Since March 2021, the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) School of Nursing students and faculty, including Dean Alexa Stuifbergen, PhD, RN, FAAN, and Associate Professor Karen Johnson, PhD, RN, FSAHM, FAAN, as well as the UT Medical Reserve Corps have been working to intentionally provide vaccines to underserved communities in Central Texas. This includes many Austin-area residents who have limited or no access to request online appointments or are unable to travel to large vaccination sites.

With support from the UT Austin vaccine hub, they have launched an innovative partnership with other university affiliates, several churches in East Austin, and nonprofits as well as community organizations to create two vaccination delivery programs: “Vaccination Administration Mobile Operations” (VAMOS), a mobile clinic set up at local churches and other community sites, and “Vaccinate, No Waste” (VaxNow), in which extra vaccines that are prepared are taken to individuals who are homebound or have difficulty accessing appointments. (Pictured left: Stephanie Morgan, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, Director of Practice Innovation, and Dean Stuifbergen)

“The mass hub is a great model for getting shots into lots of arms quickly and is definitely needed,” said Dr. Johnson. “But from a health equity perspective, it runs the risk of not serving some of our most vulnerable communities who are suffering disproportionately from COVID-related morbidity and mortality.”

The success of the mobile clinics is based largely on a tailored outreach and a trusted and personalized registration experience, as well as information, education, and logistical convenience to people who can most benefit from the vaccine. For instance, two of the partners helping VAMOS and VaxNOW, Mt. Zion Baptist Church and Rehoboth Baptist Church in East Austin, are already home to AMEN, an African American mental
Declines in the area’s coronavirus positivity rate are promising, but continuing to vaccinate more of the population is vital,” said Dr. Stuifbergen. “Through VAMOS and VaxNoW, we are using our limited resources to help the highest-risk groups who otherwise would go unreached.”

**Fellow Vaccine Efforts**

**Melissa A. Fitzpatrick**, MSN, RN, FAAN, a Member of UNC REX Healthcare’s Board and President of Kirby Bates Associates and Tyler & Company, volunteers her time to administer COVID-19 vaccines at the UNC REX co-worker vaccine clinic. (*Pictured above.*)

Through the [Badger Nurses Collaborating on Covid-19 Vaccine and Delivery (BN-CoVEd)](https://www.wisc.edu/), initiative, the [University of Wisconsin (UW) Madison School of Nursing](https://www.wisc.edu/), with support from Dean Linda D. Scott, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FNAP, FAAN, is collaborating with community partners and other UW System nursing schools to vaccinate the public against COVID-19. As of March 29, 2021, more than 1,600 student clinical hours and 270 faculty clinical hours have been dedicated toward this effort. The program is supported by a $185,000 COVID-19 Response Grant from the Wisconsin Partnership Program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and through a philanthropic gift from Activision Blizzard.

If you have been active with the vaccination rollout, the Academy wants to hear from you! [Share your experiences](https://www.rand.org) to be featured in upcoming editions of COVID Digest.

**Fellow Highlights**

**April Kapu**, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, FAANP, FCCM, FAAN, and **Anabel Castro Thompson**, MSN, APRN, ANP-C, FAANP, FAAN, are featured in an article titled “Nurse Practitioners Mobilize to Increase Vaccinations Across Minority Communities and Combat Vaccine Hesitancy” by Yahoo!Finance.
Kenneth R. White, PhD, AGACNP-BC, FACHE, FAAN, President-Elect of the Academy, co-authored an article, “Complexity Science, Nursing, and COVID-19” in American Journal of Nursing.

News & Updates from National Organizations

American Medical Association (AMA) published a webinar titled “Prioritizing Equity video series: COVID-19 and Employer Vaccine Equity.”

Duke University School of Nursing published a video tribute, “A Tribute to Honor Nurses in the Duke University Health System and School of Nursing,” highlighting their sacrifices and work during the pandemic.

International Council of Nurses (ICN) released an article titled “Team-based care: responding to COVID-19.”

Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) released an article titled “Why Doctors and Nurses Can Be Vital Vaccine Messengers.” KFF published a policy brief titled “KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor- Rural America.”

Kaiser Health News (KHN) published an article titled “Beating the Pavement to Vaccinate the Underrepresented — And Protect Everyone.” KHN published an article titled “12 Months of Trauma: More Than 3,600 US Health Workers Died in Covid’s First Year.”

60 Black Health Experts Urge Black Americans to Get Vaccinated

Disinformation has pervaded social media and is an assault on our people.

By Thomas A. LaVeist and Georges C. Benjamin

Dr. LaVeist is a medical sociologist and the dean of the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at Tulane University. Dr. Benjamin is a physician and the executive director of the American Public Health Association. They are among 60 Black health experts who have signed onto this Op-Ed.

Watch: National Academy of Medicine Members Urge Black Americans to Get Vaccinated

National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) will host an event titled “Implementation Science and Non-Vaccine Public Health Measures during COVID-19” on Friday, April 23rd at 7am ET.

National Governors Association (NGA) released an issue brief titled “COVID-19 Impacts On Justice-Involved Kids: Lessons Learned From States.” NGA released an issue brief titled “State-Driven Initiatives To Support Moving To Value-Based Care In The Era Of COVID-19.”

Research!America will host a webinar with Dr. Walter Koroshetz, Director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), titled “Long COVID” on Thursday, April 15th at 2:30pm ET.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) released a policy brief titled “Eviction and Health: A Vicious Cycle Exacerbated by a Pandemic.”


Federal Government Response

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- CDC published a statement titled “Joint CDC and FDA Statement on Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine.”
- CDC released a report titled “U.S. COVID-19 Vaccination Program: Vaccine Channel Portfolio by Jurisdiction.”
- CDC released guidance titled “Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Overview and Safety.”
- CDC released guidance titled “Selected Adverse Events Reported aer COVID-19 Vaccination.”
- CDC published a web page titled “Health Equity News & Resources.”
• CDC released guidance titled “Guidance for Reporting SARS-CoV-2 Sequencing Results.”
• CDC’s MMWR released a report titled “COVID-19 Incidence and Mortality Among American Indian/Alaska Native and White Persons — Montana, March 13–November 30, 2020.”
• CDC published a toolkit titled “COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkit for Health Departments and other Public Health Partners.”
• CDC published guidance titled “About Variants of the Virus that Causes COVID-19.”
• CDC continues to update data on the number of COVID-19 cases caused by variants.
• CDC continues to update data on the number of COVID-19 vaccinations distributed in the United States.
• CDC continues to update data on the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths in the United States.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

• CMS continues to hold calls with clinicians, hospitals, other facilities, and states in an effort to keep stakeholders updated on COVID-19 efforts.
• Find more general information on COVID-19.

Department for Health and Human Services (HHS)

• HHS published a press release titled “Statement by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra on the President’s FY 2022 Discretionary Funding Request.”
• HHS published a press release titled “HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra Announces Expansion of COVID-19 Vaccine Program to All Community Health Centers Across the Country.”
• HHS released remarks by Surgeon General Vivek Murthy at Virtual Launch Event for COVID-19 Community Corps with Vice President Harris.
• HHS published a press release titled “HHS Secretary Becerra Announces Reduced Costs and Expanded Access Available for Marketplace Health Coverage Under the American Rescue Plan.”
• HHS published a press release titled “U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Launches Nationwide Network of Trusted Voices to Encourage Vaccination in Next Phase of COVID-19 Public Education Campaign.”
• HHS published a press release titled “HHS to Expand Access to COVID-19 Vaccines for Older Adults and People with Disabilities.”

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
FDA released a statement titled “Joint CDC and FDA Statement on Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine.”

FDA published a blog post titled “Vaccine Ready: Addressing COVID-19 Health Disparities among Racial and Ethnic Minority Communities.”

FDA published a press release titled “FDA Makes Two Revisions to Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Emergency Use Authorization to Help Increase the Number of Vaccine Doses Available.”

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

- NIH published a press release titled “NIH Experts Discuss Post-Acute COVID-19.”
- NIH published a press release titled “NIH Experts Call for Accelerated Research to Address Concurrent HIV and COVID-19 Pandemics.”
- Dr. Francis Collins published a blog titled “Mapping Severe COVID-19 in the Lungs at Single-Cell Resolution.”
- NIH published a press release titled “NIH Clinical Trial Evaluating Moderna COVID-19 Variant Vaccine Begins.”
- Dr. Francis Collins published a blog titled “Lessons Learned About Substance Use Disorders During the COVID-19 Pandemic.”
- NIH published a press release titled “CDC and NIH bring COVID-19 self-testing to residents in two locales.”
- Dr. Francis Collins published a blog titled “New Initiative Puts At-Home Testing to Work in the Fight Against COVID-19.”

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)

- NIAID published a press release titled “T Cells Recognize Recent SARS-CoV-2 Variants.”

Black Nurse Volunteers Give Shots to Minnesota’s Most Vulnerable
Shane Price supports his wife, Verna Price, as she gets her first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine from nurse Kelly Robinson. Mrs. Price was hesitant to get the vaccine, but said that having it explained to her by a nurse of color helped her come around.

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*Note: The COVID Digest distribution schedule has been adjusted to once a month on the second Wednesday for consistency with other Academy newsletter communications.*

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