

Foundation for Black Women's Wellness: Receives major gift

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Foundation for Black Women's Wellness receives major gift *Healthy Dane Funders stress value of community leadership*

MADISON - The Foundation for Black Women's Wellness, a Dane County, Wisconsin based non-profit committed to improving Black women's health, has received a major boost through a \$200,000 grant from a local collaborative of health-care organizations.

Healthy Dane Funders, comprising Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin, SSM Health, UnityPoint Health-Meriter and UW Health, made the two-year commitment to support the organization's efforts to address health disparities affecting African-American women. The gift will fund work primarily aimed at heart health and maternal and child health.

Lisa Peyton-Caire, founder and president of the Foundation will become the organization's first paid employee after more than six years of devoted volunteer leadership. She said the priorities, especially the focus on mothers and children, arose from the pressing health needs of Black women in Dane County and the community health-needs assessment done by the four Healthy Dane organizations.

"As an organization led by and for women of color, we are deeply committed to doing our part to reduce and eliminate the disparities that disproportionately impact Black women and their families in Dane County. We're excited and grateful for the Collaborative's generous support and continued partnership as we work to reduce

the impact of chronic illnesses like heart disease among Black women, and to improve our birth outcomes in a time where twice as many black babies in Dane County die in their first year of life compared to white infants,” said Peyton-Caire.

The gift was announced by Peyton-Caire and Healthy Dane representatives on Saturday at the Foundation’s 10th annual **Black Women’s Wellness Day** before a sold-out crowd of over 550 women, girls, health advocates and partners from across Dane County and Wisconsin. Launched by Peyton-Caire in 2009, the popular event led to the establishment of the Foundation in 2012 as a vehicle to provide year-round programming and support to local women.

“The Foundation has established itself as an effective leader and advocate for Black women’s health in the community, and this gift will place them in the forefront of work to improve health in the African-American community,” said Juli Aulik, UW Health Community Relations Director and Healthy Dane Funders representative. “Its many volunteers deserve to have their efforts amplified, and their leadership recognized as arising organically from the community the organization serves.”

For more information about the Foundation, visit www.ffbww.org.