



Tigerlily Foundation to Lead Historic Special Session on Health Equity, Collaboration and Partnership at the 2020 San Antonio Breast Cancer Virtual Symposium

December 8, 2020 - Tigerlily Foundation, a national breast cancer organization established by a Black, first-generation immigrant woman and patient-led organization will open the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium (SABCS). Maimah Karmo, President and Founder of the Tigerlily Foundation, has set the stage for a new day, as she has raised the bar higher in health equity, taking the stage as the first Black patient leader to co-host the opening special session at this global scientific conference. Although the path to representation and being on an equal playing field as scientists and researchers has been long, particularly as a woman of color, Karmo knew that the road to health equality and justice takes time; and in the midst of racial injustice, a global pandemic, and heightened disparities faced by people of color, the time was now to set and take the stage to usher in a new day.

Tigerlily Foundation co-hosts this historic special session in collaboration with the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), titled *Setting the Stage for Health Equity, Collaboration and Partnership*, on December 8, 2020, to discuss continued collaborative action towards health equity in breast cancer care, at SABCS 2020. The event is designed to foster transformational dialogue and lead to specific strategies to end barriers at every level of healthcare for people of color.

Maimah Karmo and Dr. Chuck Perou, Professor of Genetics, LCCC Member, and Co-Director of the Computational Medicine Program at the University of North Carolina will co-host this session, with some of the most globally renowned scientists of color. Shawn Johnson, a medical student at Harvard Medical School will make a special presentation on the history of how racism, redlining, segregation, and institutional policies affects healthcare; followed by three presentations - by Dr. Lisa Newman surgical breast oncologist and Chief of the Section of Breast Surgery, and a physician scientist of Weill Cornell Medical College; Dr. Funmi Olopade, a breast medical oncologist and physician-scientist, and is a pioneer in cancer genetics, and the “Walter L. Palmer Distinguished Service Professor of Medicine and Human Genetics AND Director of the Center for Clinical Cancer Genetics and Global Health” from the University of Chicago; and Dr. Maria Elena Martinez of UCSD, a Professor in the Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science, who holds the Sam M. Walton Endowed Chair for Cancer Research and Co-leads Community Outreach & Engagement at the Moores Cancer Center.

This session builds on Tigerlily Foundation’s innovative and patient-first approach to engaging patients of color, and its historic Young Women’s Metastatic Breast Cancer Disparities Fireside Chat, where Tigerlily Foundation brought the largest contingency of Black women to the conference, to host a conversation centered on understanding the gaps, misperceptions and barriers within the healthcare system that affect young women of color with metastatic breast cancer (MBC). The 2020 SABCS special session will highlight this year's achievements – Tigerlily’s national MBC ANGEL Advocacy Training which educated women of color living with metastatic breast cancer and living in the 20 cities with the highest mortality rate of breast cancer; a COVID-19 Relief Program; a myriad of virtual on-line and COVID-safe in-personal activations in communities of color to provide education and access to screening; engagement of



thousands of advocates nationwide; monthly bi-directional conversation series, between Black patient experts and non-Black healthcare professionals; and more than 400 million social media impressions from social and mainstream media focusing on health disparities.

Most notably, Tigerlily Foundation launched the #inclusionpledge which provides a transparent and tangible framework across stakeholder sectors to identify and track equity actions, holding anyone accountable – who through action or inaction – impacts the lives of women of color – to make specific and measurable change to improve outcomes for Black and Brown women.

For this Tigerlily Foundation and AACR's Special Session, *Setting the Stage for Health Equity, Collaboration and Partnership*, partners and attendees are invited to use their privilege for power by taking the #inclusionpledge.

At the 2019 SABCS, several advocates made an #inclusionpledge to only participate in advocacy initiatives – panels, advisory boards, planning committees, programs—that include the experience of Black women. This year, the pledge has expanded and is a rallying cry and call to action, as Tigerlily Foundation encourages leaders in the breast cancer care ecosystem— pharmaceutical companies, clinical research organizations, clinicians, healthcare systems, healthcare payor systems and physician organizations and groups—to stand up and join those efforts with their own specific actions we can take now to help end disparities. Visit [Tigerlily Foundation #InclusionPledge for Black Women](#) to learn how you can collaborate on these efforts.

“Race, literacy, financial barriers, access, social, systemic and hereditary backgrounds should not be determinants of life and health equity. To continue to accelerate impact as it relates to disparities and women of color, the #inclusionpledge is imperative. As an organization, Tigerlily Foundation was founded to address inequity – of age, of stage and of color. We must see that health disparities is a racial justice and civil rights issue and work to end this injustice. Never again should there be health meetings without Black patients on the stage, providing real world input. There have been no ramifications for healthcare systems that has hurt when meant to heal, but one in which patients of color face unequal health treatment, limited access to clinical trials, unconscious bias and microaggressions - patients who the healthcare system has taken an oath to protect. This is the reality of living with cancer while being Black. If the global community could unite to develop three vaccines for COVID-19 in six months, eliminating all barriers to healthcare IS possible. We can change this by enacting anti-racist policies across the globe and checks and balances to combat discrimination throughout every aspect of our healthcare system. We must have vulnerable, heart-based conversations, and healing – on both sides. Being Black should not negate our right to live. The murder of George Floyd unveiled the inherent disregard for Black people's lives. It is incumbent on all, especially those whose privilege allows for oppression of others, to use that privilege to end barriers. We launch the #inclusionpledge to advocate for and activate the inclusion of women of color across initiatives impacting their breast and overall health.” – Maimah Karmo, President, Tigerlily Foundation.



“This Special Session at the SABCS meeting is critically important and represents a step forward towards the goal of providing equitable health care to all. We are directly talking to the right audience, which represents thousands of cancer health care providers from around the world, and these are the people who can enact change. To accomplish this goal, we will discuss many of the possible causes of health care outcome disparities, be they societal or biological, and plan to identify solutions that will bring us closer to a level health care playing field.” – Charles M. Perou, PhD, The May Goldman Shaw Professor of Molecular Oncology

“I’m proud to be a part of this powerful session, where Tigerlily Foundation and the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium have partnered to create a landmark program of presentations highlighting the multi-factorial nature of breast cancer disparities. This session will feature groundbreaking research regarding the cascade of influences - ranging from socio-economics and systemic racism, to tumor biology and genetics - all of which converge to result in the 40% higher breast cancer mortality rates observed in African American compared to White American women. This session goes even further with groundbreaking discussion of how policy and advocacy can be leveraged to address and reverse these disparities, and the importance of true collaboration with patients as experts.” – Dr. Lisa Newman, Weill Cornell Medicine

“The special session taking place at SABCS is important. Disparities in breast cancer care and survival outcomes for Black women have to be addressed now. It's time to shift the paradigm from limited narratives about socioeconomic status and poverty and bring attention to structural racism and provider bias that impacts the breast cancer care and survival of Black women.” – Jamil Rivers, Founder and CEO of The Chrysalis Initiative

This session will be aligned with a Twitter activation, which coincides with the graduation of his event is generously supported by AmGen, Athenex Oncology, Daiichi Sankyo, Immunomedics, Sanofi, SeaGen, Lily Oncology, Merck and Pfizer, and in partnership with the Iris Collaborative.

Event Information:

Title: The SABCS SPECIAL SESSION - Presented by Tigerlily Foundation & AACR Poster Spotlight Sessions and Panel Discussions on Setting the Stage for Health Equity, Collaboration and Partnership (Panel Discussion, Twitter Chat and Facebook Live)

Date/Time: December 8, 2020, 8:15a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CST

Location: Virtual Symposium, San Antonio, Texas

Register: <https://www.sabcs.org/2020-SABCS-sup-sup/SABCS-sup-sup-Registration-Virtual>

Contact: Email inclusionpledge@tigerlilyfoundation.org to interview participants at SABCS or in their local communities, or for more information on media, partnerships or sponsorship opportunities.