

## Stress

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As I stood in line to check-in at the emergency room my heart began pounding again, I was trying to fill out the paperwork and found I didn't have sufficient strength in my right hand to hold the pen and when asked what was wrong my response came through extremely slurred speech. "I can't talk and I can't write" was all I could reply as the tears started to flow down my face. My blood pressure was 205/132!

I was very fortunate. I was only in the hospital for two days. The assessment indicated I had suffered an acute mild stroke/transient ischemic attack likely secondary to hypertensive emergency. I was told again that I needed to make some lifestyle changes. I stayed home to rest for a couple of days and had quite a bit of time to think. I knew that many people have died from strokes and I was okay with dying. But, the thoughts that consumed my mind centered on what if this condition doesn't kill me; what if I became disabled? That scenario woke me up.

Heart disease and stroke are major

health concerns for all people, but African Americans are particularly at high risk. The good news is that you can take positive action to live longer and stronger.

Yes, I am a recovering workaholic. Like so many women, I had derived

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my identity and my self-worth from my job, my abilities, and my accomplishments. I sacrificed my health to prove that I was good enough or better than whomever I was competing against, and I ignored all the wakeup calls along the way.

As often as possible, I speak at churches, businesses and women's

events about the warning signs of heart disease and stroke. More importantly I talk about the controllable factors – things we have the ability to adjust in our lives. If through my story and my example I can help one other woman turn her life around for the better, I will have accomplished much more than I ever accomplished on any job, any assignment or any project I've undertaken over the past 40 years.

My story is part of the Checking Our Pulse exhibit currently at the Northwest African American Museum in Seattle. Through this exhibit, you will get to know critical health concerns in the black community, including heart disease and stroke, and simple ways to make positive lifestyle choices for yourself and your family. To learn more about Checking Our Pulse, visit [www.naam-nw.org](http://www.naam-nw.org). You can also get more information about risk factors at [www.powertoendstroke.org](http://www.powertoendstroke.org)

The Checking Our Pulse exhibit runs until June 5.



Natalie Ellington

## Red Cross

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at the foundation of the work of the Red Cross and are at the core of international humanitarian law. These rules have been adopted by all governments in order to reduce suffering in war," says Bonnie McElveen-Hunter, chairman of the American Red Cross.

The Red Cross commissioned two surveys, one of younger Americans between 12

Nearly 3/5 youth (59 percent) – compared to 51 percent of adults – believe there are times when it is acceptable to torture the enemy.

More than 2/5 youth (41 percent) believe there are times when it is acceptable for the enemy to torture captured American prisoners, while only 30 percent of adults agree.

More than half of youth (56 percent) believe that there are times when it is acceptable to kill enemy prisoners in retaliation if the enemy has been killing American prisoners, while only 29 percent of adults agree.

The global Red Cross and Red Crescent network and the Geneva Conventions had their start after Henry Dunant witnessed the devastating consequences of war at a battlefield in Italy. In the aftermath of that battle, Dunant argued successfully for the creation of a civilian relief corps to

respond to human suffering during conflict, and for rules to set limits on how war is waged.

Inspired in part by her work in the Civil War, Clara Barton would later found the American Red Cross and also advocate for the U.S. ratification of the first Geneva Convention.

The Red Cross has developed the "Exploring Humanitarian Law" curriculum which can be incorporated into social studies and history classes. More than 1200 schools in all 50 states already use these resources.

"The American Red Cross curriculum on humanitarian law can tie the history of the Civil War with conflicts occurring today across the world, and show the importance of basic rules through time that protect the rights of combatants and citizens," said Elisabeth Vasquez Hein, international serv-

ices programs manager for the American Red Cross Serving King & Kitsap Counties. "The Red Cross urges teachers in schools throughout our community and our state to include this curriculum as part of

More than 41 percent of youth believe there are times when it is acceptable for the enemy to torture captured American prisoners

their history and social studies courses, especially as we mark the anniversary of the Civil War."

More information on the program can be found at [www.redcross.org/ehl](http://www.redcross.org/ehl).

For more information, visit [www.seattleredcross.org](http://www.seattleredcross.org).

'The American Red Cross curriculum on humanitarian law can tie the history of the Civil War with conflicts occurring today'

and 17 and another of adults, and the results showed that, in many cases, youth are more inclined to support illegal actions in times of war than adults:

## Loans

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committed to ensuring the safety and soundness of Washington's mortgage industry — including foreclosure prevention and assistance," DFI Director Scott Jarvis said. "It's appalling how many individuals continue to take advantage of distressed homeowners in the midst of one of the most difficult times of their lives."

As the mortgage crisis continues in Washington, more homeowners are facing the prospect of foreclosure. Some, in a desperate search for relief, cling to any offer of help. Home Credit Law Center employees call Washington homeowners offering that relief for a \$3,000 advance fee.

"Loan modification services are offered for free through Housing and Urban Development-approved specialists," continued Bortner. "Before you pay for loan modification services, see if a HUD-approved housing counselor can help you for free."

To view the KING5-TV report by Jesse Jones on Home Credit Law Center, go to <http://www.king5.com/>

A list of HUD-approved counselors is available at <http://hud.gov/>. DFI provides a number of resources for homeowners facing foreclosure at [www.homeownership.wa.gov](http://www.homeownership.wa.gov)

To verify whether a company offering residential loan modification is licensed by

Brian R. Linnekens and his law firm charged with taking property from Washington residents by fraud or misrepresentation

DFI, go to [www.dfi.wa.gov](http://www.dfi.wa.gov) and click on the "Verify License" link.

The mission of the Division of Consumer Services is to protect consumers from illegal and fraudulent lending practices. The division accomplishes its mission through

licensing, licensee examinations, investigations, and enforcing selected state and federal statutes and rules. Consumer Services regulates the business activities of consumer loan companies, mortgage brokers, money transmitters and currency exchange

ers, as well as check cashers and sellers, also known as "payday lenders." The Division is entirely self-supporting, with funding provided by licensing, auditing, and policing of regulated businesses and individuals. No money is received from the state General Fund or other public revenue

source.

About DFI [www.dfi.wa.gov](http://www.dfi.wa.gov) • 360.902.8700 • 877.RINGDFI (746.4334)

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