageous conversations, champion more changemakers in community and amplify voices of those who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and in this now endemic environment.”

Jannah Scott joins the YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix team as Director, Systems Change Initiatives to implement this grant. Scott, a former Obama Administration official, has a depth and breadth of policy and program experience. She will lead discussions with communities in Northwest Maricopa County and serve as a convener and thought partner for meaningful change.

Through a structured theory of change process, recommendations will be offered to County officials on strategies to increase access to and eradicate racism and discrimination in mental health and public health systems for elders and LGBTQ youth ages 18-24.

Jannah adds, “We understand that race and ethnicity are key indicators of access overall, so we keep this lens front and center as we do this work. By listening to those in community who have borne the worst of this pandemic, we will be able to discover, learn from and share “ground-truth” insight into policy, systems and environmental policy discussions. This will lead to meaningful changes that may be needed to address service barriers, whether structural or discriminatory.”

*This project is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$498,689.45 with 100% funded by CDC/HHS. The contents of this announcement are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by CDC/HHS or the U.S. Government.*

**About YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix:**

Since 1912, YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix has been on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. We imagine an equitable and inclusive Phoenix for everyone. We focus on how race and gender impact the issues that impact Phoenix and we create safe spaces for courageous conversations. In addition to our advocacy and racial justice convenings, we provide direct services to seniors, low-income women and their families through our home-delivered meals, senior center services, and prosperity programs.