

YEAR IN REVIEW



In 2024, the Cobb Institute celebrates 20 years of research and focus upon the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities in health and healthcare in the U.S.

Spotlight on Engagement & Impact

Since 2018, our Community Partner Gateway Initiative (CPGI) outreach efforts with the NIH *All of Us* Research Program have reached over 300,000 individuals, showcasing our ongoing dedication to program awareness and community engagement. Despite facing NIH budget cuts, we are steadfast in our support for the *All of Us* Research Program and Cohort. Our strategy involves leveraging our unique position to reach Black and African American populations, engaging communities through our Strategic Engagement Journey process, hosting impactful webinars, contributing to professional education at National Medical Association events, and collaborating with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to increase participation. Despite budget challenges, we remain committed to ensuring the program's success and visibility.



Ms. Conchita Burpee conducting outreach and engagement on behalf of the The Cobb Institute and the NIH All of Us Research Program

Strengthening Partnership & Collaboration

We are enhancing partnerships for the Cobb Scholars Program, including collaborations with the Baylor College of Medicine's *All of Us* Evenings with Genetics Research Program, funded by the NIH *All of Us* Research Program. The Baylor team presented with us at the 2024 NMA Region V Conference and we are teaming up to enhance access to the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench.



Dr. Debra Murray and Dr. Randall Morgan at Baylor College of Medicine

HBCU Convenings



Lester Henry M.D. Auditorium at Howard University Hospital

The 2024 W. Montague Cobb Institute Health Disparities Symposium was a huge success! Held

at Howard University Hospital, the event featured advocacy in physician practice, disparities in surgical oncology and cancer care, firearm mortality patterns, improving access for patients with limited English proficiency, and lingering disparities in peripheral artery disease management, among others. Speakers emphasized the importance of recognizing and addressing disparities to achieve health equity.

Scientific Contribution

Over the past ten months, our *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities (JREHD)* has presented a diverse collection of over 600 articles, primarily exploring medical and scientific topics that intersect with health disparities and societal determinants of health.

- Research articles comprising 90% of *JREHD* articles during this time period, including two randomized controlled trials (RCT), advancing clinical practice and evidence-based medicine.
- Nearly 60 review articles, half of them systematic reviews, including 2 meta-analyses, provide comprehensive insights.

Highlighted Themes and Articles:

- Genetics, Genomics, and Precision Medicine: Notably, four research articles shed light on the complex interplay between genetics and health, addressing disparities in Alzheimer's disease incidence (Kolpakov et al.), novel genomic variants in gallstone disease (Arora et al.), the intersection of racism experiences and DNA methylation in the Black Women's Health Study (Ruiz-Narváez et al.), and a genomics and transcriptomics analysis for prostate cancer (Lee et al.). Additionally, Hong et al. investigate genetic testing perceptions among different racial and ethnic groups regarding cancer risk, while Halder et al. highlight the underrepresentation of Hispanic patients in pancreatic cancer clinical trials and genomic testing, emphasizing the importance of tailored approaches and targeted interventions.
- Cummings et al.'s 4-arm cluster randomized controlled trial (RCT) of blood pressure control interventions examines patient and practice characteristics that influence antihypertensive selection and treatment intensity, prescribing

patterns, and blood pressure control among Black or African American patients with uncontrolled hypertension in the rural southeastern USA.

- Among the review articles, Marôco et al. offers a systematic review and meta-analysis on racial and ethnic disparities in cardiovascular and cancer mortality.
- Prostate Cancer Clinical Trial Concerns: Sultan et al.'s review highlights a significant concern in NIH and federally funded prostate cancer interventional clinical trials: the lack of methods to control type 2 diabetes and obesity among Black or African American men. This underscores a notable gap in therapeutic optimization that necessitates prioritization in federal funding initiatives. Obesity, affecting 41.1% of African American men, poses a risk factor for prostate cancer recurrence, progression, and increased mortality. Notably, obesity is associated

with aggressive prostate cancer specifically in African American men, underscoring the importance of addressing this disparity in clinical trial settings.

- Abdalla et al. highlight a concerning decrease in American Black or African American authorship in US medical journals across clinical specialties despite an increasing number of Black or African American physicians between 1990 and 2020 in the US, prompting reflection on systemic barriers and the need for inclusive research and publication practices.

We anticipate that *JREHD* continues as a crucial platform for scientific exploration and discourse, providing comprehensive insights and critical evaluations. Its contributions notably advance our understanding of health disparities by addressing genetic and societal determinants, while also shedding light on issues concerning healthcare access, treatment outcomes, and the impacts of discrimination and structural racism.

New Staff

Maliek van Laar brings over 20 years of project management experience with Federal agencies, international associations, and corporations across the US and abroad. Maliek proactively engages with stakeholders and senior leadership in identifying requirements and planning to ensure that projects are executed on schedule and within budget and scope. She works diligently to ensure that the client, stakeholders, members, and team are properly informed throughout the project lifecycle. Maliek is a Certified Meetings Professional (CMP) and a Project Management Professional (PMP). Maliek earned a Certificate in Women's Entrepreneurship from Cornell University and is a member of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), and the Project Management Institute (PMI).



Dr. Mitchell's legacy as a trailblazer in oncology and her exemplary service will continue to inspire generations to come.

Renowned cancer researcher and Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors at the W. Montague Cobb Institute, Dr. Edith Mitchell, MD, MACP, FCPP, FRCP (London) passed away unexpectedly early this year, leaving a void in the research and medical communities. Dr. Mitchell has been an outstanding Past President of the National Medical Association (NMA) and Editor-In-Chief of the Journal of the National Medical Association (JNMA), where her contributions have been immense. She provided leadership for the Cobb Institute including the establishment of the Jane Cooke Wright M.D. Cancer Symposium each year at the NMA Convention and Scientific Assembly. Board Certified in Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology, Dr. Mitchell served as Clinical Professor of Medicine and Medical Oncology at Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University and Associate Director for Diversity Programs and Director of the Center to Eliminate Cancer Disparities for Sidney

Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson

Health. She served as the Vice-Chair of the W. Montague Cobb Institute and Chair of the Research Committee.

Dr. Mitchell spent her medical career helping individuals in medically underserved areas, and demonstrated the importance of community service and outreach especially to underserved populations.

Her research in breast, colorectal and pancreatic cancers

and other gastrointestinal malignancies

involved new drug evaluation and chemotherapy, development of new therapeutic regimens, chemoradiation strategies for combined modality therapy, patient selection criteria, and supportive care for patients with gastrointestinal cancer. Dr. Mitchell served as a member of the National Cancer Institute's Blue Ribbon Panel convened to advise the National Cancer Advisory Board on then Vice President Biden's National Cancer Moonshot Initiative In 2019. Dr. Mitchell began service as a member of the President's Cancer Panel and in 2020 she became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. Dr. Mitchell served as the 116th President of the National Medical Association, was a member of the American Medical Association, NMA, Aerospace Medical Association, Association of Military Surgeons, Medical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania, ECOG/ACRIN Cancer Research Group, and Radiation Therapy Oncology Group. Last year she received the Pennsylvania Medical Society's (PAMED) Distinguished Service Award. Since it was first awarded in 1956, only 31 people have been honored with the award including C. Everett Koop, MD, and Jonas E. Salk, MD. In addition to her medical achievements, Dr. Mitchell is a retired United States Air Force Brigadier General.



*Remembering
Dr. Edith
Mitchell*

1947 – 2024



*Friend, Colleague,
Mentor, and Inspiration
— she will be missed.*

Health Disparities *Symposium*

Join us, for our annual **Health Disparities Symposium** on Saturday, January 25, 2025

from 7:30am–1:00pm at
Howard University Hospital, W.
Lester Henry, M.D. Auditorium.

Registration will be \$75.
Complimentary registration for
students and residents.

Topics will include:

Cardiology, Cancer, Infectious diseases, Behavioral health,
Focus on addressing disparities in internal medicine



January
25
2025

HU
HOWARD
UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL

Washington
DC

Register: <https://bit.ly/cobb-hds25>





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ADDRESSING RACIAL AND ETHNIC HEALTH DISPARITIES ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

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FACILITATING RESEARCH NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

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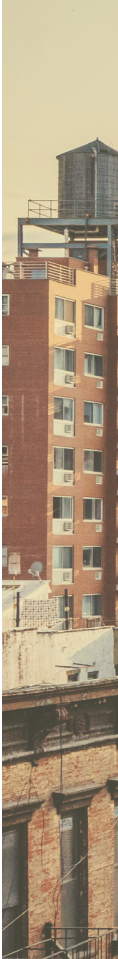
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ENGAGING COMMUNITIES AS PARTNERS IN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH AND CLINICAL TRIALS

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▶ **The Cobb Institute,**

a 501(c)(3) in Washington, DC

founded in 2004, engages

in innovative research and

knowledge dissemination

toward eliminating racial

and ethnic health disparities.

In addition to hosting the

Journal of Racial and Ethnic

Health Disparities, the Institute

continues to cultivate a trusted

and proven network of diverse

stakeholders.