

NAACP

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane.” Martin Luther King Jr.

Maternal Mortality Program



The Springfield NAACP, SWMO NOW, Planned Parenthood and Reproaction sponsored the event on the Drury University campus on April 15. The panelists: Dr. Sabrina Brinson of MSU, Dr. David Darossett of Drury, Carla Lantz, Nurse Practitioner from Planned Parenthood and Tehesha Stegall, Nurse Practitioner from Jordan Valley Health Center discussed the high rates of maternal mortality in the African American community. Issues identified as playing a role included access to care, poor prenatal care, indifference and racism. The event was covered by KOLR-10, attended by about 50 people and provided knowledge and insight into this shocking problem.



Meet Austin Boyland, Clinical Informaticist III Cox Health

What does a Clinical Informaticist do? I oversee parts of our compliance regarding the Electronic Health Record as required by federal regulatory bodies. I am responsible for the providers in 3 hospitals and about 80 clinics. *What type of education do you have for this job?* I have a Bachelors in Public Relations with a Minor in Political Science that I earned from MSU in 2012 and a Masters in Health Administration that I earned from MSU in 2014. *What type of salary could be expected in this type of job?* You could expect 40-70 thousand dollars a year. *What about your early education?* I grew up in Ellington, Mo. and went from kindergarten through 12th grade there. My graduation class had 52 students in it. So far I am the only mixed or black person to go through K-12 in Ellington.

Why did you go into healthcare? The healthcare system has had

African Americans Underrepresented in Healthcare Professions

The National NAACP funded a large study in 2015 to grade 6 very large healthcare systems on their performance in a number of factors around opportunity and diversity. Of the six healthcare systems examined: Ascension Health, Catholic Health Initiatives, Community Health Systems, Dignity Health (out of San Francisco), Hospital Corporation of America and Tenet Healthcare, only Dignity Health received a grade of "B". None received a grade of "A". Some of the notable findings were:

- Growth numbers for Black and Latino physicians are stagnant.
- Small numbers of minorities in highly skilled professions.
- Very small numbers of minorities in senior management.
- Small numbers of minority businesses involved in procurement and supplies.

The Springfield Mo. NAACP Health Committee is currently collecting statistics on the local market, training programs for future professionals and efforts by local institutions to improve African American representation in healthcare. The link to the report can be found at naacp.org opportunity & diversity report. card

several very important impacts on my life. I was born prematurely and spent some time in a newborn intensive care unit. I had a major back surgery at the age of 16 and another back surgery last year. I have been impressed at the skill and caring that was shown to me during those vulnerable times. I care about people but don't have the stomach to take care of patients. My family has also been involved with the provision of healthcare for others. My great grandfather was a Missouri State Representative for about 15 years and he was responsible for obtaining the funding to open the Reynolds County Hospital in Ellington. The hospital was opened in 1978 and was operational until March 11, 2016. It was very important to the community and they were devastated when it closed. The hospital was bought out by SoutheastHEALTH and then shuttered because Medicaid expansion was defeated making it an unprofitable venture. Currently if people in Ellington have an emergency they have a 45 minute drive to Poplar Bluff. I have seen first hand what happens when healthcare is unavailable due to financial considerations.

Tell us about your family. My mom is white from the rural town of Ellington, Mo. (population 1,000). My mom's side of the family is deeply rooted there. They own businesses and have been in the community for decades. My dad is black, urban and is from Memphis, TN and currently lives in Springfield. I have an incredibly strong family. Although my parents are divorced they (and both sides of my family) have always been supportive. *Do you have your own family now?* Yes, I live with my partner, one dog and two cats. *What are your goals for the future?* I would like to grow my technical career, earn a PhD, perhaps teach and retire young. *Have you ever experienced racism?* Yes, being mixed is interesting due to the inherent privilege some of our society grants light skin. Some acquaintances will tell me they consider me white (as an implied compliment) but then will be quick to call me n***** if there is a problem. Black is beautiful and powerful no matter the shade.

What advice do you have for young people? Never be afraid to talk about race. We can't move forward unless we have the conversation. Don't let lack of representation determine what field you go into, in healthcare you may find yourself in the patients you take care of.