

BHM 2026

CENTERING BLACK VOICES

| Confronting Bias and Creating Change

Sosa Eweka

Nurse & Mental Health Advocate



Sosa Eweka-Valentine

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ADVOCATE

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Sosa brings a powerful blend of professional expertise and lived insight to healthcare leadership. With frontline clinical experience in continuing care, she navigates the complexities of workplace safety, equity, and culturally responsive care through the lens of a Black woman in healthcare.

★ Founder

Salt City Advocacy Society

🎤 Creator

"Talks with Sosa" Conference Series (600+ Participants)

SPEAKING FOCUS AREAS



DEI in Healthcare



Representation



Burnout Prevention



Safer Care Environments

SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES

Why Centering Black Voices Matters in Healthcare



Historical underrepresentation in leadership



Ongoing workplace bias



Disparities in patient outcomes



The connection between voice and safety

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

My Journey: From Calling to Consciousness

What It Really Looks Like



Subtle & Cumulative

- Microaggressions that are subtle, repeated, and patterned.
- Cumulative impact over time.

“Bias is not always loud. It is often patterned.”

SYSTEMIC IMPACT

The Cost of Silence

"Silence protects systems, not people. In healthcare, communication breakdowns are safety risks."



Internal Questioning

"Am I overreacting?"



Emotional Fatigue

The cumulative toll of navigating bias.



Reduced Psychological Safety

Decreased confidence in voicing concerns.



Impact on Team Communication

Breakdowns in critical information sharing.



Impact on Patient Trust

The ultimate cost of systemic bias.

Representation as a Form of Protection



Kizzmekia Corbett
Viral Immunologist



Nadine Burke Harris
Pediatrician & Surgeon General



Olajide Williams
Neurologist & Innovator



Onye Nnorom
Public Health Specialist

"Representation tells the next generation: your voice belongs here."

TAKING ACTION

Creating Change: Individual Accountability

CREATING CHANGE

Structural Responsibility

Change cannot rely solely on the
marginalized educating the majority.
Systems must shift.



Inclusive Hiring Practices



Transparent Promotion Pathways



Mentorship & Sponsorship Programs



Bias Training Tied to Accountability



Safe Reporting Mechanisms

SELF-CARE STRATEGIES

Sustaining Ourselves While Doing This Work



Boundary Setting

Establishing clear limits to protect time and emotional energy.



Peer Support

Building networks of understanding and shared experience.



Collective Care

Moving beyond self-care to community responsibility.



Preventing Burnout

Identifying early signs and prioritizing rest proactively.



Advocating without Depletion

Balancing the drive for change with personal preservation.

MOVING FORWARD

Reflection & Commitment

Pause. Reflect. Act. Allow these questions to guide your next steps.



Centering Black voices is not about preference.

IT IS ABOUT EQUITY.

It is about ensuring that competence is recognized, dignity is protected, and care is culturally responsive.

Black History Month is not just remembrance.

IT IS RESPONSIBILITY.

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What kind of workplace are we building?