



EBENEZER HEALTHCARE ACCESS



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Leading the Nation in Healthcare Services for the Underserved



Jean de Dieu Mukunzi, MPH, PMP

Executive Director / Founder of Ebenezer Healthcare Access

Immigrants and refugees have been a hot topic this year, popularized by recent political comments and news media focusing on illegal immigrants and border issues.

Meet those on the frontlines of legal immigration paving the way as national leaders helping legal immigrant populations. There has never been a company like Ebenezer Healthcare Access and the story of our Executive Director and his journey to America giving back to the underserved is remarkable.

Jean de Dieu Mukunzi the Executive Director and Founder of Ebenezer Healthcare Access collaborated with local healthcare systems, local academic institutions, the city of Dayton, and local immigrant leaders to start this non-profit organization in order to help those in need of support and assistance in navigating the healthcare system. After experiencing the challenges of learning a new culture and language firsthand, Mukunzi wanted to do something to give back and help others facing the same challenges he overcame.

With a team of 41 staff members, majority of them multilingual Community Health workers Ebenezer Healthcare Access was able to serve thousands of new Americans located in the cities of Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati. Due to services provided by Ebenezer, many immigrants were able to address different social determinants of health. They have been connected to family doctors and specialists and pregnant women were able to deliver safe and healthy babies. Many were able to get jobs and started to pay taxes to build this beautiful country, United States of America, their new home.

Cultural Competency: Guilt and Shame Cultures Aspect to Consider while Providing Care to the Immigrant Population

Ebenezer Healthcare Access is taking meaningful steps to strengthen connections between providers and the diverse communities they serve. After noticing an increase in clients from immigrant populations, the organization is exploring ways to help local healthcare and service providers better understand these clients' cultural backgrounds. EHA trained the Help Me Grow of the Miami Valley staff on cultural competency.



The curriculum included an introduction to cultural competency, an overview of

immigrant and refugee health contexts, identification of barriers to healthcare access, and development of culturally competent communication skills. Participants also engaged in practical exercises on facilitating difficult conversations with immigrant families, using country-specific health profiles, and understanding cultural dimensions such as guilt- and shame-based cultures, which can influence how individuals perceive health, authority, and decision-making. Feedback from participants emphasized the value of these sessions in increasing awareness and improving communication. Inspired by the training, Ebenezer Healthcare Access is continuing the initiatives to share these insights with local healthcare and service providers. The overarching goal is to strengthen provider capacity to deliver equitable, culturally responsive care and ensure that all families feel understood, respected, and supported.

Click the link below if you are considering requesting the same training for your staff members.

[Cultural Competency Training Inquiry Form](#)

OCMH: Director Urges Self-Advocacy, Community Unity at Summit



Director of the OCMH, Angela Dowson, and Jean de Dieu Mukunzi, the Executive Director and Founder of EHA

Columbus and Dayton, a city long known for being immigrant-friendly, also participated in the summit. In his presentation, Jean de Dieu Mukunzi, the Executive Director and Founder of Ebenezer Healthcare Access, discussed the different categories of immigrants and their impact on employment and county benefits. He also highlighted how EHA's Community Health Workers have helped Immigrants and Refugees overcome language and cultural barriers to meet their health needs and access community resources while navigating the US health care system.

Mukunzi noted that the new legislation titled the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), signed on July 4, 2025, may create challenges for some immigrants and refugees. While certain provisions of the bill have taken effect immediately, others will be implemented next year and beyond.

Health Care Access Now (HCAN) held a summit in Fairfield, Ohio, on Wednesday, October 22, 2025—just two months before the end of the year. The event brought together Community Health Workers from across much of the state. The main objective of the summit was to empower these professionals through shared stories, testimonies, and a renewed focus on leading with a strong leadership mindset.

Ebenezer Healthcare Access, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of immigrants and refugees by breaking down language and cultural barriers to health equity—particularly in the cities of Cincinnati,



EHA CHWs and Staff



Community Health Workers during the Summit

One of the major challenges faced by non-U.S. citizen immigrants, he explained, is the reduction in access to food assistance programs such as food stamps. In response, Ebenezer Healthcare Access is working closely with local food pantries to help ensure that immigrants and refugees do not suffer from food insecurity.

Angela Dawson, the Director of the Ohio Commission on Minority Health, OCMH also addressed the summit. Her main message emphasized the importance of self-advocacy and the need to bridge gaps within communities—key themes that were strongly promoted by HCAN throughout the event.

Ebenezer Healthcare Access Brings Joy to Local Children with Shoe Donation Event

Dayton, OH, Ebenezer Healthcare Access continued its mission of community care. On October 23rd, EHA hosted a shoe donation event that brought smiles to dozens of local children.

The initiative, part of the organization’s ongoing commitment to supporting families in need, provided brand-new shoes to kids from across the Dayton area. This effort was made possible through collaboration with local partners like Shoes 4 the Shoeless, Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides new, properly fitting gym shoes and socks to children in need across Southwest Ohio.

For many families, new shoes are a luxury that can strain already tight budgets. Ebenezer Healthcare Access sought to ease that burden while fostering a sense of inclusion and support. As the kids tried on their new pairs of shoes, their laughter and smiles captured the heart of what community support is all about. Ebenezer Healthcare Access remains deeply committed to uplifting local families through compassionate service, meaningful outreach, and a shared belief that a stronger community begins with caring for one another.

“The joy on the children’s faces reminded us why we do what we do,” said a representative from Ebenezer Healthcare Access. “Something as small as a pair of shoes can make a big difference in a child’s day—and in their self-esteem.” Parents and community members expressed gratitude for the organization’s outreach, noting that events like these strengthen community bonds and highlight the importance of giving back.

Ebenezer Healthcare Access, a nonprofit dedicated to improving access to healthcare and essential services, plans to continue similar community initiatives throughout the year as part



Gaudence Niwemutoni, CHW, joyfully celebrates with the children as they receive their new shoes.

of its broader mission to enhance the well-being of local families.



Organizers said the goal was simple: to ensure every child has access to basic essentials that promote health, comfort, and confidence.



Meet the Game-Changers: Our New Directors of Grants and Communications

Dr. Christopher Amy joined Ebenezer Healthcare Access from the University of Dayton as the new Director of Grant Acquisition, Research, and Health Education. She was instrumental in assisting with securing grant funding to develop a multilingual YouTube health education channel addressing COVID-19 and diabetes in five languages. Dr. Christopher was the principal investigator for a recent Health Equity publication in collaboration with Ebenezer Healthcare Access addressing the health literacy and healthcare access needs of Ohio's African immigrant and refugee/immigrant/migrant (RIM) populations.



She is a board-certified health professional with extensive experience in clinical pharmacy practice, academic instruction, research, non-profit leadership, and interprofessional collaboration. Demonstrating sustained excellence in patient care, teaching, and community engagement, Dr. Christopher has developed a professional record distinguished by



Tim H. Ishimwe joined Ebenezer Healthcare Access from Voice of America under the United States Agency for Global Media. Mr. Ishimwe is a multilingual media and communications professional with over a decade of experience in journalism, digital

content production, marketing, and nonprofit communications. He specializes in creating culturally resonant multimedia content, managing multilingual campaigns, and growing diverse digital audiences across global platforms. Throughout his career, Mr. Ishimwe has developed a strong record in video production, social media strategy, and healthcare storytelling. His work emphasizes visual narratives that amplify underrepresented voices, promote community engagement, and support cross-cultural understanding.

As an International Multimedia Journalist with the Voice of America (VOA) in Washington, D.C., he researched, scripted, shot, and edited digital and broadcast multimedia packages for international audiences. He produced political,

innovation in education, dedication to underserved populations, and commitment to evidence-based practice.

Dr. Christopher's scholarly contributions encompass a range of interrelated topics, including health equity in RIM populations, interprofessional experiential medical education through volunteer student-run clinics; pandemic-related adaptations in faculty and student experiential learning; anticoagulation therapy, drug interactions, and off-label medication use. Additional publications have focused on flipped-classroom pedagogies, active learning methodologies, and interprofessional education frameworks.

Beyond academic and research pursuits, Dr. Christopher has demonstrated sustained commitment to community health promotion. Initiatives include participating alongside other health professionals in large-scale mass vaccination events with physician assistant and pharmacy students during the COVID-19 pandemic. She also established interprofessional student-run health clinics serving residents of underserved senior housing communities.

In her new role at Ebenezer Healthcare Access,

Dr. Christopher oversees non-profit grant development and management, directs community-based research initiatives, and leads health education programs that advance equitable healthcare access and outcomes.

health, and cultural programs, covered multiple United Nations General Assemblies and U.S. elections, and helped expand VOA Central Africa's YouTube following to more than 100,000 subscribers within two years.

Mr. Ishimwe is proficient in English, French, Kinyarwanda, and Swahili, with conversational skills in Kirundi. His technical expertise includes the full Adobe Creative Suite (Premiere Pro, After Effects, Photoshop, Audition, Indesign), as well as camera, lighting, and audio production for both field and studio environments.

He completed his undergraduate studies in Mass Communication and Journalism at the Catholic University of Kabgayi (Rwanda) and completed undergraduate coursework in Motion Pictures (Production Track) at Wright State University, along with an associate degree in graphic design from Sinclair Community College.

Mr. Ishimwe believes that the expertise he brings to EHA will elevate the organization's marketing and communications to a new level.

Breaking Barriers: Helping African Immigrants Navigate Health Care in Southwest Ohio



A new study published by principal investigator Dr. Amy Christopher, in collaboration with Ebenezer Health Care Access in the *Health Equity* September 2025 issue, is shedding light on the health literacy challenges facing African immigrants in Southwest Ohio — and how community-based education could make a difference.

Dr. Christopher's research group and Ebenezer Healthcare Access' team surveyed 59 African immigrants using a short health literacy assessment translated into four major African languages. The findings revealed that education, employment, and family dynamics strongly influenced how well participants understood and used health information. Nearly half showed limited health literacy, pointing to serious barriers in navigating the U.S. health care system.

Language barriers were among the biggest obstacles, with many participants struggling to understand medical instructions or communicate with health providers. Most said they preferred one-on-one learning sessions over written materials or group classes, highlighting the value of personal, culturally aware communication.

The study calls for tailored, language-accessible health programs to help African immigrants better access preventive care and make informed health decisions. Researchers emphasize that ongoing community engagement and culturally sensitive education will be key to bridging these gaps and improving health outcomes. For more information regarding this important pilot study, please find the link below to the Health Equity article entitled: Bridging African Immigrant Health Literacy Gaps.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/24731242251378089>

Results

Participant characteristics and patterns by health literacy

Table 2. summarizes the baseline characteristics of the 59 African immigrant adults who participated in the study, stratified by health literacy group (SAHL ≤14 vs. >14).

Variables	SAHL ≤ 14 n (%)	SAHL >14 n (%)	p-value
Table 2. Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants, Stratified by Health Literacy Status (SAHL ≤14 vs. >14)			
Age (n years)			0.0185*
18–24	4 (16.0)	3 (8.8)	
24–34	12 (48.0)	7 (20.6)	
35–44	3 (12.0)	16 (47.1)	
45–54	5 (20.0)	4 (11.8)	
55 or older	1 (4.0)	4 (11.8)	
Sex			0.6779
Females	11 (44.0)	18 (52.9)	
Males	14 (56.0)	16 (47.1)	
Marital status			0.8271*
Single	5 (20.0)	6 (17.6)	
Married/partnered [†]	19 (76.0)	25 (73.5)	
Widowed or divorced	1 (4.0)	3 (8.8)	
Time in the United States			0.4558*
Less than 1 year	8 (32.0)	5 (14.7)	
1–3 years	7 (28.0)	10 (29.4)	
3–5 years	4 (16.0)	7 (20.6)	
6 years or more	6 (24.0)	12 (35.3)	
Number of children			0.9625*
None	5 (20%)	5 (14.7)	
1–2	9 (36%)	12 (35.3)	
3–4	6 (24%)	9 (26.5)	
5 or more	5 (20%)	8 (23.5)	
Prior Country			0.3408*
Burundi	7 (28.0)	4 (11.8)	
Rwanda	7 (28.0)	16 (47.1)	
Uganda	7 (28.0)	8 (23.5)	
Other [‡]	4 (16.0)	6 (17.6)	
Income (dollars)			0.8355
≤10k	13 (52.0)	15 (44.1)	
11–40k	5 (20.0)	8 (23.5)	
41k+	7 (28.0)	11 (32.4)	
First language			0.6695
Kinyarwanda	17 (68.0)	26 (76.5)	
Other [‡]	8 (32.0)	8 (23.5)	
Additional languages			0.1002
1 or 2	11 (44.0)	7 (20.6)	
More than 2	14 (56.0)	27 (79.4)	
School completed			0.0425*
Elementary/middle	13 (52.0)	7 (20.6)	
High school/trade	9 (36.0)	16 (47.1)	
Bachelors	1 (4.0)	8 (23.5)	
Graduate degree	2 (8.0)	3 (8.8)	
Employment status			0.7041*
Employed	13 (52.0)	19 (55.9)	
Looking for work	5 (20.0)	9 (26.5)	
Student/retired	6 (24.0)	4 (11.8)	
Not in labor force	1 (4.0)	2 (5.9)	

Bold italic value represent significant p-values.

Citation: Christopher A, Chen Y-J, Hovey P, Muhumure A (2025) Bridging African immigrant health literacy gaps, *Health Equity* 9:1, 520–528, DOI: 10.1177/24731242251378089.



Ebenezer Healthcare Access and Secret Smiles of Dayton Extend Kindness to the Community

As Ebenezer Healthcare Access continues its mission to support families with essentials beyond healthcare, the organization remains dedicated to giving back to the community. In the partnership with Secret



Their food assistance was halted under a new bill titled the *One Big Beautiful Bill*. Another recipient, Minezero Nyiransabimana, expressed her gratitude for the mattress provided for her children, while Emmanuel Sebatware also shared his appreciation after receiving both a mattress and a bed frame.

By providing these mattresses just weeks before Thanksgiving—a holiday centered around gratitude, sharing, and community—Ebenezer Healthcare Access continues to embody the spirit of compassion and service.

Through initiatives like this, Ebenezer Healthcare Access demonstrates that true healthcare extends beyond medical treatment—it’s about caring for

Smiles of Dayton, Inc., on Friday, November 7, 2025, the team toured several neighborhoods throughout the Dayton area, distributing mattresses to families in need. Secret Smiles of Dayton, Inc. provides beds, cribs, and bedding to children in the community who are without.

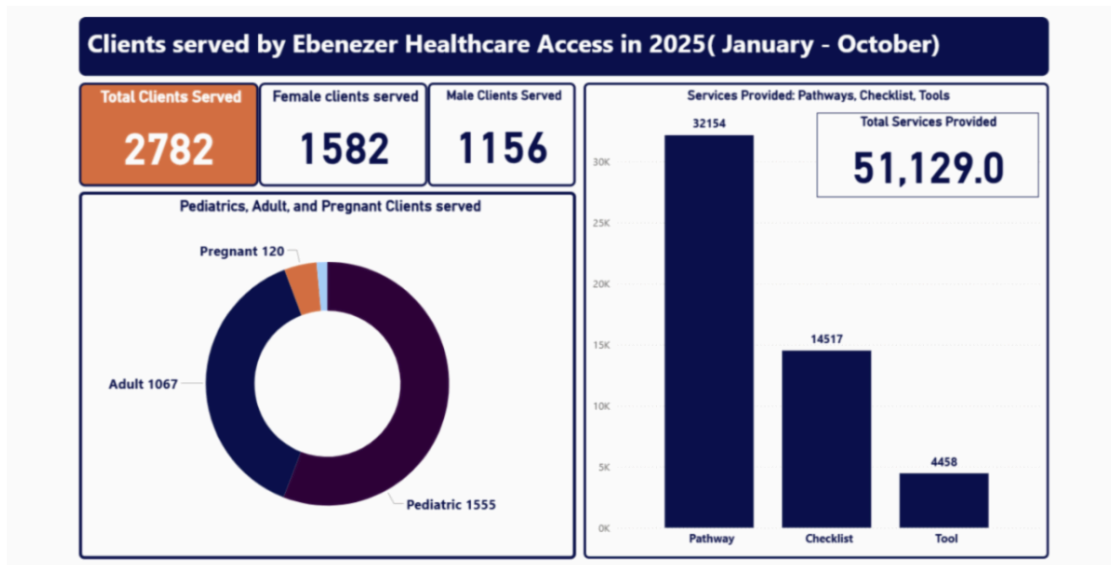
Many of the recipients were families from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). While they expressed heartfelt gratitude to Ebenezer for recognizing their needs, several also shared concerns about the recent suspension of their food stamp benefits. They appealed to Ebenezer for assistance in finding additional food resources to help sustain their families.

Jean Masheja, a father of six, including a set of twins, voiced his appreciation for Ebenezer’s support but also described the growing hardship his family faces since

the whole person and strengthening the fabric of the community. As the holiday season approaches, Ebenezer’s ongoing acts of generosity remind us of the power of giving, empathy, and unity.



Check Out Some of Our Accomplishments of 2025



Links Containing Promotional Video Materials in Different Languages by Ebenezer

- [English](#)
- [Kinyarwanda](#)
- [French](#)
- [Russia](#)
- [Spanish](#)
- [Swahili](#)
- [Farsi](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

November

15

The Miami Valley Community ID card drive:
 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM
 Dayton Metro Library, located at 215 E. 3rd St

November

23

Global Artisan Market at 2nd Street Market

11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

@ Join Welcome Dayton at the 2nd Street Market for the popular Global Artisan Market!

November

28

Ebenezer Healthcare Access: CSR—Supplying our clients in need with beds

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Offering beds and mattresses to our clients

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Get In Touch



3 Convenient Locations Near You

Ebenezer Healthcare Access
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