On July 7, 2013, the members of AFRICOM elected Dr. Eric Edi to serve until October 2014 as the coalition’s 6th president.

Dr. Eric Edi is an active founding member of the coalition. His election sparked a wave of renewed enthusiasm as members of the African and Caribbean communities of Philadelphia are convinced that the 12 year old Pan African organization will reach new heights. Established in 2001 at Historical Society of Philadelphia, AFRICOM has contributed to the social, economic, and political wellbeing of numerous African and Caribbean immigrants in the city of Philadelphia.

Dr. Eric Edi, will serve with Mr. Lanfia Waritay as Vice-President, Ms. A. Ghartey as Secretary, and Mr. Alou Traore as Treasurer. The new leadership is committed to reestablishing the coalition’s connection with the community and to the expansion of its programming.

One of the first acts of the new leadership was to bring former members to the table. Elder Mamady Doumbouya of the Guinean community, Mr. Siddiq Hadi of the Sudanese community, and Mr. El Hadji Ndiaye have been the first to return to the organization.

El Hadji Ndiaye has been instrumental in facilitating AFRICOM’s meetings at the Southwest CDC on 63rd Street and Paschall Avenue.

The new Executive Council is working under the care of an experienced board of directors chaired by Veteran Mr. Giordani Jean-Baptiste.

AFRICOM holds First Bowling Party Fundraiser

On August 9, 2013, from 8 pm to 10 pm, The Coalition of African and Caribbean communities had a bowling party in Haverford, PA. Around 40 individuals and 8 teams representing some nationalities of the coalition participated in the competition: the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Jamaica, Nigeria, Mali, Sudan, Ghana etc.

The Coalition for Jamaica, won first place followed by Nigeria, second and Liberia, third. The event allowed AFRICOM to raise funds for its programs. Congratulatory words were sent to Dr. Philip Udo-Inyang, chair of AFRICOM-Philly’s fundraising committee and coordinator of the bowling party.
AFRICOM’S CORNER OF EXCELLENCE

The Executive Council congratulates the following individuals for their outstanding contribution to Africom this quarter

- Ms. Antoinette Ghartey
- Mrs. Zemoria Brandon
- Dr. Philip Udo-Inyang
- Mr. Andrew Batchelor
- Mr. El Hadji Ndiaye

AFRICOM Spearheads Leadership Transition of the Mayor’s Commission for African and Caribbean Immigrants Affairs

Following the resignation of Hon. Stanley Straughter, as Chairman of the Mayor’s Commission for African and Caribbean Immigrants’ Affairs, Africom has spearheaded the efforts to find a new chair and facilitate the continuation of this important institution. After consulting with the founding members of the commission and with the guidance of Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, Africom called the first meeting in October to establish an election commission and call for nominations of candidates. The smooth process is underway. Dr. Philip Udo-Inyang, the election committee chair, has worked diligently with Mr. Cleous Young, Mr. James Cordice, Mr. Lansana Koroma, and Mrs. Carol Bangura to select the next chairs and vice-chairs of the commission.

The process has shown the importance of Africom-Philly in the affairs of the African and Caribbean immigrants in the city of Philadelphia. It will end on December 11, 2013 with the election of the new officers of the commission.

Echoes of Africa 2013 honored Mrs. Zemoria Brandon

This year “Echoes of Africa,” an annual event hosted by the office of Councilwoman J. L. Blackwell honored the work of Africom’s Board member Mrs. Zemoria Brandon. Mrs. Brandon received a well-deserved citation at the prestigious event for her unlimited service to the community and her work with the Sickle Cell Disease Association, Delaware Valley Chapter. Giordani Jean-Baptiste, Chairman of the Board of Africom, Aminata Sidibe, a member of the Coalition, Dr. V. Tolbert, past president of the coalition and Dr. Eric Edi attended the event. Congratulations to Mrs. Zemoria Brandon.
AFRICOM works with the AC3
By Dr. Camille Ragin

The African Caribbean Cancer Consortium (AC3) is an international research network, established in 2006, and focuses on cancer disparities in communities of African ancestry. The AC3 is based at Fox Chase Cancer Center in North-East Philadelphia since 2011. Over the last 2 years we have had the privilege of partnering with AFRICOM in many areas related to health. Through participation in AFRICOM's 2012 and 2013 health fairs, AC3 has had the opportunity to provide cancer-related materials to the African and Caribbean communities. In 2012, AFRICOM in collaboration with other African and Caribbean-based organizations worked with the AC3 in the planning and hosting of the 4th International African Caribbean Cancer Consortium Conference. The conference was held at the Philadelphia campus of Lincoln University. In this setting, international researchers from the United States, Africa and the Caribbean participated; and community members had the opportunity to learn about the current achievements in cancer research in African and Caribbean communities. A special conference session was hosted by AFRICOM entitled “Healthy Lifestyles: Reducing Cancer Risk” and community participants learned about modifiable behaviors that would promote cancer prevention. In addition to our cancer educational opportunities, AC3 is currently working with AFRICOM to promote cancer research designed specifically to address the high rates of cancer in African and Caribbean individuals in Philadelphia. We have ongoing projects that investigate the impact of tobacco smoke exposure in Black individuals and all study participants have been provided a free oral cancer screening examination. Other research projects are designed to address genetic risks associated with prostate cancer in African and Caribbean men. Enrollment of community participants into our studies was facilitated by AFRICOM during the 2013 health fair and we look forward to other opportunities during AFRICOM-hosted events. We are grateful for the support of AFRICOM and we continue to look forward to a sustained partnership over many years as we seek to address cancer disparities in African and Caribbean communities.

Camille Ragin, PhD, MPH
Associate Professor
Cancer Prevention and Control Program
Fox Chase Cancer Center - Temple Health
Principal Investigator:
African Caribbean Cancer Consortium
www.ac3online.org

Congratulation on the Coalition for Jamaica on their Annual Fundraising Banquet!

Look in the next issue for the article and pictures.
AFRICOM participated in many community events to form partnership:

- The 16th Annual Sickle Cell Walk at Fairmount Park on Saturday, September 22nd, 2013
- On September 30, 2013 ACBC’s reception of Gambian Minister of Tourism and Culture
- Jamaican Independence Day, at Calabash,
- Friday, September 27, Ribbon Cutting event with Spectrum Health Services, 52nd & Haverford
- November 16, 2013 Liberian Association Board Inauguration.

Health and Wellness Fair 2013

On September 25, 2013, AFRICOM co-sponsored, with the African Diaspora Health Initiative, the 13th African and Caribbean Health and Wellness Fair at Kingsessing Recreation Center. The fair sponsored by the ADHI offered the community various health screenings and other information. The annual soccer tournament took place. The low turnout of the event called the community leaders to task to design a new method to address the needs of the community.

AFRICOM Meets with African Hair Braiders to Address PA State License Requirements

African Hair Braiders, a vibrant economic force in the state of PA and in the city of Philadelphia, continue to be impacted by the State of Pennsylvania cosmetology license requirements. In recent months, inspectors have issued braiders $500.00 fines to be paid in one installment. Most of the ladies who received the citations were not in compliance with the license requirement, an issue that has polarized the African hair braiding business for the past years. Early in October, AFRICOM formed a special committee to address the issue. Dr. Eric Edi and Mr. El Hadji NDiaye met with a group of shop owners on 5th and Olney to assess the situation and better orient the effort to bring the matter to a definitive end.

African Hairs Braiders are underestimated contributors to Philadelphia’s economy and cultural diversity. The African hair braiding shops have created bonds between African and African American communities. Though they agree with having a Cosmetology License, braiders are more concerned about the cost, the length, and the total usefulness of the courses and the exam they are required to take.
AFRICOM Meets with Dr. Alie Kabbah, Executive Director of United Africans’ Organization

On Friday, November 8, 2013, at Philadelphia Community College (17 & Spring Garden) the leadership of AFRICOM held an important meeting with Dr. Alie Kabbah, the Executive Director of United Africans’ African communities in Chicago. AFRICOM and UAO of Chicago works and challenges in African and Caribbean States. Aside from Ali Kabbah facilitated the meeting, the AFRICOM delegation comprised: Dr. Eric Edi, Dr. Vera Tolbert, Ms. Antoinette Gharkey and Board chairman Mr. Giordani Jean-Baptiste.

AFRICOM Participates to Immigration Reform Rally –

Immigration reform is not and should not be the affairs of the US Latino communities only. This is the challenge AFRICOM has tried to take on to boost African immigrants’ presence and voice in such matters. AFRICOM has been working with the New Sanctuary Movement, to call the US administration to speed up the process to reform the immigration system and to end inhumane deportations.

Upcoming Community Events

GADANGME FOUNDATION OF PENNSYLVANIA
2013 END-OF-YEAR DANCE
AT
ROBERT C. WILSON, JR. MEMORIAL CENTER
1150 Engle Street
Chester, PA 19013
ON
DATE: SATURDAY, December 21, 2013
TIME: 8:00pm – 2:00am
ATTIRE: AFRICAN OR FORMAL
DINNER: 9:30pm
TICKET IS $15 FOR EARLY PURCHASE.
$20 AT THE DOOR.
(FREE FOOD AND DRINK)

Haitian Coalition of Philadelphia Gala
December 7, 2013 at 8:30p
Ukrainian Cultural Center
700 North Cedar Road
Jenkintown, PA 19046
http://www.haitiancoalition.org/