

2022

ANNUAL REPORT



AMAKA
Consulting and Evaluation Services, LLC



Table of Contents

Our CEO and Founder	3
Company Herstory	4
Project Manager Insight	5
Our Team of Experts	6
Consultant Insight	7
About the Company	8
Client Testimonial	9
2022 Highlights	10
Project Manager Insight	11
2022 Project	12
Consultant Insight	13
2022 Project	14
Client Testimonial	15
Social Media Highlights	16



The health care system is so fragmented and so racist inherently in its nature, that the needs, the priorities, the symptoms, the responsiveness to Black and brown birthing people, is not where it needs to be.

-Ndidi Amutah-Onukagha, PhD, MPH, CHES





Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha, PhD, MPH, CHES



Dr. Amutah-Onukagha's commitment to health disparities and health equity research and evaluation began before she formally knew what the interdisciplinary field was called. As a Nigerian American woman, she is reminded daily of the inequities experienced by women of color. Thus, by virtue of her previous life experiences she believes she has always viewed inequity through the lens of a social epidemiologist interested in the social determinants of health. These life experiences have shaped her research and evaluation career and training to date, and have undoubtedly deepened her commitment to research and evaluation pertaining to the health of people from marginalized backgrounds. She is fueled by an interest in inequitable life trajectories and outcomes as minority groups of people experience them.

Dr. Amutah-Onukagha received her PhD in Public Health with a focus on Maternal and Child Health at the University of Maryland, College Park School of Public Health in 2010. She received her Masters in Public Health from The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services in Maternal and Child Health in 2005. As an evaluator and project director, she is equipped with expertise in the areas of health disparities, maternal and child health, and HIV/AIDS. Dr. Amutah-Onukagha has conducted evaluation work for organizations such as the March of Dimes, the Susan G. Komen Foundation, Yale University, the University of North Carolina, and the American Public Health Association (APHA). Recently, Dr. Amutah-Onukagha and the ACES team provided research and evaluation expertise to the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts, which included design and implementation oversight of a large-scale evaluation plan focused on stigma reduction in youth and communities of color across Massachusetts.

All the research Dr. Amutah-Onukagha has conducted as an Associate Professor in the Department of Public Health and Community Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine, and also as the President and Founder of Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services (ACES), LLC, has been for the greater good of marginalized and vulnerable communities. In this capacity, she manages a team of over 35 consultants and subject matter experts to guide clients towards their intended outcomes with a keen focus on equity. She considers herself one of the few people that is truly comfortable in both the academy and in the community, and she finds ways to meaningfully intersect her work between both worlds. She has worked for the past 15 years in the field of health disparities, examining from a research and community-based perspective why infants and women of color are more likely to die than their white counterparts. This work has taken her from the academy to communities such as Baltimore, MD, Newark, NJ, and Washington DC, where she has lived and worked to raise awareness about these pressing issues, change policy, and increase resources to people who need them the most.

Dr. Amutah-Onukagha has shown flexibility as an evaluator in the following ways: a) working with and for communities, as she understands that the needs of the community should drive the evaluation and provide results that are meaningful and sustainable to the local community, and b) working with stakeholders and funders, as she understands the way that data should be presented in order to have maximum impact- both internally for organizational use and externally to other policymakers and decision makers. Dr. Amutah-Onukagha applies an equity lens to all evaluation work, with a focus on dismantling and calling out isms such as racism, sexism, and ageism.



Company Herstory

Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services (ACES), LLC is a trusted consultancy firm with deep expertise in program planning and evaluation in public health. A minority and woman-owned firm, since 2016 ACES has provided invaluable technical expertise in areas such as health disparities, maternal and child health, program evaluation, grant writing, and mixed methods research. With over 30 years of combined experience, the composition of research associates within ACES reflects the diversity of technical skills and content knowledge to meet clients' needs across many domains. ACES evaluation work has been rooted in our commitment to racial equity, diversity, and inclusion.



Our **mission** is to provide high-quality, evidence-based evaluation and consulting services with a keen focus on equity and social justice. Our **values** include respectful and clear communication, thoughtful engagement, collaborative partnership, and innovative and creative output.



Focus areas include maternal and child health research, research and evaluation, health equity, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Project Manager Insight

“

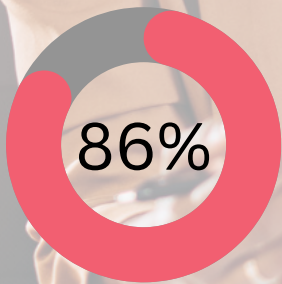
There is no lack of motivation from ACES research assistants, so the more I can bring them into the larger picture, the better, as they are committed to overcoming any obstacles to get the work done well.

-Project Manager



Our Team of Experts

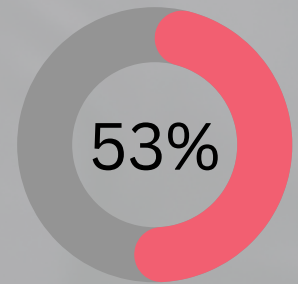
Our consultants join us from varied backgrounds, bringing a wealth of expertise to solve your team's greatest challenges. We prioritize transparency, integrity, and professionalism.



Of our consultants identify as Black and/or Latinx.



Of our consultants identify as LGBTQIA+.



Of our consultants are first-generation immigrants and/or college graduates.



Consultant Insight

“

I work with AMAZING people with equally amazing skill sets and expertise in the areas they're passionate about. ACES truly exemplifies "teamwork makes the dream work," and it feels good to be a part of a team that strives for excellence in a endeavors.

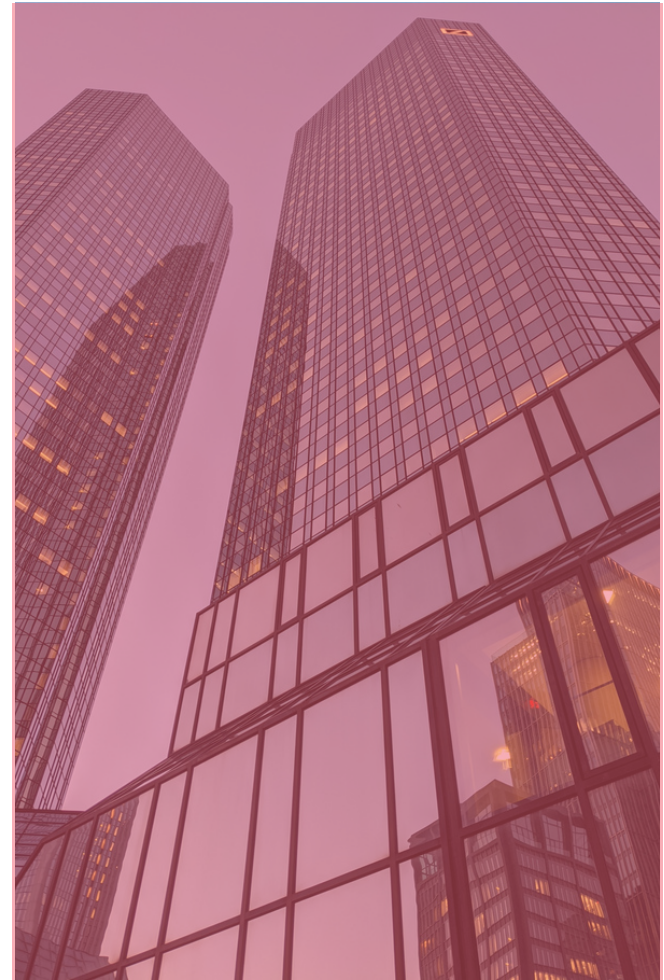
-Consultant



About the Company

With over 30 years of combined experience, the composition of research associates within ACES reflects the diversity of technical skills and content knowledge to meet clients' needs across many domains. ACES evaluation work has been rooted in our commitment to racial equity, diversity, and inclusion.

As a minority and woman-owned firm, the majority of ACES staff are minority women, and can thus bring a cultural depth and sensitivity to our work in and for underserved communities. ACES prides itself on maintaining a team of evaluation experts with diverse expertise and backgrounds. We have team members that are men and women of color, immigrants, and from low-income backgrounds. ACES Research and Evaluation associates have provided their expertise to other evaluation work funded by the March of Dimes, Rutgers, the State University of NJ, the American Public Health Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Partnership for Maternal and Child Health of Northern NJ.





Client Testimonial

“

Working with the ACES Team has been a joy! More than evaluators, they are our co-collaborators. Designing an evaluation with them made our strategies and projects stronger. Centering racial equity in public health evaluation is non-negotiable and the ACES Team walks the walk while many are only talking the talk. Evaluation of projects in over-researched yet underfunded communities requires deeply empathic and equitable practices in which the evaluation process itself addresses inequities. The ACES Team has earned our trust and the trust of our community partners. They are flexible and creative in working to evaluate a complex portfolio of statewide projects. We are so blessed to have them by our side in this work!

”



2022 Highlights

2022 was extremely productive for ACES. Some major highlights include:



Awarded the Comcast RISE Creative Production Grant.



Onboarded 10+ consultants.



Served as a sponsor for the Melinated Moms Seed of Sisterhood Fundraiser.



Featured on Newsy and USA Today News.



Project Manager Insight

“

Major wins for projects I have managed at ACES are, sticking to timelines, being extremely efficient with our workflow, providing the client with comprehensive updates and action plans. Each project has team members who have true passion for Public Health and bring different perspectives to the table allowing for a more balanced and diverse final product.

-Project Manager



2022 Project

POWER TO DECIDE

From October 2021 - August 2022, the Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services (ACES) evaluation team worked with Power to Decide (PTD) to develop a strategic plan with a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lens to examine both the internal and external impact of the work that PTD conducted around equity initiatives in their hiring, promotion, and retention of Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) staff. ACES' support included individually tailored assistance to conceptualize and refine a strategic planning approach for PTD, to implement or support strategic planning activities as appropriate, and to guide the development of an evaluation plan aligned to the strategic plan. The following questions guided this DEI evaluation:

- What are the internal goals of diversity, equity, and belonging at PTD?
- What are the internal perceptions of diversity, equity, and belonging at PTD?
- What opportunities exist for addressing gaps in belonging, equity, and anti-racism?

ACES submitted a finalized Strategic Action Plan in November 2022. The plan was finalized through a series of meetings and workshops with PTD key staff. This action plan outlined strategic goals, objectives, strategies and performance indicators.

In addition, a final Evaluation Report, to include progress made, activities completed, and hours spent related to the strategic planning process, was provided by ACES to PTD staff in December 2022. This summary included a brief report about progress made on strategic planning during the project period, such as updates on the timeline and activities or meetings conducted, as well as attachments of any deliverables developed during the contract period.



Consultant Insight



The teams I have worked on have been awesome. Compared to other teams, ACES team members are more detail oriented, which is nice, because you know everyone is pulling their weigh for the project to succeed.

-Consultant



2022 Project



From August 2022- November 2022, Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services (ACES) provided expertise in order to (1) support a landscaping exercise of the Community-based Organization (CBO) ecosystem in New Jersey; (2) center the voice of those who are closest to the problem/lived reality and inform funders and key decision makers of the diverse voices and multidimensional nature of the birth equity field.

ACES provided a mixed methods evaluation plan that includes surveys, focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders. Informed by the findings from the first phase of the CBO landscape analysis, ACES developed data analysis tools, to be co-designed with the NJ Birth Equity Funders Alliance project team, researchers, and community advisors. The qualitative data analysis was rooted in a series of key informant interviews and focus groups, each lasting approximately 60 minutes. In order to ensure a timely and comprehensive recruitment process, the composition, structure, and recruitment for these groups were pre-identified by the Alliance project team and conducted via Zoom by ACES. These groups were audio and video recorded, transcribed using Otter.ai or a similar professional transcription service, and analyzed using Dedoose with the foundation of Grounded Theory. The quantitative data analysis was conducted through surveys to pre-identified participants by the Alliance and analyzed through statistical tests using SPSS software. Potential participants for the surveys, interviews, focus groups included, but are not limited to: Community-based organizations (CBOs) whose work affects birth equity outcomes through a variety of determinants, technical assistance providers, and other state entities.

ACES maintains constant communication with the Alliance project team by convening with the Alliance to review the evaluation plan and develop interviews, focus group guides and surveys, as well as to review preliminary results from data collection. Through consistent and ongoing conversations with the Alliance project team, we ensure that our work is in alignment with the overall vision of success for the project that this important work entails.



Client Testimonial

“

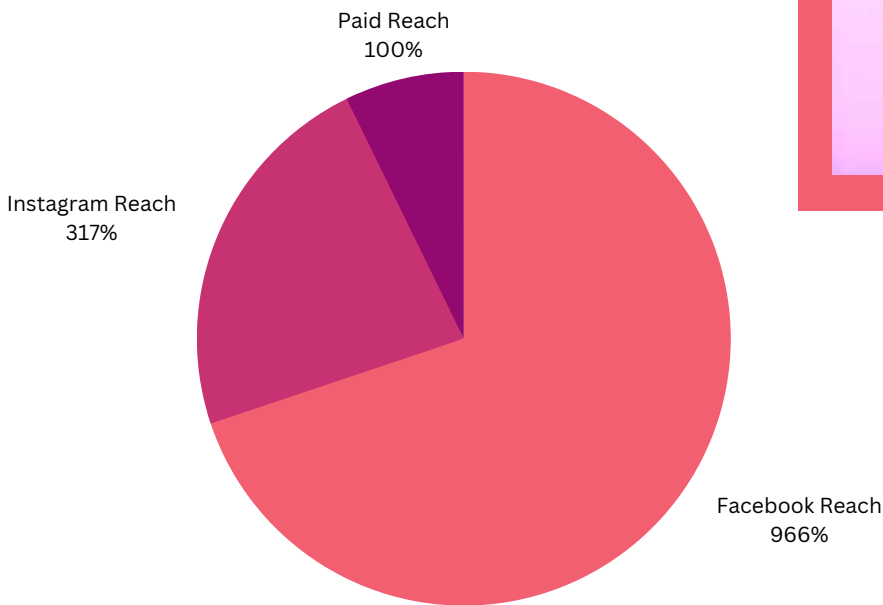
Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services has been instrumental in educating our organization and stakeholders on the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the sexual and reproductive health space. Dr. Amutah-Onukagha is very thorough and conscientious in her delivery and she creates a space that is very engaging and welcoming to all. Her expertise is invaluable and the quality of service she provides is impeccable. Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services is the gold standard!

”



Social Media Highlights

From January 2022 to December 2022, we saw significant growth on all social media platforms. For example, our reach increased by more than 900% on Facebook alone. As a result, we have been able to connect with various organizations, professionals, and change agents.



Dr. Ndidid! Thank you for shedding further light into the cruel treatment of Black women in this country. Till this day, our minds, spirits and wombs suffer at the hands of this system. We reclaim full agency over our bodies, our Ancestors' and the generations to come!

-LinkedIn Follower

Stay Connected



Facebook: Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services, LLC



LinkedIn: Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services, LLC



Twitter: @AmakaEvaluation



Instagram: @AmakaConsulting



YouTube: Amaka Consulting and Evaluation Services



Website: www.amakaconsulting.com



Email: info@amakaconsulting.com