

African Americans Reach A A R T H and Teach Health



COMMUNITY ROOT



ED



Health Focused

AARTH

Equity Driven

A Message from Our Leadership

Dear Friends of AARTH,

As I enter retirement after nearly five years as Executive Director, I am deeply grateful for the community that has carried this work forward.

I began this role during the COVID-19 pandemic, when our communities faced immense challenges. African American elders were especially impacted, and the need for trusted, compassionate support was clear. In that time, I witnessed the strength of AARTH's community. Volunteers, funders, partners, and community members came together with resilience, care, and purpose.

Because of you, AARTH has continued to educate, support, and uplift those we serve. This organization is more than programs. It is a community rooted in dignity, compassion, and connection.

As I step into retirement, it is my honor to pass leadership to someone who reflects the heart of this work.

Together, we will continue to grow, serve, and uplift.
With gratitude,

Kathleen Wilcox
Executive Director (Retiring)



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MISSION

AARTH exists to advance **health equity by educating, empowering, and advocating for African American communities and all people of African descent in Seattle.**

We work to eliminate health disparities through culturally responsive education, community partnerships, prevention programs, and leadership that promotes access, dignity, and justice in healthcare.

VISION

We envision a future where every community has equitable access to healthcare, accurate information, compassionate care, and the resources needed to live long, healthy, and empowered lives.

A future where health disparities are no longer predictable by race, income, or zip code and where prevention, education, and community leadership shape public health outcomes.



CORE VALUES

Equity: We are committed to closing health gaps and addressing systemic barriers that impact African American communities.

Education: We believe knowledge saves lives. We provide clear, accurate, and culturally relevant health education.

Community: We build trusted relationships and partnerships that strengthen collective impact.

Compassion: We approach every individual with dignity, empathy, and respect.

Advocacy: We speak up for policies and practices that improve access, prevention, and care.

Accountability: We measure our impact and remain transparent in our commitment to community health.

Cultural Responsiveness: We honor the lived experiences, traditions, and voices of the communities we serve



utch
Center

solidarity

Unity People
Helping People

AFRICAN AMERICANS
REACH & TEACH
HEALTH MINISTRY
EARTH

KEY MILESTONES

Achieved

Successfully delivered workshops on HIV education, chronic disease outreach, senior wellness, caregiver support, opioid prevention, and workforce health training.

Launched

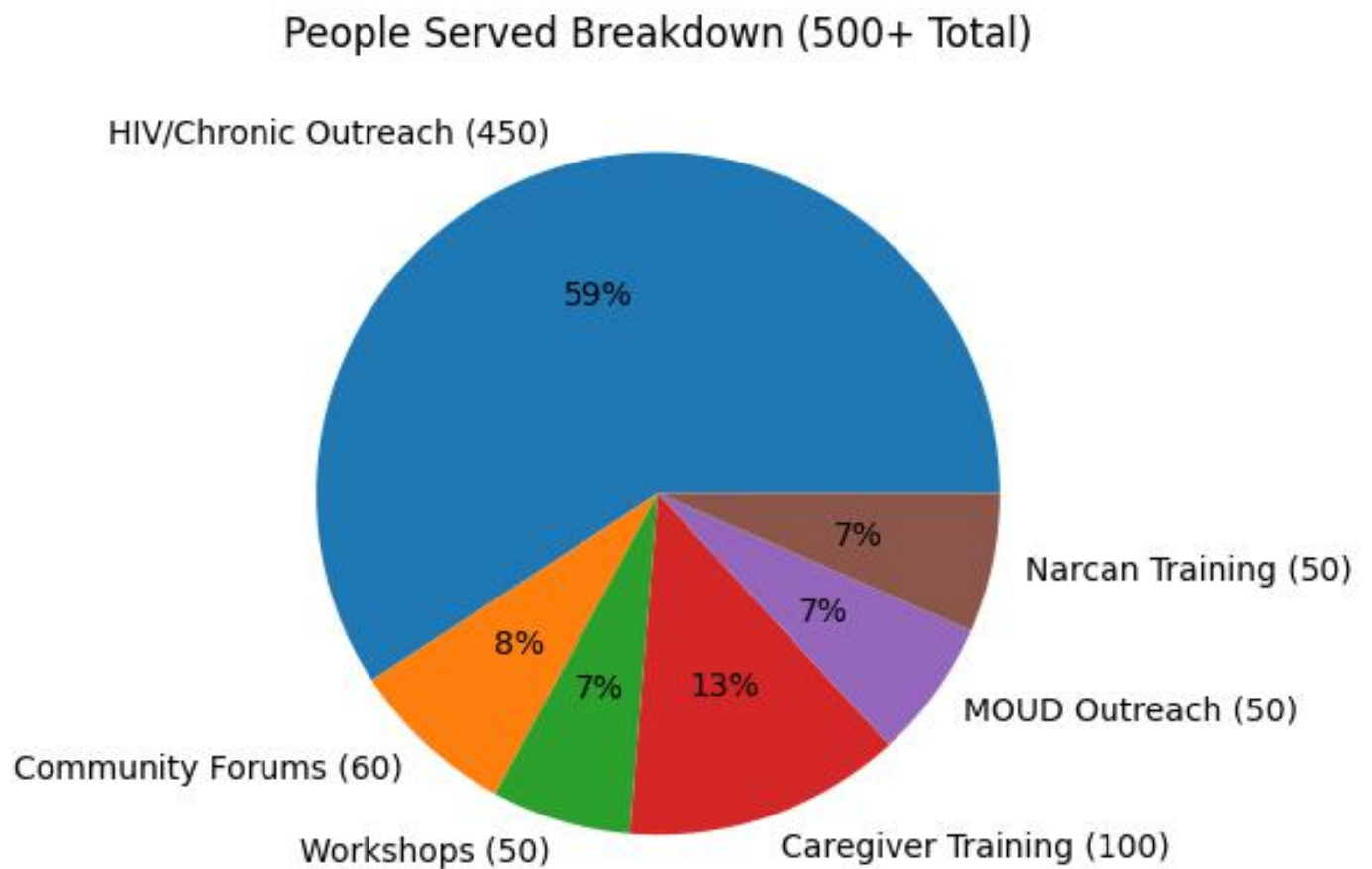
Launched the Bingocize series, movement workshops, an LGBTQ senior support group, and HIV awareness workshops to support healthy aging and community wellness.

Expanded

HIV/AIDS education, chronic disease workshops, MOUD awareness efforts, Narcan training, and Senior Health Promotion programs across Seattle through strategic partnerships and public health contracts.

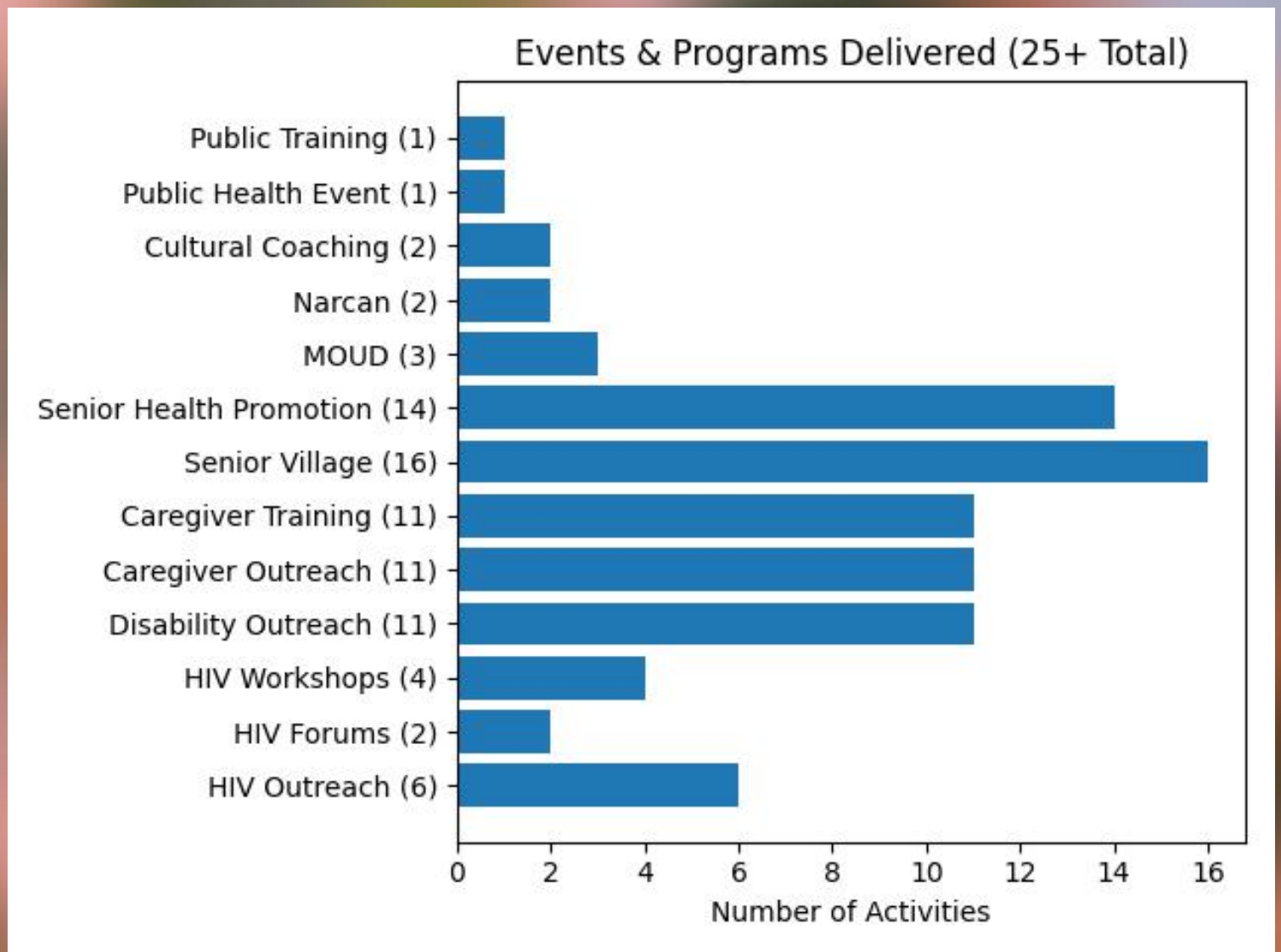


500+ People Served

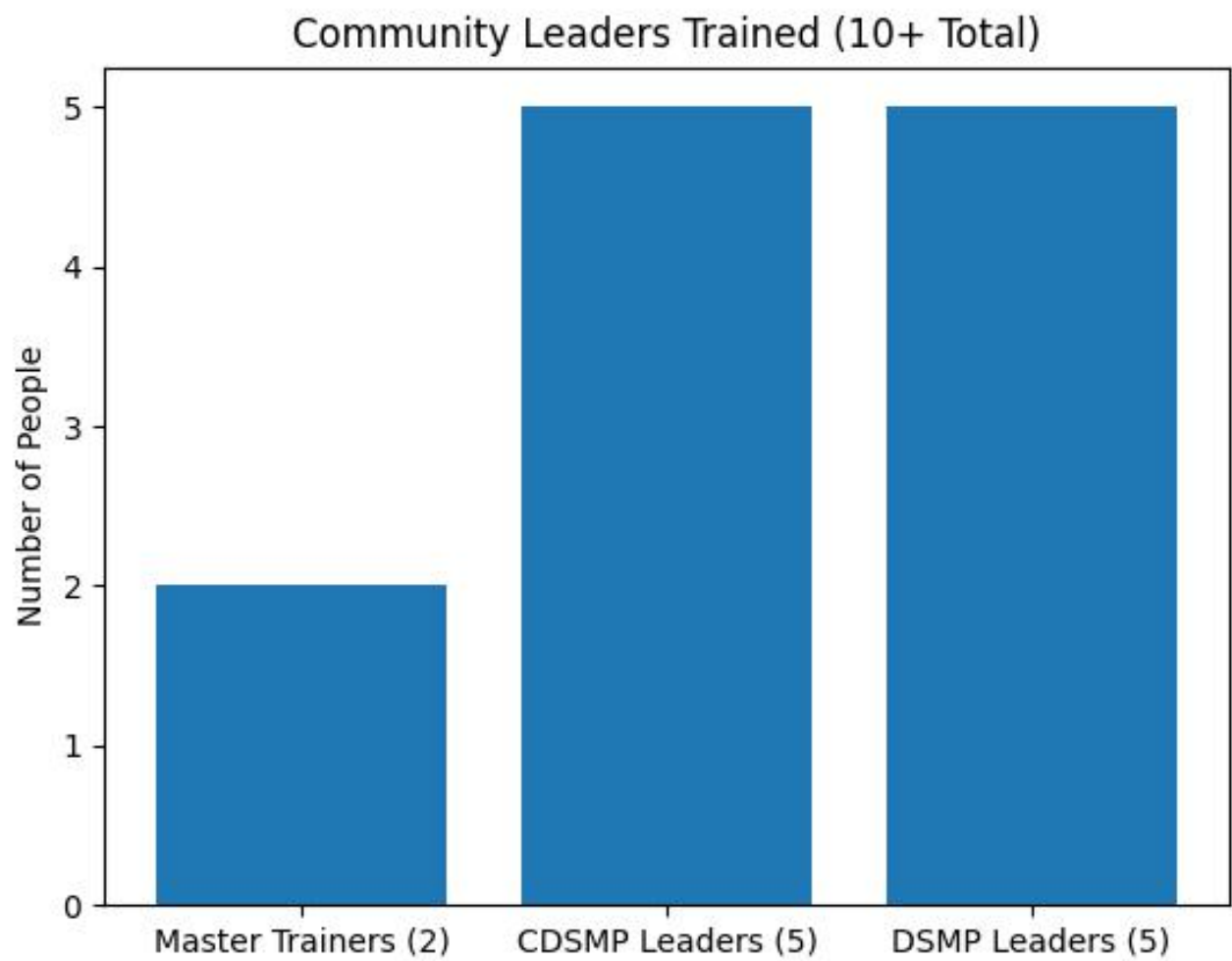


IN NUMBERS

25+ Events and Programs



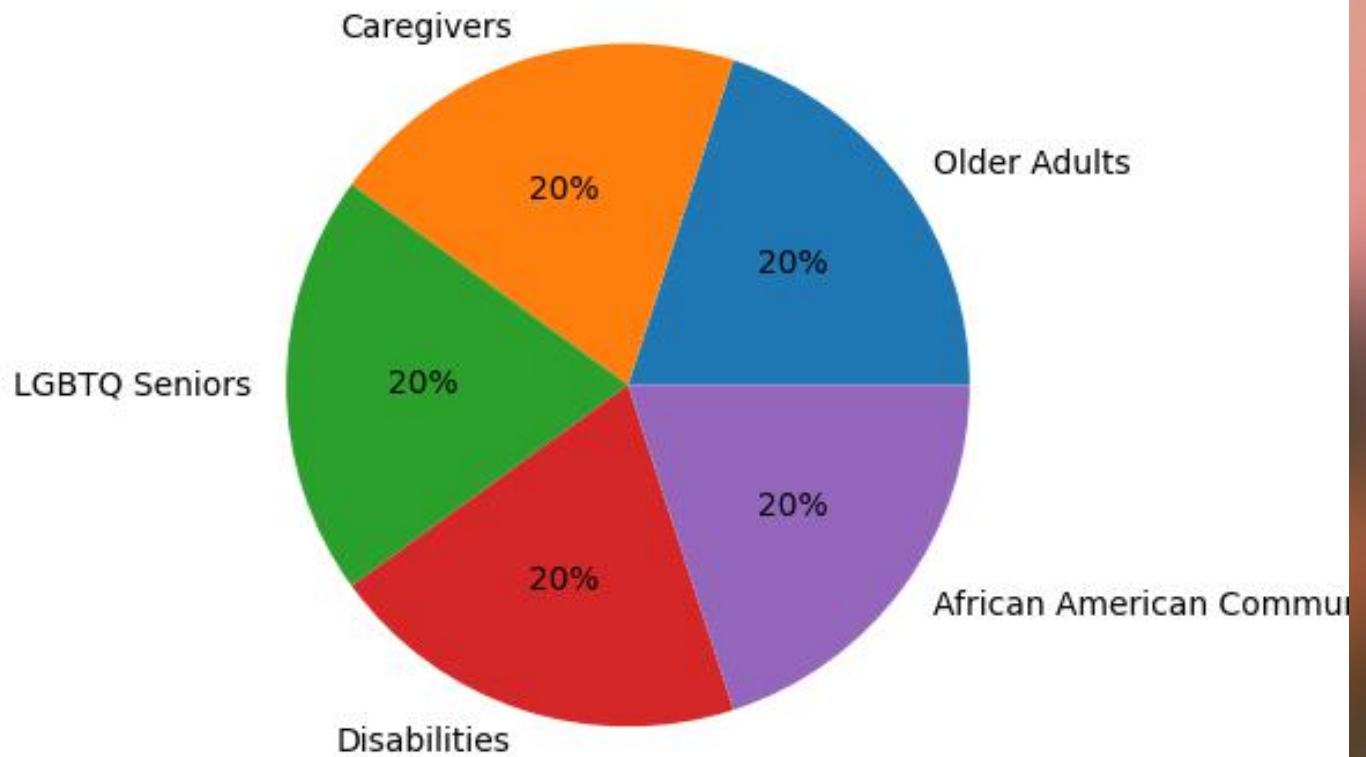
10+ Community Members Trained



IN NUMBERS

50+ Outreach Activities

Outreach Focus Areas (50+ Activities)



OUR PROGRAMS

AARTH's programs empower communities through health education and wellness initiatives, reaching over 500 seniors with resources that support healthy aging and improved quality of life.

Bingocize



A fun, evidence-based program that combines bingo and light exercise, and health education to help older adults improve strength and balance. To reduce fall risk, increase physical activity, and promote healthy aging in an engaging, social environment.

52

Participants reported feeling stronger, having more energy and some built muscle mass due to the programs bi-weekly consistency.

Grocery Giveaway



To ensure that community members facing financial hardship, have access to healthy food options that support chronic disease prevention and overall wellness.

153 Participants Served in count



Chronic Disease Self Management

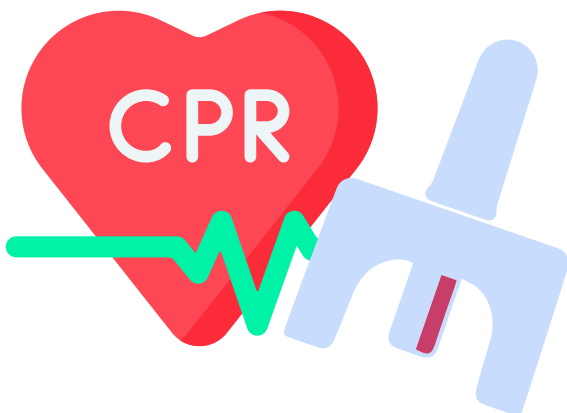


Empowering seniors to better understand their condition, improve communication with healthcare providers, manage symptoms like pain and fatigue, reduce stress, and make healthy lifestyle choices. Through education, support and long-term wellness management

Participants included:

100 Caregivers, 560 Seniors Supported

Narcan & CPR Training



Empowers individuals to act quickly, reduce overdose deaths, and strengthen community safety by ensuring more people are prepared to save a life when every second counts.

50 Seniors Trained

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OUR PROGRAMS

AARTH's programs empower communities through health education and wellness initiatives, reaching over 500 seniors with resources that support healthy aging and improved quality of life.



Soulful Cooking with Chef Adunni

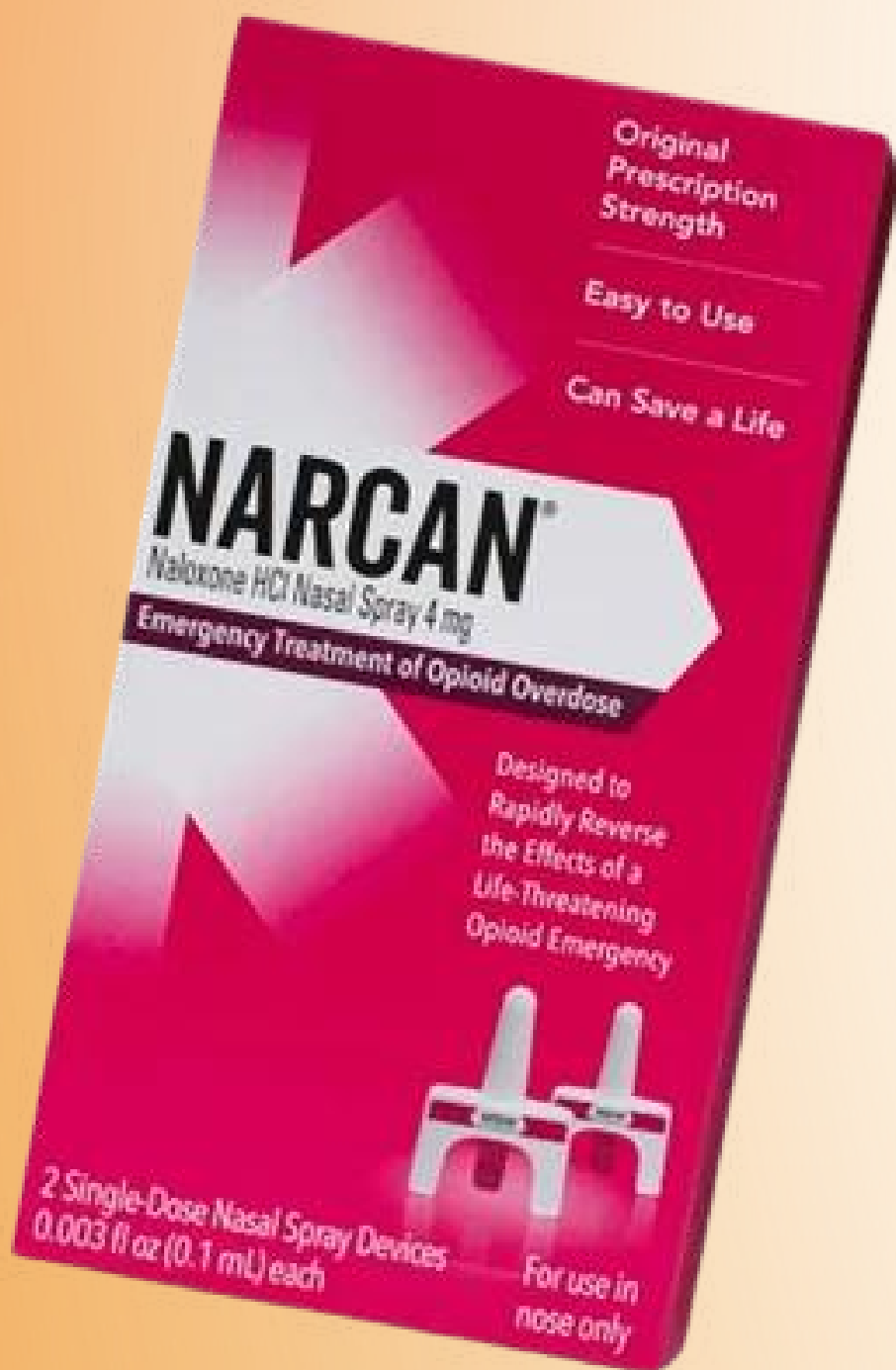
To empower participants, especially older adults and caregivers. To nourish their bodies, celebrate culture, and build healthy habits in a warm, interactive, and supportive environment. The program teaches practical nutrition tips, healthier ingredient swaps, and simple meal preparation techniques that support chronic disease prevention.



139 Participants

Participants reported love the recipes, they are cultural, fresh and easy to follow





Original
Prescription
Strength

Easy to Use

Can Save a Life

NARCAN

Naloxone HCl Nasal Spray 4 mg

Emergency Treatment of Opioid Overdose

Designed to
Rapidly Reverse
the Effects of a
Life-Threatening
Opioid Emergency



2 Single-Dose Nasal Spray Devices
0.003 fl oz (0.1 mL) each

For use in
nose only

COMMUNITY STORIES

A Grandmother's Courage, A Family's Hope

At one of AARTH's Narcan and CPR training, a grandmother walked in holding the hands of her grandchildren. She was not there for herself. She shared that her grandkids had asked to come. They wanted to learn how to use Narcan so they could help their mom.

At that moment, the room shifted. What was meant to be a public health training became something deeper, a reminder that the opioid crisis does not affect just one person. It affects entire families. It affects children. It affects grandparents who are doing everything they can to hold their families together.

The grandchildren listened closely. They asked thoughtful questions. They practiced the steps. They wanted to be prepared. Their grandmother later shared that having this knowledge gave her family something they had not felt in a while, a sense of control and hope.

This is why AARTH continues to provide free Narcan education and distribution in our community. Not because addiction is simple, but because saving a life should be.

When we equip families with knowledge, we reduce fear. When we reduce stigma, we open doors to healing. When we show up consistently, we build trust. That grandmother did not just attend training. She brought her family into a circle of support.

That is what community health looks like in action.

Building Strength Through Movement

One participant, an older adult, joined Bingocize and quickly found joy in the routine of the sessions. What began as a simple way to stay active became an important part of her wellness journey. During a visit with her doctor, she learned that she had gained healthy weight, a positive sign for her overall health. After sharing that she had been exercising more through Bingocize, her doctor explained that the weight gain was likely due to increased muscle from her consistent activity.

The impact extended beyond her. She shared that her husband also began benefiting from a more active lifestyle. He became more energetic, and over time, his A1C levels improved, reflecting better management of his health. Together, they experienced how movement, when paired with support and consistency, can strengthen both the body and overall well-being.





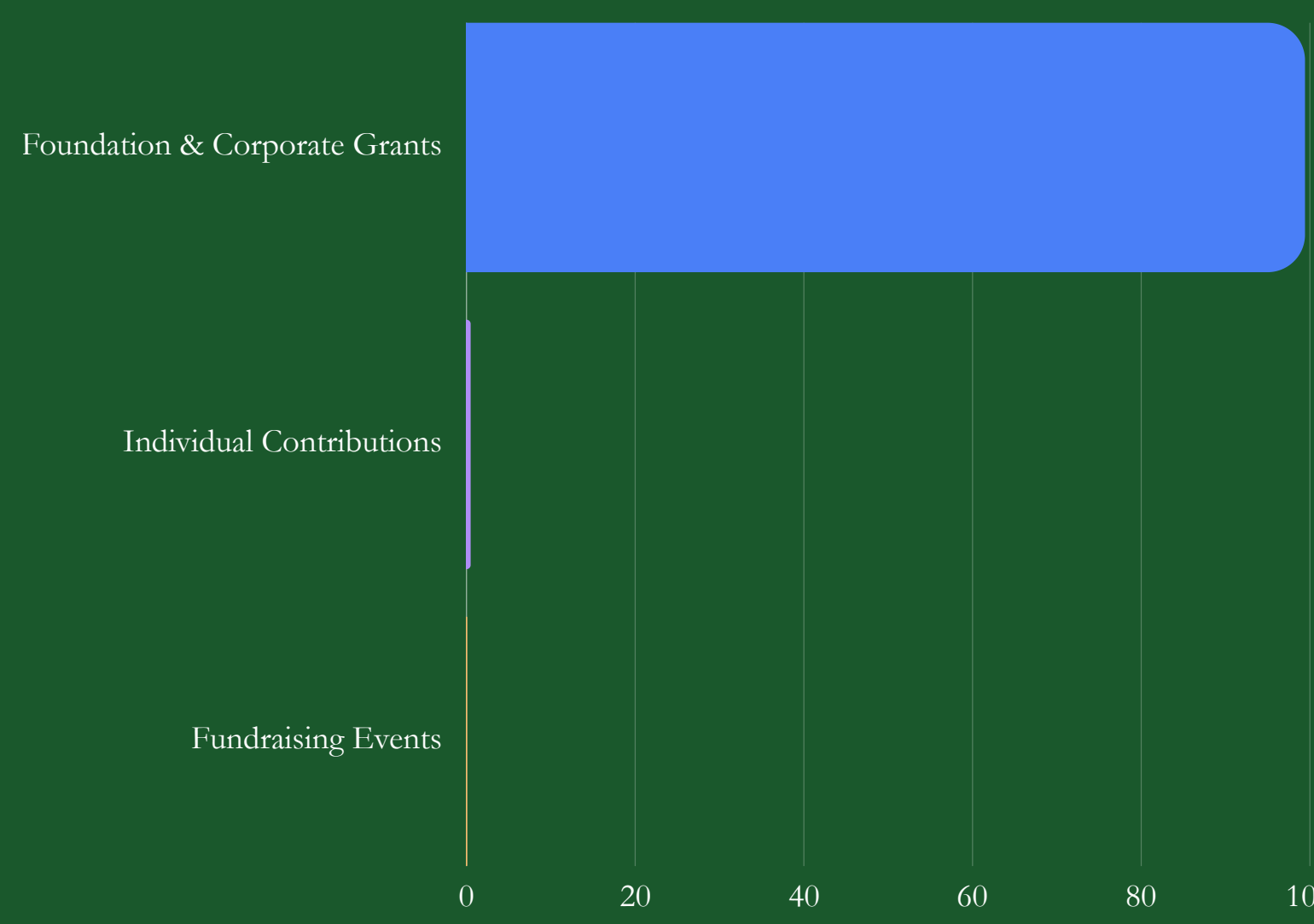
Restoring Connection and Community

Another participant came to Bingocize after experiencing deep isolation following the COVID-19 pandemic. Like many, he had spent long periods without regular social interaction, which affected his sense of connection and routine.

Through Bingocize, he found more than just a program. He found a welcoming space where he could engage with others, share conversations, and enjoy moments of laughter. The combination of light exercise and interactive activities like bingo created an environment that felt both safe and uplifting.

For him, the program became a pathway back to community. It offered regular opportunities to connect, rebuild relationships, and feel a renewed sense of belonging.

In 2025, African American Reach and Teach (AARTH) continued to strengthen its financial foundation while expanding its impact across the community. Through intentional planning, strong partnerships, and the trust of our supporters, we increased both our reach and our resources.



Financial Summary

Where Our Support Comes From

Total Revenue: \$584,516.79

Our funding reflects a diverse and stable mix of support:

- 99% Foundation & Corporate Grants
- .49% Individual Contributions
- 0.09% Fundraising Events

This balance allows AARTH to grow sustainably while remaining focused on community needs.

We remain committed to putting resources where they matter most:

Services 58%

Program Services

The majority of AARTH's funding goes directly into programs that serve our community. From health education and movement workshops to caregiver support and outreach, these funds ensure individuals receive the knowledge, tools, and care they need to live healthier, more confident lives.



Fundraising efforts allow AARTH to grow and continue offering free and low-cost programs. Through community campaigns, events, and outreach, these resources help us connect with supporters and sustain our impact year after year.

Financial Summary

How Funds Were Used



41%

Administrative support keeps AARTH running effectively and responsibly. This includes managing operations, maintaining systems, and ensuring financial accountability so that every program is delivered with consistency, quality, and care.

Total Expenses: \$610,221.33

Because of your support, we were able to:

- Expand health education and outreach programs
- Strengthen workshops for seniors and caregivers
- Increase community partnerships and engagement
- Deliver culturally responsive care and resources

Every dollar invested translates into real support, real education, and real change.

At the close of 2025, AARTH maintained a strong and stable financial position:

- Total Assets: \$167,995.23
- Total Liabilities: \$1,929.27
- Net Assets: \$166,065.96

These reserves ensure we can continue serving our community consistently while preparing for future growth.

Financial Position

What This Means for Our Community

These reserves position the organization to:

- Sustain programs during funding cycles
- Respond to emerging community needs
- Invest in future capacity building

The Board of Directors provides ongoing fiscal oversight, and financial reports are reviewed regularly to ensure transparency and accountability.



Our Commitment to Stewardship

We are committed to transparency, accountability, and responsible financial management.

Our Board of Directors actively oversees financial decisions, ensuring that every contribution is used with care and intention. Building and maintaining financial reserves allows us to respond to community needs, sustain programs, and invest in long-term impact.

Our Funders



Seattle
Human Services



Aging and Disability Services
Area Agency on Aging for Seattle and King County

Comagine
Health



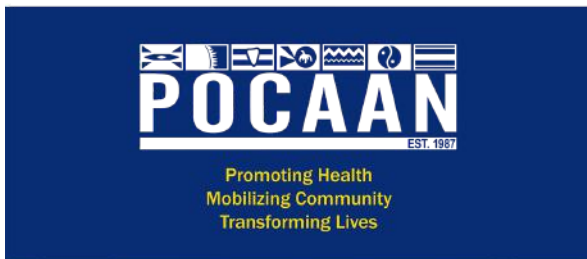
King County

Veterans, Seniors & Human Services Levy

Public Health
Seattle & King County



Our Partners





UNITY FELLOWSHIP SEATTLE - SENIOR OUTREACH
HELPING SENIORS. CHANGING LIVES.



COMMUNITY
HEALTH
Care
MEDICAL • DENTAL • PHARMACY

Mahogany
CIRCLE OF HOPE



UW Medicine
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Humana

PRIORITY
FOOTWEAR

Looking Ahead



To Our Valued Partners, Stakeholders, and Community Members:

We began this year with a historic achievement: our Inaugural Annual Fundraiser held on February 7th. This brunch was not merely a successful financial endeavor; it was a profound gathering of our community to honor our founder and celebrate our cultural heritage through the arts. The overwhelming support we received reinforces the vital necessity of AARTH's presence in the Puget Sound region.

Vision for the Future: Strategic Growth

As we look toward the upcoming year, our focus shifts toward sustainable growth and institutional strengthening

Strategic Planning

In close collaboration with our Executive Director, Shelia Braxton, the Board is embarking on a comprehensive strategic planning process. This roadmap will ensure that our resources remain aligned with the evolving health needs of our community, ensuring that AARTH remains both agile and impactful.

Board Development

To support this vision, we are prioritizing board recruitment and development. We are seeking to invite new members who bring diverse expertise and a shared passion for health justice. Strengthening our governance is essential as we scale our operations and deepen our impact across the region. We remain deeply grateful for your continued partnership. Together, we are building a legacy of wellness that honors our past while securing our future.

In Solidarity,

Joycelyn Thomas

Board President

African Americans Reach and Teach Health (AARTH)

Our Board & Staff



Joycelyn Thomas DNP, ARNP, FNP-BC

Joycelyn Thomas holds a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree from the University of Washington. Currently, she works as a Family Nurse Practitioner at a Family Practice Clinic for Catholic Health Initiatives. She is a nurse practitioner specializing in the care of persons of all ages, and her interests include HIV care and prevention to HIV/AIDS infected individuals, specifically individuals of African descent, pregnant women and children exposed and or infected with HIV/AIDS, and patient provider communication with African Americans. Joycelyn has been on the board since 2014.



Wessen Kifetew MPH

Wessen is a global/public health professional with experience in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and most recently in maternal and child health. She holds a graduate degree in Global Health from Emory University, Atlanta, GA. Wessen has been with AARTH since 2015. She serves the organization in various advisory roles and capacities, including in grant proposal and development; technical and management support and other support, as needed.



Pamelyn Saari, MSN, MPH, MSW, ARNP, FNP-BC

Pam is a primary care provider to a panel of approximately 300 minimum, medium and maximum security inmates. Duties include assessment and management of urgent and emergent health care situations, Management of health maintenance needs of women 18-83 years old, psychosocial nurse management.

She holds graduate degrees from Walden University, Seattle University, University of Washington and The Evergreen State College.



Sharon Reed, RN, MN, BSN, AAACN

Sharon has been in the medical field for thirty-eight years, primarily as a dialysis nurse/nurse manager. She's currently a registered nurse at Harborview Medical Center working in Primary Care/Triage, with focus on addressing hypertension within our African American communities. In her advanced studies, she has researched how implicit bias within healthcare professionals affect the care/treatment of African Americans which and now works to bring awareness and educate other providers how to treat from a holistic approach. She's a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. and they work to enhance education, leadership and assist youth with higher educational opportunities. She's a graduate of University of Washington, and has a Master of Nursing Education. Her goal is to educate the African American communities on chronic diseases and advocate for equity in healthcare disparities.

Our Staff







“My life’s work has been rooted in service
—meeting people where they are and
helping them move forward with dignity,
support, and hope.”



Meet Our New Executive Director
Shelia Braxton!



Kathleen Wilcox, MBA, MSN

Executive Director

Prior to joining AARTH, Kathleen served as Global Director of Drug Safety & Epidemiology for Chiron Corporation. Her career has included serving as an intensive care nurse and working with subjects contributing to cardiovascular research at the Hope Heart Institute. Advocacy is in her DNA as demonstrated in her community focused activities including member of the King County Advisory Council for Seniors and Disabled Services, and member of the Seattle Parks Department's Rainier Advisory Council, and several other advisory councils. Kathleen's love for family and community has been expressed through her experiences as a caregiver and team nurse for the Rainier Community Center little league football team. Kathleen holds an Executive Master of Business Administration from University of Washington's Foster School of Business, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Seattle University, and a Bachelor of Arts with a focus in Clinical Psychology from University of Washington.



Vinson Latimore, MHA

Vinson Latimore supports organizational operations, evaluates outcomes and contractual compliance and implements administrative policies and strategies. Vinson brings a wealth of experience in healthcare, long-term care, and specialize in Medicare and Medicaid education in the public and not for profit sectors.



Ramona Shyne
Program Manager

Ramona has been a Project Manager (CSPO) and DEI Advisor with 20+ years' experience. She previously worked for a non-profit partnering with executive leaders on a strategic project plan to increase Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) awareness as a critical business imperative through relationship building, policy and procedural changes and cultural events. Her background demonstrates a proven record of building communities and relationships to drive and support companywide strategic goals. As a professional, she excels at facilitating internal and external partnerships to support initiatives that contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. Most of her work has focused on identifying and addressing stigmatized groups including BIPOC and LGBTQ+ persons. Utilizing her robust communication abilities, she can translate the organization's vision and mission into actionable strategies that cultivate individuals, inspire confidence, and empower employee and community engagement.



Rena Cann
Office Manager

Rena Cann is a results-driven professional with a diverse background spanning aerospace, healthcare, and the nonprofit sector. At AARTH, she brings strong expertise in operations support, outreach coordination, and data-informed process improvement; helping create systems that are both efficient and people-centered. Skilled in Microsoft Office, Concur, and certified in both Transformational Life Coaching and AI Foundations through Americans4Equality, Rena blends technical expertise with a compassionate approach to service. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from City University of Seattle and is passionate about building smarter workflows, strengthening community outreach, and ensuring that individuals and teams feel supported and empowered.



Ebony Harrison, MS
Training Coordinator

Ebony Harrison, from Shoreline, WA, is a recent graduate with a Master's in Kinesiology, earning her degree in December 2024. A former collegiate athlete who studied in California, she is passionate about living a healthy lifestyle and enjoys teaching others how to improve their quality of life. Ebony loves traveling, outdoor activities, sports, and exploring new foods, always seeking new experiences to enhance her life and the lives of others.



Twanda Hill
Consultant

Twanda has been a trusted consultant with AARTH for over 20 years, contributing significantly to our mission and programs. She has served as interim director, event planner and a host of other positions that support contract deliverables.



Rev. Dr. Renee McCoy
HIV/AIDS Consultant

Rev. Dr. Renee McCoy is the former co-pastor of Eastgate Congregational United Church of Christ in Bellevue, WA. She is the former Director of Public and Private Grants and the former Director of Prevention Education at Lifelong AIDS Alliance in Seattle. She moved to Seattle in 2009 from Detroit, MI, where she was the Director of HIV/AIDS Programs for the Detroit metropolitan area. In that capacity she oversaw HIV/AIDS prevention and care services for the Detroit metropolitan area through the Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion. Dr. McCoy has a long and extensive history of HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and research dating back to the onset of the pandemic in 1981, working in New York, Washington, D.C., and Detroit, MI, and Seattle, WA. Much of her work has focused on identifying and addressing the concerns of minorities and stigmatized groups including people of color and LGBTQ persons. She also specializes in addressing chronic illness and barriers due to social determinants of health such as poverty, racism, limited education, and obstacles to care and services for people of color.

She has received numerous national and local awards for the work she has done in HIV/AIDS, pastoral care, and community organizing. She has a doctorate in anthropology and has taught business and organizational anthropology, global health, and qualitative research methods. She is a medical anthropologist who has conducted ethnographic research in the Detroit metropolitan area targeting hard to reach, high risk groups. Dr. McCoy is also an ordained minister who has served the spiritual needs of marginalized persons for over four decades.



Kimberly Breland, MBA

Accountant

Experienced Accounting manager in the areas of Revenue, Accounts Receivable, Payroll, Project/Contract management, and General Ledger accounting. Skilled in Analytical Skills, Team Building, Management, Financial Accounting, and QuickBooks. Strong education professional with a MBA focused in Business Administration and Management, General from University of Phoenix. Experienced Adjunct Faculty with a demonstrated history of working in the higher education industry. She has been at AARTH since 2009.



Yolanda Drew

Consultant

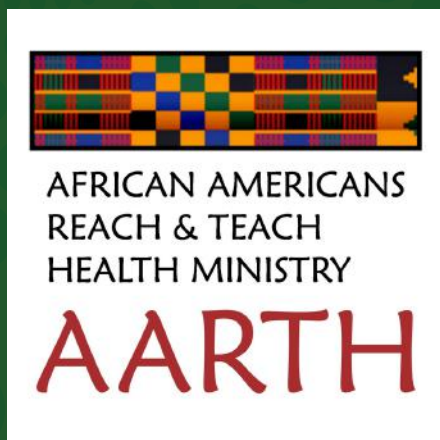
Yolanda is our Digital Marketing Consultant and the owner of Sincere Auxiliary Marketing (SAM). With three years of experience, she has worked extensively with small businesses and nonprofit organizations focused on social justice. Specializing in dynamic videos, Yolanda helps us distribute our photos and videos to document and showcase what AARTH has been up to, keeping our supporters informed and engaged.



Feben Girmai, MS
Training Coordinator

Feben Girmai is a User Experience Researcher with over five years of experience and a passion for creating inclusive, community centered experiences. She holds a Master's degree in Human-Computer Interaction and Design from the University of Washington. With a multidisciplinary background spanning technology, healthcare, and community engagement, Feben has led research and design projects with organizations such as Meta and local tech startups, and previously contributed to clinical research at Valley Medical Center. She runs a web design business that provides branding and digital services to small businesses and first-time entrepreneurs, with a focus on amplifying underrepresented voices. Her approach is grounded in equity, inclusion, and cultural awareness, ensuring every individual feels seen, heard, and empowered. Outside of work, Feben enjoys giving back to her community, exploring new cultures through travel, and discovering the best local coffee spots.





Contact Information

African Americans Reach & Teach Health (AARTH)

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Website: www.AARTH.org

Social Media:

Instagram- [@aarthministry2026](https://www.instagram.com/aarthministry2026)

YouTube- [@aarthseattle](https://www.youtube.com/aarthseattle)

Facebook- African Americans Reach & Teach Health

Linkedin- African Americans Reach & Teach Health