

**For Immediate Release**

**New National Initiative Taps Barbers and Stylists to Encourage COVID-19  
Vaccination in Communities of Color**

*President Biden recognizes innovative partnership between the Black Coalition Against COVID, the University of Maryland Center for Health Equity, and SheaMoisture*

**Washington, D.C., June 2, 2021** – President Biden today announced a collaboration between the [Black Coalition Against COVID \(BCAC\)](#), the University of Maryland School of Public Health’s [Maryland Center for Health Equity](#), and the beauty and personal care brand [SheaMoisture](#) to increase COVID-19 vaccination rates in Black, Latino and other communities of color across the United States. “Shots at the Shop” will train Black hair stylists and barbers to be COVID-19 health champions, dispel myths and disinformation about COVID-19, and encourage people to get vaccinated to ensure that we reach community immunity, and in some instances, recruit shops to be vaccination sites.

“We at the Black Coalition Against COVID appreciate that President Biden and his administration recognize the important role hair salons and barbershops play in the culture life of Black and Brown communities,” said Dr. Reed Tuckson, founding member of the Black Coalition Against COVID. “We are at a critical stage in the fight against this pandemic and we need all-hands-on-deck if we are going to protect Black and Brown health and survival. Barbers and stylists are at the top of the list in terms of engagement right now.”

“**Shots at the Shop**” builds upon the long-standing Health Advocates In-Reach and Research (HAIR) campaign, a culturally tailored community-based intervention developed at the University of Maryland, College Park’s School of Public Health by Stephen B. Thomas, PhD, director of the Maryland Center for Health Equity.

“For the last 15 years, our research has shown how Black barbers and stylists are an important asset to the health of the community. It took a pandemic for people to recognize how important it is to be in communities and build trust,” said Thomas, a professor of health policy and management. “It is my hope that Shots at the Shop is the beginning of truly recognizing the role that barbers and stylists can play in promoting health and preventing disease. We need to stay there to address the underlying health conditions, like hypertension, cancer, and diabetes that have made people of color vulnerable to this pandemic.”

Powered by the SheaMoisture \$1 million fund, Shots at the Shop seeks to recruit 1,000 beauty salons and barbershops across the country to participate in a four-hour COVID-19 Rapid Response Training designed for barbers and stylists to become community health workers. The course will be delivered online through the University of Maryland, using national public health and medical experts along with barbers and stylists, who have already achieved Certified Community Health Worker status. Once

trained, some salons and barbershops will also become COVID vaccination sites. SheaMoisture is providing \$1,000 stipend to each participating shop.

After providing relief and recovery grants in 2020 to ensure Black-owned businesses survived the economic crisis, SheaMoisture has expanded their community commerce initiative to support Shots at the Shop by providing \$1,000 grants to each beauty salon and barbershop owner in an effort to help them re-open with vaccine confidence and low incidence.

“SheaMoisture is a brand that stands ready to support the Black community. Upon hearing that Black Americans comprise only 8.5% of those vaccinated in the U.S., we saw that as an urgent need to act,” said Cara Sabin, CEO of SheaMoisture. “We are proud to work together with the White House and U.S. Department of Health, Black Coalition Against COVID, and University of Maryland Center for Health Equity through the Shots at the Shop initiative to transform vaccine hesitancy into vaccine confidence. By providing 1,000 businesses with \$1,000 grants, for a total of \$1 million, we hope this will bring the necessary educational and material resources to Black communities across the U.S. in a safe, efficient, and convenient manner.”

**To introduce Shots at the Shop, BCAC is hosting a national Town Hall conversation for hair stylists and barbers on Wednesday, June 2, 2021 at 7 PM EST. Watch via [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#).**

**Black-owned barbershop and beauty salons owners who are interested in applying for a grant can register at [www.sheamoisturefund.com](http://www.sheamoisturefund.com).**

##

#### **About the Black Coalition Against COVID**

The Black Coalition Against COVID is a Washington, D.C.-based community initiative which seeks to provide trustworthy, science-based, information curated on behalf of and for the Black community about COVID-19 and the vaccine development process in an effort to help save Black lives at the national and local levels. Connect with BCAC: [Website](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)

#### **About the University of Maryland School of Public Health's Center for Health Equity**

The University of Maryland, College Park School of Public Health is dedicated to advancing a better state of health for the diverse populations of Maryland and beyond. Accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health, the school is ranked 20th among all public health schools by US News and World Report (2022 ranking). The school's Maryland Center for Health Equity, a national leader in the effort to eliminate health disparities and achieve health equity, engages in innovative research, teaching and service with local communities. One of its signature projects, Health Advocates in Reach and Research (aka HAIR), engages barbershops and beauty salons as culturally relevant portals for health education and delivery of public health and medical services in the community. *Connect with UMD Public Health:* [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#)

#### **About SheaMoisture**

SheaMoisture is committed to serving those who have been underserved. Shea butter is one of the brand's core ingredients, praised for its hydrating and nourishing properties. As part of their Community

Commerce business model, SheaMoisture partners with women-led co-ops in Northern Ghana to source their namesake shea butter. With the core belief that commerce can bring true economic independence and empower women to break cycles of poverty, the brand further reinvests into both the co-ops and the communities it serves throughout the U.S. SheaMoisture continues to create economic opportunities for women and other minority entrepreneurs in its ecosystem with engaging events, investment funds and educational programs. SheaMoisture is a global beauty leader in the hair care, bath, body, skin care, baby and men's categories, and is distributed in retailers throughout the world. SheaMoisture is a subsidiary of Unilever. [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)