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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cherry Hill Cares Campaign

[The Arts and the community converge to help residents battle the pandemic]

[Baltimore, MD 2/1/2022] – Three anchor organizations are coming together for a community-arts response to help stem the spread of Covid-19 in one of South Baltimore’s historic communities.

In a joint effort between the Youth Resiliency Institute (YRI) and The Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance (GBCA) in association with The Cherry Hill Community Coalition (CHCC), The Cherry Hill Cares Campaign will launch on Tuesday, February 1, 2022. Cherry Hill Cares works to combat the spread of COVID-19.

“At a time when a resurgence of COVID-19 cases is exacerbating structural inequalities, injustices, and inequities faced by residents of Cherry Hill —particularly community elders— Cherry Hill Cares is collaboratively establishing a structure that addresses the needs and perspectives of the most vulnerable in our community,” said Fanon Hill, YRI executive director and co-founder.

Cherry Hill Cares began their planning process in summer 2020 as a response to health inequities brought to light by the Covid-19 crisis that include lack of access to quality health care, increased rates of pre-existing conditions, and higher risk of exposure on job sites and public transportation.

These long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put the predominantly African American Cherry Hill community at an increased risk of contracting COVID-19 regardless of age or social status. Both YRI and GBCA understand the power of the arts in amplifying voice, identity, and culture at both the individual and community level.

"[The] Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance (GBCA) is proud to be a partner in this effort to help keep families well and lessen the impact of health care disparities, which are particularly acute during the current pandemic in the Cherry Hill community. Cherry Hill Cares is a perfect example of how arts and culture are essential tools for building healthy communities." Says Jeannie L. Howe, GBCA executive director. GBCA’s role in CHC has been to help implement the vision of YRI and The Cherry Hill Community Coalition and to identify funding partners.

Cherry Hill Cares has four campaign objectives:

- Amplify Black artistry in Cherry Hill by creating customized Cherry Hill Cares campaign products with visual art created by Cherry Hill-based artists that succinctly honors the joys and complexities of the Black experience in Cherry Hill.
- Increase awareness of CDC guidelines to help slow the spread of COVID-19 through visual art mediums.
- Install hand sanitizer stations that are customized by Cherry Hill artist(s), at high traffic locations in Cherry Hill.
- Deliver customized “care packs” to 200 Cherry Hill Community Elders that include:
 - Customized hand sanitizers.
 - Customized masks and filters.
 - Customized COVID-19 health tips.
 - Customized reusable shopping totes.

Cherry Hill Cares will also promote Covid-19 prevention through the creation of posters and flyers designed by YRI cultural arts youth organizers residing in Cherry Hill.

Organizers hope their efforts will help to reduce coronavirus infection rates, facilitate collaboration with members of the Cherry Hill community throughout the design process, amplify the work of artists residing in Cherry Hill using the branding features of the hand sanitizer stations, and facilitate a more inclusive dialogue addressing community engagement and health and wellness in the Cherry Hill community.

“Combating the spread of COVID-19 is a major concern in our community that requires the distribution of good information, creative ideas for effectively addressing the need to reduce infection rates, and the involvement of all its citizenry, especially our youth,” said CHCC chair Peggy Jackson-Jobe. “Cherry Hill Cares checks all these boxes as they use the talents of our artists to create hand sanitizer stations throughout the community. This promotes both community pride and wellness.”

Campaign funders include the Mitzvah Fund for Good Deeds at the Baltimore Community Foundation and generous contributions from private donors.

Though Cherry Hill Cares is a collaborative campaign, it ultimately functions under the auspices of YRI, which manages several year-round community projects including the annual Cherry Hill Arts & Music Waterfront Festival.

“Since 2010, the Youth Resiliency Institute has introduced community members of all ages living in Cherry Hill to high quality arts engagement,” said Hill. “Today, Youth Resiliency Institute cultural arts organizers are able to immediately respond to community need by tapping into city-wide partnerships and neighborhood-based relationships fostered through over a decade of culturally responsive community arts engagement in historic Cherry Hill.”

To learn more about how to support the Cherry Hill Cares Campaign and other YRI community-based projects, please contact co-founder Navasha Daya at navasha@youthresiliencyinstitute.org or (443) 934-1972.

The **Youth Resiliency Institute** (YRI) is a cultural arts organization under the umbrella of Fusion Partnerships, Inc. Since 2010, YRI has been developing, researching, implementing and evaluating culturally responsive community arts in high poverty communities of color. The Youth Resiliency Institute serves children, youth and families throughout Baltimore City with a priority focus in South Baltimore's historic Cherry Hill community.

Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance (GBCA) is a leading nonprofit provider of services to artists and cultural organizations in the region. Whether they are emerging or established, mainstream or underground, grassroots or institutional, GBCA believes in unifying and strengthening all members of the creative community. We do this through marketing, education, financial support, and developing innovative programs that increase equity in the cultural community and beyond. Our mission is to create equity and opportunity In, Through, and For arts and humanities.

The **Cherry Hill Community Coalition, Inc.** (CHCC, Inc.) is an umbrella organization representing all stakeholders in the Cherry Hill community including but not limited to residents, businesses, institutions, and alumni. Its mission is to preserve the rich history of the Cherry Hill community, to provide an information clearing house for the Cherry Hill community and to allow active participation by all community stakeholders in shaping the future of the Cherry Hill Community.



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