COVID-19 COVERAGE
IN BLACK AMERICA

Tanu Henry, Managing Editor of California Black Media
“The cost of unequal healthcare is measured in human life.”
- Dr. Stephen Lockhart, African American Chief Medical Officer, Sutter Health
Jonathan Burgess co-owns Burgess Brothers with his twin brother Matthew. It is a popular American bistro-slash-barbecue restaurant and food supply company based in Sacramento. Locals treasure them for their delicious waffles; handcrafted gourmet barbecue sauce; sweet and spicy smoked sausages; among other specialties.

The African American entrepreneur says small family-owned businesses like his are tempted by what digital food delivery services might offer them: A broader customer base and online advertising on highly trafficked apps.

But that exposure comes with a crippling cost.

"There's only like a very thin 5% profit margin for most small restaurants. It's simple math. If you give Uber, Doordash or one of the others a nice chunk of that, it just doesn't work out for you."

Burgess says food delivery services should offer special rates for mom and pop shops that are lower than what they charge chain restaurants. Those corporation-owned eateries typically buy their ingredients wholesale at much lower costs and they can make up for losses on delivery fees by what they make in volume.

The cost of unequal healthcare is measured in human life, says Dr. Stephen Lockhart, the African American chief medical officer at Sutter Health, a non-profit healthcare network centered in Sacramento that serves 3 million people in 24 hospitals located across Northern California.

Lockhart made this chilling observation while talking about the growing body of evidence that is confirming that more minorities and disadvantaged people are getting infected, being hospitalized and dying from COVID-19 than white, middle class and wealthier Americans.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has ripped a Band-Aid off of the structural inequities that exist within our society. We must address these disparities right away,” Lockhart said, adding “We have a moral obligation to do so.”
By Tanu Henry | California Black Media | African American children are California’s lowest performing group of students, only above students with special needs. Only 2 percent of black kids in the state attend schools that are considered “high performing.” And only 10% of African American schools, located mostly in hard-to-count, high-poverty census tracts around the Bay Area [...]
Chida Rebecca and Tanu Henry | California Black Media

Across the country, barbers and hairstylists are feeling the effects of COVID-19. In the Black community, the impact is more severe.

Black-owned salons and barbershops have always served as a hub for men and women to congregate and catch up on the latest news, gossip and overall happenings within the community.

These “meeting places” of sorts have also proven to be extremely profitable for its owners; but, per executive orders from Gov. Gavin Newsom, all non-essential businesses in California have been forced into temporary closure, among them, barbershops, beauty salons, nail technician shops and other cosmetology centers.

Tanu Henry | California Black Media

“It’s been like tons, or gallons of alcohol being thrown on the open wounds of inequality and racism in this country. And as we think about how to recover, we’re going to have to think about how to make sure that we don’t go back to where we were before,” said Angela Glover Blackwell, an African-American author and policy specialist based in Oakland.

Blackwell is the founder and president of the non-profit PolicyLink, a research institute and social action organization that advances racial and economic equity, according to the group’s website.

“It was unacceptable then and it will be unacceptable going forward,” Blackwell continued, pointing out the “painful” economic and health disparities the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare across the United States and here in California.
“In Spirit of Lord’s Prayer,” Black Churches, Non Profits Ask For Mortgage Help

Mar 23, 2020 | BVN Contributors, Covid-19

Tanu Henry | California Black Media

Hit by loss of income due to the Coronavirus pandemic, African-American churches across California are asking state leaders and the federal government for help to pay their mortgages.

“National Christian leaders are coming together across denominational, theological and affiliation lines, in the spirit of the Lord's Prayer, with this plea: "make them one" to strategize for the plight of hundreds to thousands of small to medium size congregations nationwide which are in danger of financial distress triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic," says the Rev. Bishop Kenneth Ulmer, the pastor of Faithful Central Bible Church in Inglewood.

Even before Gov. Newsom placed a stay-at-home order on the state's estimated 40 million residents Thursday, attendance at Black churches across the state had begun to decline.

Some Black church leaders say their revenues have dipped by an average between 40 and 50 percent.
“George Floyd should be alive today.”
- Assemblymember Shirley Weber, D-San Diego, Chair of the CLBC
Over $11 Billion in Stimulus Money for California: 8 Things You Should Know

Mar 28, 2020

Exclusive to San Diego Voice & Viewpoint
By Tanu Henry | California Black Media

The federal government has approved $2 trillion dollars as well to aid states in their efforts to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The money will help people, businesses and non-profits impacted; and to pay for government programs related to the pandemic.

Two weeks ago, after Gov. Newsom issued a state of emergency in California, the legislature wrote a $1 billion blank check to the state, giving it broad authority to spend the money “for any purpose” related to the Coronavirus crisis.

"The money will help people, businesses and non-profits impacted; and to pay for government programs related to the pandemic."