

Tulane School of Social Work to offer virtual panel on COVID-19 and marginalized populations

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bbronst@tulane.edu

504-352-2534



Marion Young with Tulane's Downtown Facilities Services receives his first dose of the vaccine. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Questions abound about the COVID-19 vaccine and its deployment. How can the medical community ensure that no one who wants to be vaccinated is overlooked? How can underserved communities be included in the conversation? What are some of the psychosocial aspects of the vaccination effort?

The Tulane University School of Social Work aims to answer those questions and more in its next Virtual Elk Place Health Spot —*The COVID-19 Vaccine & Marginalized Populations* — Thursday, Jan. 28 from 12 to 1:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public, and advanced registration is required [here](#).

The monthly Health Spot will feature a panel of professionals active in their communities and in research, with each sharing their expertise related to infectious diseases, public health, social work and social justice. The program includes a question and answer session.

“It is critical for the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) community to learn about the benefits of the vaccine,” said program organizer Deidre Hayes, a professor of practice at the Tulane School of Social Work. Hayes holds a Doctorate of Social Work and has extensive experience with marginalized populations.

“The speakers are experts in infectious disease and collective trauma and will discuss possibilities associated with community participation in this initiative,” Hayes said.

The panelists are Dr. Eric “Doc Griggs” Griggs, a community medicine physician and health educator; Dr. MarkAlain Déry, an infectious disease physician/epidemiologist and Chief Innovation Officer at Access Health LA; Katherine Andrinopoulos, an associate professor and program director for International Health and Development MPH Program at Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine; and Cirecie West-Olatunji, an associate professor and director of the Center for Traumatic Stress Research at Xavier University.

Griggs and Dery will talk specifically about COVID-19 and the vaccine, while West-Olatunji will address intergenerational trauma and how that may create concern among African Americans. Andrinopoulos will talk about those experiencing homelessness as well as the agencies that serve them and ensuring that they are addressed in deployment plans in a way that makes sense for them.

The event has also been approved by the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners for 1.5 clinical continuing education credit hours for social workers.

This will be the School of Social Work’s fourth Virtual Health Spot. The last one in November — *Mental Health and Criminal Justice* — is available for viewing on the SSW [YouTube Channel](#).

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