

## THE BLOODLINE WITH LLS

A PODCAST FOR PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS

### ***Episode: 'Community Outreach In the Field: Blood and Chess Atlanta'***

#### **Description:**

Please join us for a brand-new series called, *Community Outreach In The Field*, where our field correspondents, comprised of LLS Staff, will be interviewing health advocates, patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals in the communities in which they serve. These episodes will give the listener the feel that they are right in the middle of the action.

In the first episode, Bryon Daily, the National Community Outreach Manager for [LLS' Myeloma Link Program](#), explored one of the newest outreach settings for the program, called Blood and Chess. This chess event took place in Atlanta, GA, at *The Anguished Barber* and is designed as an off shoot of the barbershop model, where advocates can spread blood cancer awareness in comfortable community settings and help to decrease healthcare disparities of underserved communities.

#### **Transcript:**

**Elissa:** Welcome to *The Bloodline with LLS*. My name is Elissa, and I'm excited to introduce you to a brand-new series we are starting called *Community Outreach in the Field*. In these episodes, our Field Correspondents, who are made up of LLS staff around the country, will be interviewing health advocates, patients, caregivers, and health professionals in the community settings in which they serve.

In this episode, Bryon Daily, the National Community Outreach Manager for LLS *Myeloma Link* and a myeloma survivor himself, will be exploring one of the newest community outreach settings for the *Myeloma Link* program in Atlanta, Georgia. Welcome, Bryon.

**Bryon Daily:** Hi, Elissa. How are you?



**Elissa:** Doing good. Happy to have you here. So, before we send you out into the field, let's talk a little bit about what you'll be doing today. First, would you share with our listeners what the *Myeloma Link* program is and why we have it?

**Bryon:** So, *Myeloma Link* is an initiative that LLS started back in 2017, primarily to address the disparities in healthcare in black communities. And because we deal exclusively with blood cancer, that's our way of doing our part.

We established a program in two cities initially, Washington, DC, and Atlanta; and what we do is we conduct outreach activities to educate the community about the resources that LLS has to provide – financial support; emotional support; helping to offset travel expenses for patients and families who are impacted by cancer; and there's many other things that we do that patients aren't aware of that would be beneficial to the community.

**Elissa:** Now the outreach setting that you'll be visiting today is a brand-new pilot program for *Myeloma Link* called Blood and Chess. I love the name. Could you tell us about it?

**Bryon:** Yeah, absolutely. Blood and Chess is a campaign that we started in order to reach men primarily in the underserved community. Chess is a game that can be played anywhere by two people; and generally, it's been my experience that it doesn't matter what walk of life you come from, you can play chess. You could bring people together in a setting that they're familiar with, which is a barbershop and have a very fulfilling game of chess.

What we decided to do was bringing gaming to barbershops in a way that's not disruptive to the business. We've gotten a lot of support from barbershop owners who see this as a way to, not only promote their business, but also to give back to the community by having us come in, set up a table, say a few words about LLS and the *Myeloma Link* initiative, and then commence with playing chess.



We do that for about three hours, and at the end of the night, if we're lucky, we've impacted someone who may know someone who's been diagnosed with cancer, or they can walk away with some information that they can share with people in their circle.

**Elissa:** I find the barbershop program fascinating. In an episode that we did in July of 2020 with Dr. Stephen Thomas called "*Understanding Racial and Ethnic Disparities Within Healthcare*," he discussed a program called, "*Health Advocates In Reach and Research*" or HAIR in which barbers were trained as health advocates and could guide their customers to resources and proper care. And also bringing in healthcare professionals to the barbershops to speak with them. Is your program similar to this concept, and why is the barbershop model important for reaching the black community?

**Bryon:** Well, I think that that is a good model in theory. However, it's important that we get the information straight so there's no confusion. Many people have never heard of myeloma until they're diagnosed or know someone who has been diagnosed. Oftentimes people confuse myeloma with melanoma, which is a skin cancer.

**Elissa:** Yes.

**Bryon:** I've been in situations where people with all good intentions, say one thing, meaning to get it right; but, unfortunately, it's erroneous information. And so, for that reason, we ask the barbershop owners not to do our jobs, which is to disseminate the information to the community but just to support us by providing the venue, making sure it's a safe place, and without us disrupting their business.

**Elissa:** Right. So, then it's really a place where you would be able to present information to the patrons about myeloma so if they get diagnosed with it or another blood cancer or one of their loved ones or friends gets diagnosed, then they would know about these resources available.

**Bryon:** Right. And, like I said, many people, not only do they not know what myeloma is, but they've never heard of LLS. So, it's a teachable moment when we can explain to them that myeloma is a type of cancer that's disproportionately diagnosed among blacks at a 2:1 rate and that were diagnosed at a younger age. And it is a blood cancer that we have resources that can help people, not only overcome the financial hardships and expense, but help them learn how to overcome some of the psychological consequences of going through chemotherapy treatment and such. Things that they would not have normally known because if you're not impacted by the disease, these are just things you just don't know.

**Elissa:** I'm excited to hear how this goes. So, enjoy the event tonight, and we will catch up with you when you get back.

**Bryon:** I'm looking forward to it. Thanks so much.

**Elissa:** Thank you.

**Bryon:** It is Monday night in Atlanta Georgia, we're here at the *Anguished Barbershop* on Juniper Street in midtown and today is a typical Monday night after hours. The barbershop closes and the bar stays open until 10:00pm.

Monday night is when chess begins. Patrons come from far and wide to participate in a chess tournament and the owners have given us the privilege of coming out and disseminating health messaging through the *Myeloma Link* program. We're going to go inside and see just how we do that.

So, as I enter the bar, I go down a wide set of stairs and to my left is the barbershop, to my right there's a glass partition and there's a tile floor where there's barber chairs up against the wall and in the middle, they've cleared the way for several where there are chess boards.

There was a great turnout for tonight's event. After everyone got settled in, we started with Seth Dousman, the Coordinator for Blood and Chess, telling us about the instructions and then sharing a little about *Myeloma Link* and why we're there.

**Seth Dousman:** I'm pretty excited the tournament's starting. We've got a lot of new faces tonight. You're all going to have a new champion tonight. While you're here, Myeloma Link is here, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Great cause, great information. We're going to give out chess boards tonight just by talking to them and getting some really good information to help you, help your friends, help the community.

So, they're here, they love the chess community. They're both chess players. They have really good information that can help you.

### ***Interview with Seth Dousman***

**Bryon:** So, this is Bryon Daily. I'm here with Seth Dousman, the coordinator of *Checkmate Mondays*. And Seth, I'm glad to finally be able to sit down and speak with you.

**Seth:** Definitely, I'm happy to be here. It's always a pleasure to sit down with you and talk about *Myeloma Link*, talk about chess, and how we're going to keep pushing the game forward.

**Bryon:** Awesome. So, Seth, just a couple questions for you. How did you come up with the concept of *Checkmate Mondays*?

**Seth:** I was at the barbershop, *The Anguished Barber*, where we host it, and I was playing chess on my phone. I had recently fallen in love with the game, and one of the barbers, whose name was Will, he's actually one of the owners as well. I'm playing chess on my phone, and he's like, "Move your Queen here. Move your bishop there." And I'm just like, "Will, please don't mess up my haircut." But he still did a



great job, and he mentioned that he loved the game of chess, and he pointed to another barber that liked chess as well. And so, we started chess night here.

This was back in December of 2020, and we did our first one January 11 of 2021. It was a cold Tuesday night in January. There was just five of us, me, two of the barbers, and two of my friends; and it's grown exponentially from word of mouth and social media and I'm really, really proud of the community.

**Bryon:** Well, that's awesome, Seth. And since then, we've seen a lot of growth and a lot of people that have embraced *Checkmate Mondays*, let me ask you this. We implemented the *Myeloma Link* outreach into chess nights and have called it *Blood & Chess*. Why did you feel this was a good way to do community outreach?

**Seth:** One thing about the community that I really like is all the different types of people under one roof. But one thing about the *Checkmate Mondays* is the diversity. You walk in and see everyone from the ages of 21 to 61, white, black, Indian, Asian, gay, straight, young, old. Everyone is just having a good time getting along over the game of chess. They call chess the great equalizer, and I've really noticed that in the community. And I feel like, we have an outreach program like this; and you can reach so many demographics at once under one roof, also playing the great game of chess.

I love it. And I haven't met a chess player I don't like. Every chess player I know is thoughtful. You have to kind of think about what the next person's going to move and what your moves are and kind of get inside their head. So, it gives you this sense of caring about other people, their thoughts and feelings a little bit.

**Bryon:** Right.

**Seth:** And I feel like coming in with *Myeloma Link* and spreading awareness to thoughtful people, they're going to take that word and spread that to other thoughtful people.

**Bryon:** Sure.



**Seth:** It's just going to be a snowball effect.

**Bryon:** Yeah, that's awesome. Why is outreach like this in the black community important to you? And why is it needed?

**Seth:** I come from a very big family, especially on my dad's side. And my black friends, my black family members, when I've mentioned *Myeloma Link* and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society to them and how it affects those communities twice as much as anyone else. Just like when I heard it for the first time, none of them were aware. I care about my loved ones, care about my friends and my family. I care about my community. And anything I can do to help spread positive messages, especially with health is, a no-brainer for me.

**Bryon:** Yeah, that's great. And then we thank you for that too. Thank you for your involvement. Where would you like to see the *Myeloma Link* program grow, especially in relation to the Blood and Chess initiative?

**Seth:** I'm proud, like in Atlanta, almost everything has been done before.

**Bryon:** Right.

**Seth:** But as far as the chess club that we've really built, people come up to me like, "Wow, you made chess cool. You made chess fun." Everybody wants to learn how to play now, and I'm really proud of that. I would love to continue to make chess like a cool thing to do in all the major metropolitan areas, in between.

**Seth:** I want to keep pushing that forward to give people a platform that normally they didn't think they had, or it was kind of considered like not cool. It's a great game. And anywhere in the world, if you want to play chess and learn and also learn more about health and things in your community, I'm all for it.

**Bryon:** Sure. Clearly, you have a passion for chess, and we appreciate your embracing the health messaging component of this. And we look forward to future collaboration, and hopefully we'll get it in more cities soon.

**Seth:** Oh, yeah, definitely. That's the goal. That's the plan, and nothing to it but to do it.

**Bryon:** All right, Seth. Thank you so much. I appreciate your time.

**Seth:** Thank you, Bryon.

### ***Interview with The Anguished Barbershop Owners***

**Bryon:** One thing we really appreciate about these events is that we have that chance to spread awareness to a very diverse group of patrons. This might be the first time they've heard of it, and you never know if they will end up getting diagnosed or have a family member or friend diagnosed.

Our mission of these events is to make sure they have accurate and accessible resources for diagnosis of myeloma or any other blood cancer.

Next, we wanted to talk with the owners of *The Anguished Barbershop* to hear about this partnership with LLS and the concept of this very interesting barbershop.

Tell me about *The Anguished Barbershop*. How did that concept get started?

**Speaker:** Well, I mean it all came with the area, right? We had a lot of business, young business folks out here. And a barbershop's always been a place where it's just you come in, get your service and go. I just wanted something to kind of integrate. Instead of having a pool table and stuff like that, I just decided to bring it up a notch.

**Bryon:** Was this the first location?

**Speaker:** This is the first location, yes sir. It was a concept, we just kind of put it to work.

**Speaker:** We would have a couple more if COVID didn't happen.

**Bryon:** Right. Yeah.

**Speaker:** Yeah, Will, I would say our business partner and bar manager, actually came up the idea of with the barbershop and the bar.

**Bryon:** Was that a concept you invented, or did you see it somewhere else?

**Speaker:** Well, I mean, obviously it's just a matter of kind of putting things together. People, having a beer here while you're getting a haircut. And I just thought about taking it a little bit more. What about a cocktail bar?

And a place where you can actually host events, my thing was always an event. And I thought about wedding planners and things like that actually having the groomsmen come in, get haircuts, shaves, and enjoy the bar. So, actually, just kind of a united package.

So, with that thought in mind, I just kind of came up with it. I gave it to David and Troy, and they ran with the idea and made it happen.

**Bryon:** I like that. Very innovative.

**Speaker:** Yes, right.

**Bryon:** So, we're looking forward to seeing another *Anguished Barbershop*, but that's what you called it.

**Speaker:** Yes, *The Anguished Barber*. Yeah, it's a Salvador Dali painting.

**Bryon:** Oh, okay.

**Speaker:** So, basically as, I think it's the barber saddened by the persistence of good weather. Subtitled, "*The Anguished Barber*."

So, we utilized all the colors inside the painting to design the place, and we went with that. Anguished Barber. We're the mad barber, so it kind of plays on words, so it works.

**Bryon:** Good. That's great, awesome. As we got going, I wanted to hear from some of the patrons here. The purpose of the barbershop concept is to find a space where they're comfortable sharing things about their health and use this as another way to do outreach for the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) community. Had these patients talked to their barbers about health? Would they be comfortable with it?

### **Patron 1 – Jason**

**Bryon:** I'm Bryon Daily with LLS, and we're here to promote health and wellness in barbershops. First of all, let me ask you, you're obviously a chess player. What attracted you to *The Anguished Barber*?

**Jason:** Oh, man, just the opportunity to play chess and to drink at the same time. Honestly, back at home, it's how we play chess. It's a very social time, so drinks, sit down, talk, the cell phone's put aside. It's a tradition, so when I heard about this bar that had opened up a chess.

**Bryon:** And where are you from?

**Jason:** Lawrenceville.

**Bryon:** Okay, okay. So, are they doing anything like this in Lawrenceville?

**Jason:** I've seen plenty of groups that offer chess and plays closer to home. But this is the only one that comes with this type of atmosphere.

**Bryon:** Yeah, it is unique. One of the things we found is that men in particular, we all have challenges with mental wellness.

**Jason:** Yeah.

**Bryon:** But in terms of therapy, we don't seek therapy through traditional means. So, we're always looking to barbershop typically conversations about sports or politics or something along those lines. But it's been studied, and we found that barbers are more like therapists than anything else. What are your feelings about that?

**Jason:** The wisdom that barber can provide can carry you pretty far in life.

**Bryon:** Yeah.

**Jason:** It's small advice, but it's the type of advice that you're only going to hear when somebody's that intimate with you in regards to taking care of your hair. It's somebody that you trust and so when they speak about their advice on the issues, you really take it seriously.

**Bryon:** So, it's a familiar experience. We've all gotten haircuts since we were little, right?

**Jason:** Yeah.

**Bryon:** So typically, if we're sitting down, this person is kind of controlling the environment, if you have something on your mind and you want to express it'll come out naturally in a barbershop, right?

**Jason:** Yeah. When you sit down on a barber's chair and you allow them to use a blade to cut your hair, you submit yourself to that comfort of trusting that person.

**Bryon:** Exactly.



**Jason:** You open up deeper than you normally would back at home or just on the street or something.

**Bryon:** Without even thinking about it, right?

**Jason:** Yeah. Yep, yep. I never thought about it until you started asking me. Yeah, I never thought about that deep.

**Bryon:** Yeah. So, the fact that they have a bar here, obviously, it attracts a lot of folks. Chess is also something that you really couldn't predict the amount of popularity, but now we're introducing health. What do you think about that combination?

**Jason:** It's interesting because chess has always been kind of private for me. I never experienced it so open like this, where you're interacting with so many people and come into bars and talks and conversations and just playing style. Even just playing, you're saying a lot without saying a thing.

**Bryon:** Right, yeah. And you get to meet folks who you typically wouldn't meet otherwise, right?

**Jason:** Yeah, yeah, definitely.

**Bryon:** Yeah. We're doing a series based on *Myeloma Link*, which is an initiative that covers 13 cities across the U.S. And we're looking to embed chess in barbershops across the country. So, I just want to thank you for taking the time to speak with me.

**Jason:** Oh, definitely.

**Bryon:** All right, Jason. Thanks so much. I appreciate it.

**Jason:** Good talking to you.

## **Patron 2 - Deepak**

**Bryon:** So, I'm here with Deepak, who is a chess master. Deepak, tell me how you learned about the chess play here at the barbershop?

**Deepak:** I had a friend, Matt, who was here in the beginning. He told me about this place, and then I came and kicked it off with all these guys, and now I've been here maybe a year now.

**Bryon:** Okay. And what is it that drew you? Was it the bar or the chess play, or a combination of everything?

**Deepak:** I like how there's a social setting for chess. Because when I was growing up it was just chess tournaments, and we didn't have anywhere to go. Just like take it, have fun, or just like play with friends. So that's what I like about this place. I like all the people here. I like to practice.

**Bryon:** So, this is kind of unique for a barbershop to have a bar.

**Deepak:** I think, yeah.

**Bryon:** Yeah.

**Deepak:** Like you can even say they're pioneers kind of doing this.

**Bryon:** Yeah. Have you known any other barbershop to have this concept?

**Deepak:** I really don't know any other like places that have this concept, let alone barbershops. So, I think it's pretty cool.

**Bryon:** Yeah. So, since we've been here, you've seen us here. What are your thoughts on embedding health messaging into barbershop and chess play?

**Deepak:** I think just in general, being healthy is really important for you physically and mentally.

**Bryon:** Awesome. Well, I don't want to take too much time up. I know you're ready to get back to the tables. So, thank you for your time and look forward to talking with you again.

### ***Interview with Susan Anderson***

**Bryon:** As I was walking around talking to various patrons, I ran into Susan, an acute lymphoblastic leukemia, or ALL, survivor. She started by sharing a little about her journey in getting diagnosed.

**Susan Anderson:** So, it was in August, and I just felt really lethargic. I thought I had a bug, not COVID. And three weeks goes by, and my boyfriend had said, "Susan, you need to call your primary doctor. You have not been feeling well for three weeks. You're not getting any better."

So, of course, it was the weekend. And Monday morning, I had a hard time sleeping. I got up at four in the morning, and my heart was just racing.

So, like 7 o'clock I called my doctor; and I told the nurse over the phone, "I feel like I'm having some heart issues, not a heart attack, but I feel like I need to see a cardiologist." I need to do an EKG. She's like, "Ms. Anderson, let's go ahead and get you an appointment with the cardiologist. But in the meantime, I'll try to get you in today."

**Bryon:** Right, yeah.

**Susan:** So, she was able to get me in at 11:00. I go in. She did an EKG, and she's like let's do some bloodwork. I said great. I go home and she calls me that evening. She's like, "Susan, you need to go to Emory Midtown right now." I said, "Why?" She said, "All your numbers are up." I said, "What does that mean?" She said, "I don't know, but you need to go."

**Bryon:** Yeah.

**Susan:** And I went, and the emergency doctor came up to me at 2 AM, I was there for 5 hours. And with COVID, everybody had their mask on.

**Bryon:** Yeah, sure.

**Susan:** A lot of sick people there. And he was like, "Are you Susan Anderson?" This is an emergency doctor. I said "Yes." He said, "Are you really Susan Anderson?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I cannot believe you're standing; your hemoglobin is down to 3."

**Bryon:** Wow.

**Susan:** So, he immediately took me back.

**Bryon:** You probably didn't even understand what that meant.

**Susan:** At first, I was like I knew it was serious.

**Bryon:** Yeah.

**Susan:** So basically, I realized, okay, I hardly had any blood.

**Bryon:** Wow.

**Bryon:** You shouldn't have been standing there talking to him.

**Susan:** Well, that's why he was very surprised. And as soon as he gave me a blood transfusion, I felt I could have gotten up and ran up and down the hallway, which I didn't do, but I could have.

**Bryon:** You know what, it sounds like you were in pretty good shape when you had those symptoms.

**Susan:** I live in a condo, and I have five flights of stairs. And the day that I had an appointment with my primary doctor, that evening I parked my car, looked up the stairs; and I could not bear climbing those stairs. And I knew then something was not

right because I used to run up and down. That was my exercise, four times a day with groceries.

**Bryon:** Right, right.

**Susan:** And I knew something was not right. And that's when I finally said to myself- Susan, go upstairs and just lay down, which I did. He came home, I started crying, and I said to him, "I need to move in with your friend. Your friend has an in-law suite on the main floor. He's like, "Why?" I said, "I cannot climb those stairs." So that was when I received a phone call from my primary doctor while he was on the phone.

So, I was at Emory Midtown for three days. I went home. I begged to go home. At the time, that was before bone marrow biopsy, so they didn't know what was going on with me. They referred an infection disease doctor, and he sat down with me the next morning. And he said, "Well, I thought you had AIDS because your white count was just out of control. Well, you don't have AIDS." I said, "Well, that's good." He said, "You don't have TB. We're just trying to figure out what is going on."

**Bryon:** Process of elimination.

**Susan:** In the meantime, that day I had the bone marrow biopsy. I think they knew what I had, but they couldn't say it because they needed to get the reports from the solid tissue, exactly.

**Bryon:** Right, well they had to go through the process of elimination first. Yeah.

**Susan:** I even asked my emergency doctor at Emory. I said, "Do you think I have leukemia?" And he said, "Ms. Anderson, I can't say."

**Bryon:** So. this was all in the course of how many days?

**Susan:** About three days.

**Bryon:** Yeah.

**Susan:** And then, so when I went home after the third day, I think Thursday, that night, my hematologist called from Emory.

**Bryon:** Right.

**Susan:** And she said, "You have ALL [Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia], and she was telling me it was child-like cancer. Adults can get it too. She said, "Tomorrow morning, you need to go straight to Northside. You're going to be there for a few days, and you need to pack a little bag." I was there for two months.

**Bryon:** Wow.

**Susan:** Within the next day, I was getting chemo.

**Bryon:** Yeah. Really good.

After discussing her initial diagnosis, Susan and I had an interesting discussion about the different types of stem cell transplants. As a myeloma patient, I had an autologous transplant, which is one using my own cells to stimulate my immune system after a high intensity dose of chemo. With Susan's ALL, she needed a donor stem cell, which is called an allogeneic transplant. Thankfully, her brother was a match and was able to donate to her. Let's take a listen.

**Susan:** I was there for two months, and I had stem cell transplant a year and three months ago. My brother was the donor thankfully.

**Bryon:** So, it wasn't autologous.

**Bryon:** I mean as far as the transplant, he donated.

**Susan:** Yes.

**Bryon:** I had an autologous, so they were able to use my own blood cells.

**Susan:** See, that's great. But they couldn't do that with mine.

**Bryon**: Right.

**Susan**: The type of cancer I had.

**Bryon**: The good thing is he's your brother.

**Susan**: Yes. Thankfully he was.

**Bryon**: Susan then finishes off by sharing an inspiring story of a woman she met who was a long-time ALL survivor and how much their two stories showed that the landscape of cancer treatment has changed and improved so much over the years.

**Susan**: It's amazing because I spoke with a woman that had the same type of cancer, ALL, Philadelphia Plus, and she celebrated her 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary; this was two years ago when I was diagnosed.

**Bryon**: Yeah.

**Susan**: And she said, "Susan, you're going to be in great hands. Here I am, it's been 20 years, and they know so much more about this." And she was so right, and my doctors were amazing.

**Bryon**: Yeah. I would say, if there were ever a time to get it, you probably got it at the right time.

**Susan**: Yes.

**Bryon**: Because of the treatment, COVID, breaking down barriers. And, also, innovations that have taken place just over the past few years.

**Susan**: It's been over a year, and now I'm seeing them between three to six months.

**Bryon**: Yeah, yeah.

**Susan**: I'm totally under remission.

**Bryon:** Oh man, that's great. That's amazing.

**Susan:** And now my donor cells have taken over.

**Bryon:** That's outstanding. I'm glad to hear that.

**Elissa:** We are back in the studio following the *Blood and Chess* event. Wow, thank you, Bryon, for bringing our listeners to this incredible event. It sounded like such an innovative way to reach a diverse group of people and bring more awareness to blood cancers, especially myeloma.

So, what is the future looking like for this program?

**Bryon:** Well, the future is bright, Elissa. I think that because we're looking at more creative ways to get the word out and inform the community of the resources that we have available, in addition to the innovative treatments and procedures that are coming down the line through research, we see that there is a potential light at the end of the tunnel in terms of curing cancer.

So, we expect that, over the next year or two, *Myeloma Link* will grow from what, we were at 13 cities about a month and a half ago. Now we're in 16.

And hopefully, many more cities down the line. So, we just hired a new Community Outreach Manager to help with that effort. And we're really excited about what this means, not just to the black community or people who are diagnosed with myeloma, but people who are diagnosed with blood cancer in general.

**Elissa:** That's great. And it's really these pilot programs, just like this *Blood and Chess*, that get these new and innovative ways of outreach to keep growing, right?

**Bryon:** Yeah, absolutely. And the great thing about it is we're not creating something with the idea that whatever we come up will be embraced by the community. We're making a best effort to meet the community where they are. *Blood and Chess* just happens to be a match because we know that black men go to barbershops. They've



been doing it all their lives. It's a familiar venue. Chess is also a game that is familiar and it's just a great match.

In other communities, we can find similar matches. We may want to substitute Blood and Chess for Blood and Dominos. Maybe Blood and Trivia or some sort of a Paint and Sip activity that we can embed health messaging.

So, the sky's the limit. There's a lot of ways we can do this; and I guess, one way of looking at our experience coming out of COVID is that it forced us to be a little bit more creative and do things a little different, which is actually good.

**Elissa:** That's great. I really love the thought that you meet people where they're at; and I think it's especially important when we're looking at helping our underserved communities. And so that's great. I'm so excited to see this program continue to grow; and thank you so much, Bryon, for being our very first Field Correspondent in this series.

*Myeloma Link* is such an important program to bring awareness of myeloma and other blood cancers right into the heart of communities of color. As we mentioned earlier, outreach to underserved communities is a crucial step to addressing racial and ethnic healthcare disparities; and we appreciate all the work that you and your team have done.

**Bryon:** Well, thank you, so much, Elissa. It's my pleasure to serve.

**Elissa:** And thank you to everyone listening today. *The Bloodline with LLS* is one part of the mission of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, to improve the quality of lives of patients and their families.

To help us continue to provide the engaging content for all people affected by cancer, we would like to ask you to complete a brief survey that could be found in the show notes or at [TheBloodline.org](http://TheBloodline.org). This is your opportunity to provide feedback and



suggested topics that will help so many people. We would also like to know about you and how we can serve you better.

The survey is completely anonymous, and no identifying information will be taken. In addition to the survey, we are excited to announce our brand-new Subscriber Lounge where you gain access to exclusive content, discuss episodes with other listeners, make suggestions for future topics, or share your story to potentially be featured as a future guest.

Join for free today at [TheBloodline.org/SubscriberLounge](https://TheBloodline.org/SubscriberLounge). We hope this podcast helped you today. Stay tuned for more information on the resources that LLS has for you or your loved ones who have been affected by cancer.

Have you or a loved one been affected by blood cancer? LLS has many resources available to you – financial support, peer-to-peer connection, nutritional support, and more. We encourage patients and caregivers to contact our Information Specialists at 1-800-955-4572 or go to [LLS.org/PatientSupport](https://LLS.org/PatientSupport).

You can also find information about our Community Outreach through *Myeloma Link* at [LLS.org/MyelomaLink](https://LLS.org/MyelomaLink). All of these links will be found in the show notes or at [TheBloodline.org](https://TheBloodline.org).

Thank you again for listening. Be sure to subscribe to *The Bloodline* so you don't miss an episode. We look forward to having you join us next time.