



Together We Rise Durham: Celebrating Black Achievements in Durham Region

February 1 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

The “**Together We Rise Durham**” **Black History Month Committee** is hosting a live panel discussion on February 1 that will celebrate Black achievements and focus on local frontline health-care heroes. This year’s theme is “**Celebrating Black Achievements in Durham Region**,” and includes a panel discussion with four health-care professionals that will share their experiences during the pandemic.

Panelists

Dr. Adwoa Amamoo

Dr. Adwoa Amamoo, a resident of Durham, graduated from Acadia University in Nova Scotia with a Bachelor of Science. She received her Doctorate in Medicine from Memorial University in Newfoundland, where she also completed her residency in family medicine.

Originally from Ghana, Dr. Amamoo, joined the Ajax-Pickering hospital as a part-time surgical assistant and hospitalist in 2010, and later moved on to focus on surgical assisting. Currently, she is the Site Chief for the Surgical Assisting Department, a role she has held since 2018. She speaks commonly spoken languages in Ghana, Twi and Fante.

Dr. Amamoo also worked at the Oshawa Community Health Centre from 2010 to 2011, and later went on to set up her family practice at Appletree Medical Centre in Ajax in 2011, where she continues to care for patients.

Dr. Amamoo is an active member of the Black Physicians’ Association of Ontario and the co-lead for the Black Health Vaccine Initiative in Durham. As a co-lead, she has been instrumental in planning Covid-19 vaccination clinics for the Black community in Durham.

Natasha Gray, Registered Nurse

Natasha Gray is a Registered Nurse with Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. She completed her Diploma in Nursing in 2003 from Centennial College, and post-graduate certificates in Coronary Care Nursing from Durham College and in Critical Care Nursing from George Brown College.

Natasha is currently the team lead of the Cardiac Cath Lab, Structural Heart and Vascular Programs at the Schulich Heart Centre at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. Her career has included working as a nurse in the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Sunnybrook Health Network, and in the Post Anesthetic Care Unit at Rouge Valley Health Network (2011 to 2014).

With over 16 years of nursing experience in areas of acute care, cardiology/telemetry and intensive care, the pandemic has been one of the most challenging times of her career. Having patients requiring emergency surgery and working in the operating room and ICU and not



knowing, prior to surgery, if these patients were exposed to Covid-19, was extremely stressful. Despite these challenges, she ensured patients were always very well cared for.

Along with exercise, Natasha uses travel and short getaways with her partner, friends and family as a form of de-stressing and taking care of both her physical and mental health.

Healthcare Leader Jacqueline Chen, President of the Jamaican Canadian Association of Nurses

Jacqueline Chen has over 25 years combined clinical and administrative leadership experience. She has been a Clinical Leader Manager with the St. Michael's Academic Family Health Team since 2012. Jacqueline provides operational leadership to two primary care clinics, including direct reporting relationships to over 80 interdisciplinary clinicians and administrative staff.

Jacqueline led the Sumac Creek Health Centre opening and coordinated the integration of two primary clinics into one new health centre. She has a Master's Degree in Nursing and Health Leadership from Athabasca University. Jacqueline is cross-appointed with the University of Toronto School of Nursing to both teach and take on students for mentorship.

Jamere Bembridge, Advanced Care Paramedic

Jamere Bembridge is an Advanced Care Paramedic with the Region of Durham. He completed his Primary Care Paramedic training at Durham College in 2014 and then began working for the City of Toronto. Since then, he has completed his Advanced Care Paramedic Graduate Certificate at Durham College and began working for Durham Region. Jamere is well known in the Region for the compassionate care he provides to his patients and the support he gives his coworkers as a member of the Peer Support Team.

In his time off from the road he works at Durham College teaching the next generation of paramedic students. Jamere always goes above and beyond to ensure a positive and safe learning experience for his students. In his free time, Jamere spends it with family, close friends and his new puppy, Bentley.