



# WORD OF LIFE INTERNATIONAL (WOL) Community1st Campaign – Ensuring Fair and Equitable Access to COVID- 19 Testing and Vaccination Resources

My name is Pastor John Udo Okon of the Word of Life International; I lead a local church that started from humble beginnings in a 4th-floor walk-up in the Bronx, and over the last 20 years, has grown to lead one of the largest food pantries in the Bronx. In partnership with our Community1st Alliance Partners, The SmarTech Nexus Foundation 501 (c)(3), and Adsystech Inc., we are on a mission to reduce the reluctance or refusal to be vaccinated or to have one's children vaccinated against COVID-19 and its variants despite the availability of vaccination services.

## Why are people in our community hesitant about being vaccinated?

- Age is the primary driver, with residents 18- to 29-years having double-digit increased odds of being vaccine-resistant compared to those 50 and older.
- The Historic mistreatment of Black Americans by the U.S. government and medical institutions (e.g., Henrietta Lacks' stolen cells, Tuskegee Experiment, etc.)
- Safety and Fear of side effects and not trusting the COVID-19 vaccine
- Lack of access to social services, including food, shelter, transportation, primary care, etc.
- Autonomy and personal freedom continue to fuel negative attitudes toward the COVID-19 vaccines.

## Why should we get the vaccine?

- Reduce a person's risk of contracting the virus that causes COVID-19, including this variant.
- Be highly effective at preventing hospitalization and death, including against this variant.
- Protect fully vaccinated people with breakthrough infections from the Delta variant appear to be infectious for a shorter period.

## What services do we provide?

- Outreach and awareness to Bronx residents and families to determine their vaccination status
- Access to city-run vaccination sites for those who want to be vaccinated.
- Sign-up and refer residents for essential services

- Food
- Shelter
- Income
- Health and Wellness

## What happens when you are fully vaccinated?

- You do not need to wear a mask outdoors or when gathering with friends and family at home or in other private settings.
- Masks are still required in schools, on public transportation, in health care settings, and specific congregate settings, such as nursing homes and homeless shelters, and at any other settings if designated by a business or location.
- We recommend wearing a mask in all other public indoor settings, even when it is not required, as well as in any environment when you do not know the vaccination status of those around you.
- Keep your mask on if you are around unvaccinated people who are at increased risk for severe COVID-19.

## We will meet you where you are! If you have a question or need help, operators are available to assist you.

- Call: NYC Vaccine Hotline: 877-VAX4NYC (877-829-4692)
- Please also check the NYC Vaccination Finder Website to find a vaccination site near you: <https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/>
- Pop-up vaccination outreach and awareness events will appear on the WOL website: <https://wordoflifefornewyorkcitynew.org/>

**Get vaccinated and reduce the spread of COVID-19 and its variants!**

For additional information about our program, don't hesitate to get in touch with me directly:

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