PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**GirlTrek on the Coronavirus Pandemic: What Black Grandmothers Taught Us**

*“Our mamas braided battle plans into our Bantu knots and passed down survival secrets that have kept us alive in the face of real danger for centuries. We are leaning into that knowledge now to make adjustments to the GirlTrek 2020 season in light of the Coronavirus threat,” said Vanessa Garrison, GirlTrek cofounder.*

(**Washington, D.C**. – **March 17, 2020**) [GirlTrek](https://www.girltrek.org/), the largest health movement and nonprofit for Black women and girls in the country, is closely monitoring Coronavirus (COVID-19) and its impact. No one is untouched by this unprecedented global public health crisis.

With these everchanging conditions, what’s not ever going to change (ever) is GirlTrek’s commitment to keeping the community healthy and safe – and calm.

“GirlTrek is inspired by Black women throughout history who left us a blueprint for survival,” said cofounder, Vanessa Garrison. “And yet, here we are.  The #DaughtersOf women who wouldn’t even let us enter the kitchen, let alone open the fridge, without washing our hands. Who knew that the common-sense, sage advice, and regular ritual of Black grandmas everywhere would become the number one weapon in a war against a pandemic that has sent the world into panic?”

With more than half a million active members and counting, GirlTrek as profiled on [CNN](https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/21/health/iyw-girltrek/index.html), encourages Black women to use radical self-care and walking as the first practical step to leading healthier, more fulfilled lives. GirlTrek is on a mission to inspire one million Black women to walk in the direction of their healthiest, most fulfilled lives by the end of 2020 and it all starts with taking the pledge at GirlTrek.org.

Garrison added: “Who is more resilient than us? As the Coronavirus spreads across the nation and world, and anxiety and fear rise, I am here today with a message sent straight from the ancestors. Do not fear. You were built for this. These are trying times, yes. But 400 years of waging war against a system that was designed to break us, has prepared Black women to not just weather the storms of today, but to be the leaders, and the beacons of light, that the world desperately needs right now.”

While social distancing is required to contain the spread of the Coronavirus, in light of what GirlTrek knows to be true, social distancing doesn’t have to mean physical inactivity. These are stressful times and walking not only improves physical health but also relieves stress. So GirlTrek has kicked off its 2020 trek season earlier than the April 1st original deadline with a solo 30-Day Jumpstart challenge. That’s 20 walks in 30 days. Every person who completes the jumpstart challenge will receive GirlTrek’s special edition golden shoelaces that say #1MILLIONby2020.

In order to keep members safe as well as communities across the nation while walking, GirlTrek has implemented the following guidelines:

* Prioritizing walking alone. GirlTrek calls those solo treks.;
* Postponed ALL large group events planned for March and April;
* GirlTrek doesn’t advise group walks at this time. If you choose to walk with trusted friends or family, we recommend keeping the group sizes to 10 or less ;
* We are strongly advising members to stay home and not attend GirlTrek walks if they feel sick.

As this situation evolves, GirlTrek may implement additional measures. GirlTrek is closely monitoring real-time developments from the Center of Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) in order to address any issues that may arise.

Contact jewel bush Chief of External Affairs at jewel@girltrek.org to help coordinate media interviews in your media market.

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