

# INTERCEPTS 4 AND 5 TOOLKIT

## The AMAAD Institute



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Arming Minorities Against Addiction & Disease

## THE ARMING MINORITIES AGAINST ADDICTION & DISEASE (AMAAD) INSTITUTE

The Arming Minorities Against Addiction & Disease (AMAAD) Institute (AMAAD) was conceptualized in 2004 by Dr. Carl Highshaw and funded in 2014. AMAAD was designed to engage, motivate, and strengthen communities of color in South Los Angeles, California, through peer-driven recovery and essential services support. AMAAD provides community support and resources around specialized, strength-based management and leadership development, with a focus on LGBTQIA+ populations and people of color who are justice-involved, experiencing homelessness, and/or in need of other community and reentry supports, such as job readiness and mental health counseling services.



**BJA**  
Bureau of Justice Assistance  
U.S. Department of Justice



RECOVERY  
MONTH

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BJA's

**Comprehensive**  
Opioid, Stimulant,  
and Substance Abuse

Program

## AMAAD's Mission Statement:

*AMAAD facilitates personalized individual access to programs and services that foster safe and supportive healthy environments for people to live, learn, and develop to their fullest potential.*

AMAAD has developed community-based, peer-driven recovery support networks for Black people and other people of color in South Los Angeles. It provides living role models of people of color who create and maintain successful communities. AMAAD empowers and celebrates healthy living while affirming men and women of color.

Programs include Black LGBTQIA+ community building and leadership development, community education and engagement, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP)/post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) linkage, mental health therapy, substance misuse counseling, health and wellness services, transitional housing for young gay and bisexual men, housing support for formerly incarcerated individuals, employment services, and training and coaching.

## AMAAD's Tips for Success

- Meet people where they are at; do not try to force someone into a change or process that they are not ready for.
- Show that people are not alone in their struggles; having a peer-led program with someone who looks like them shows them it is possible.
- Be in the community, be a member of the community, participate in the community. AMAAD hosts Thanksgiving meals, participates in community events, and is a part of its community.
- Provide mentorship and a ladder for success.
- Share your story—show that success is possible.
- Be ready to listen.
- Recognize that identities are complex.
- Celebrate culture and openness.
- Create a community.
- Make allyship visible.
- Cultivate compassion.
- Let people choose their own labels.
- Watch your language; it matters.
- Normalize the use of gender-inclusive pronouns.
- Do not show the flag if you are not doing the work.
- Create a strong inclusion policy.
- **Foster hope!**

*“What AMAAD is seeking to do is near and dear to the organizers, because this is where we spend our daily lives. This is where we do our sleeping, our shopping, our socializing. We are not going ‘into’ South LA, we are already here.”*

—Dr. Carl Highshaw