



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **NAACP DC HOSTS VOLUNTEER DAY AT ORGANIC GARDENS PROVIDING FREE PRODUCE TO DC RESIDENTS**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – In remembrance of the September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedy, the NAACP DC Branch is hosting a service project, mobilizing volunteers to support gardening and harvesting at three Organic Gardens in Washington, DC. On Saturday, September 11, 2021, NAACP members will volunteer at Union Temple Baptist Church’s UJIMAA Farm located on the block of 1225 W Street, SE Washington, DC between 9:00am and 12 Noon. There will be additional Volunteer Days available on Tuesday and Wednesdays at DCPR’s Edgewood Rooftop Garden and Lederner Organic Garden.

The NAACP is committed to ending racial health disparities in nutrition, food access, lead exposure, public health and healthcare. Food access and economic security are major barriers to achieving optimal health and wellness. Washington, DC includes food insecure areas with limited access to grocery stores and other affordable, healthy food sources. Individuals with limited access to full-service grocery stores are more likely to patron corners, gas stations, convenience stores for food. Food Deserts are areas in DC located more than half a mile from a Grocery Store, low car-access and high poverty rates. DC’s most food insecure areas and food deserts are concentrated in economic challenged areas, including Barry Farms, Ivy City, Mayfair and Anacostia. As a result, low-income communities with limited-access to affordable, healthy foods are plagued with diet-related illnesses, such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.

There are several Organic Farms and Gardens in DC, utilizing former lots and unoccupied space in DC’s urban-communities. These urban Organic Gardens and Farms grow healthy fruits, vegetables and herbs. The NAACP DC Branch has partnered with 3 organic gardens by mobilizing volunteers to assist with gardening and harvesting produce to be distributed for free to the community. Organic produce includes tomatoes, cucumbers, kale, collard greens, squash, cherries, strawberries, herbs and more. Volunteers help with planting, weeding, gardening and harvesting of produce. Healthy produce is harvested and distributed for free to the community.

*Akosua Ali, NAACP DC Branch President states, “We remember the lives lost on September 11th by serving communities in need. Food access is a human right. From our most vulnerable, to our most thriving, we all have a right to clean water and healthy foods. Nutrition, health and wellness is key to academic success and economic empowerment moving our communities from surviving to thriving.”*

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