



September 25, 2023

Dear Mount Zion Health Fund,

I am writing in support of the UCSF/MERI Center for Education in Palliative Care's "Poetic Medicine for Grief" proposal to the Mount Zion Health Fund for their MZHF+Community grant submission.

Under the direction of our Executive Director and Co-Founder, Rev. Cynthia Carter Perrilliat, AC Care Alliance partners with the UCSF/MERI Center to support the developing Serious Illness Program at Glide Church. Given the wonderful and complementary relationship we have built in this project, we enthusiastically support UCSF/MERI in the "Poetic Medicine for Grief" proposal to create sustainable and racially tailored bereavement services for BIPOC populations. As you know, health inequities are all too common in the Bay Area (and the rest of the nation) and we are committed to investigate whether racial affinity groups that serve grieving African Americans can reduce such disparities.

In working with Dr. Michael Rabow and MERI and in my discussions with the San Francisco African American Faith-based Coalition (SFAAFBC), I am pleased to report that a number of individual churches that are a part of the SFAAFBC are enthusiastic about expanding their bereavement services and to partner with MERI on this Poetic Medicine for Grief project.

I serve as a liaison between MERI and our colleagues in the SFAAFBC. I have met with both the MERI team and members of the SFAAFBC and look forward to implementing the project for many of the twenty San Francisco African American churches that have membership in the SFAAFBC during Year 2 of the grant period. We are also looking forward to adding to the learnings from Year 1 of the project and am excited to be collaborating too with Sandy Stokes and the Chinese American Coalition for Compassionate Care.

I am confident that MERI and the SFAAFBC have the drive, organization, and skills to complete this exiting project and look forward to personally working to promote improved bereavement services for San Francisco's African American communities.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Clyde W. Oden, Jr.  
Assistant Director

cc. Rev. Cynthia Carter Perrilliat, Executive Director

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