

## ACCLIVUS ASCENSION – 1<sup>st</sup> Edition – January 2025

### **Representative Marcus C. Evans, Jr. Talks About the Ties That Bind Acclivus and the IL Black Caucus**

*Violence deconstructs all those things that lift us up and make us a traditionally healthy people. Acclivus is a good community steward. They do the work to limit violence, help Black people transform their lives and rebuild communities into livable neighborhoods, improving the quality of life for each resident.* - State Representative Marcus C. Evans, Jr.

The [Illinois Black Caucus](#) began in 1967 as a way for Black legislatures to ensure that the interests of Black citizens received equitable representation, particularly in pillars crucial to the community, including health and welfare, criminal justice reform, consumer education, employment/job creation/minority business enterprise, education, and housing.

State Representative Marcus C. Evans, Jr., 33<sup>rd</sup> District and Black Caucus Assistant Majority Leader said Acclivus, a community health organization focused on violence prevention, has been a great steward and Caucus collaborator, offering services and programming to connect with each of the Caucus' pillars.

The violence experienced in Black neighborhoods is a public health crisis, which is the reason Evans respects the work Acclivus does in the community. Acclivus treats violence as a disease. The organization's goal is to prolong life and promote health through organized efforts that help victims and potential victims of violence move away from violent acts; and support their families and supporters. Acclivus facilitates the growth and sustainability of other organizations committed to nonviolence, health and safety, youth, community, and business development. Acclivus helps justice-impacted individuals and their families transform, complete educational goals, find employment, and become productive members of the community. Then, they represent these groups and communities by working with the Caucus and other elected officials to make sure money is designated and appropriated for the ongoing proliferation of violence-free communities, Evans continued.

“If you go to Northbrook, you see all the things that make a community work, prosper, and offer residents a positive quality of life. Greenery replaces concrete. Businesses flourish. Grocery stores are many and accessible. Parks, streets, and homes are safe. There's no violence. These are the qualities Black citizens want to see and benefit from in their neighborhoods. So the Black Caucus works with proven groups, like Acclivus, because we want to see Northbrook in Englewood,” Evans said.

Evans sees another Acclivus strength and source for its success is that it is a Black-led organization. “I think it's best to have Black-led violence prevention organizations because we are capable of solving our own problems. I can't imagine an immigrants' rights group a Jewish rights organization led by a Black person. It wouldn't make any sense. Many times, the best leadership and understanding you'll get regarding an issue comes from the person most impacted by it. Black people can lead and solve our own problems. If other folks want to help... be an ally,

that's fine; but, leave the leadership to those most affected. There is no limit in skill and ability when given the opportunity.”

### **Acclivus visits Springfield for Legislative Inauguration – January 2025**

Acclivus CEO LeVon Stone, Sr., and community engagement director Bamani Obadele with Joint Black Caucus chairwoman State Senator Lakesia Collins; Illinois State comptroller Susana Mendoza; Assistant Majority Leader State Representative Marcus Evans; State Representative Kimberly du Buclet; Assistant Majority Leader State Representative Kam Buckner; State Senator Robert Peters; Alderman Desmon Yancy; and Alderwoman Jeanette Taylor.

