

2018-19 Health Disparities Research Education Program (HDREP) SCHOLAR DIRECTORY



Taiwo Ajose, MD
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**HDREP 2018
MSM/TU/UAB Cancer
Partnership**

Dr. Taiwo Ajose is a second year resident at the Morehouse School of Medicine in the Department of Internal Medicine. She earned her doctorate of medicine degree from the Windsor University School of Medicine St. Kitts and Nevis. She received training at Grady Memorial Hospital and developed a keen interest in minority research with a focus on gastroenterology and hepatology related cancers in minority patients. Dr. Ajose has worked with several research mentors writing abstracts and manuscripts and plans to continue developing her research career. She is the current president of her residency program's Journal Café that encourages and provides a platform for residents and faculty to discuss and develop research ideas and scholarly activities.



Leigh Ann Bray, PhD, MS
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**HDREP 2018
MHRC / CNR**

Dr. Leigh Ann Bray is an Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). She earned her both her BSN and MSN from the University of Alabama, and then her PhD from UAB. She has worked at Children's of Alabama in both the Pulmonary Care Unit and the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit. From her experience on the Pulmonary Unit, she saw a need for ways to improve the lives of those who have cystic fibrosis through research. Her research interest is gender disparities in health-related quality of life of those who have cystic fibrosis.



Shemeka Cody, PhD, AGNP-C
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**HDREP 2018
RCMAR**

Dr. Shameka Cody is an Assistant Professor at The University of Alabama Capstone College of Nursing. She obtained her Masters of Science in Nursing in 2012 and her PhD in Nursing in 2017 from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Cody is a board-certified Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner with clinical expertise in adult primary care, infectious disease, international travel medicine, and women's health. Her research trajectory focuses on the biological mechanisms of integrative mind-body interventions to improve sleep and cognitive health in cognitively-impaired older adults with HIV. Dr. Cody is interested in reducing racial, socioeconomic, and geographic health disparities among the aging HIV population.

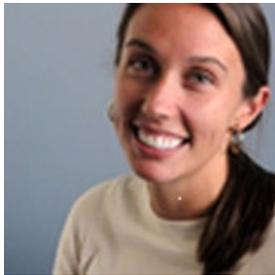
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Matthew Cribbet, PhD
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**HDREP 2018
RCMAR**

Dr. Matthew Cribbet is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Alabama. He studies the role of stress and sleep in cardiovascular disease risk. He is particularly interested in sleep as a mechanism linking childhood adversity to cardiovascular disease risk. Dr. Cribbet received a BS in Psychology from The Ohio State University and PhD in Clinical Health Psychology from the University of Utah. He completed a postdoctoral fellowship in sleep medicine from the University of Pittsburgh. Prior to joining the faculty at The University of Alabama, Dr. Cribbet was a faculty member in Clinical Psychology at Texas Tech University.



Jenny M. Cundiff, PhD
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**HDREP 2018
RCMAR**

Dr. Jenny M. Cundiff is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Alabama. She received her doctorate in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Health Psychology from the University of Utah in 2014, subsequently completing two years of postdoctoral training in Cardiovascular Behavioral Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research examines if and how our social lives contribute to poor health. Much of her work has been focused specifically on biopsychosocial mechanisms (e.g., stress physiology, social interactions) linking lower social status to poor health.

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Shawona C. Daniel, PhD
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MHRC / CNR**

Dr. Shawona C. Daniel is an Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). She has over 13 years of experience in nursing education and more than 18 years of clinical experience, particularly with those who suffer from end-stage renal disease (ESRD). Dr. Daniel completed undergraduate study at Tuskegee University and graduate studies at UAB earning a Master of Science degree in Adult Health Nursing and the PhD in Nursing. Dr. Daniel is a Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner and collaborates with a prominent nephrologist managing care for patients with ESRD. As a result of her continued engagement with the ESRD community, she is familiar with the negative effects of nutritional instability on hemodialysis patients' lives and existing disparities within this population. Her research focuses on understanding the interrelationships between nutritional status and psychological health in hemodialysis patients. Improving quality of life and overall psychosocial well-being in patients with renal disease and leveling inequalities are the overarching goals of her research career.

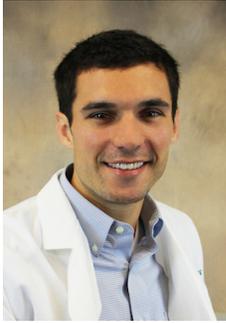


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While working as a dietitian in hospitals and clinics, **Dr. Dale Hardy** was entrusted with the nutritional care of cancer patients, some of whom had a short time to live due to this terminal illness. Dr. Hardy attended to cancer patients after their surgeries, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments, and encountered patients in long-term care units and hospice, who experienced distressing symptoms as a result of the illness. These symptoms took a toll on the patient and added to the intolerance of other symptoms associated with the cancer disease process. While working in a medical setting, health disparities among minorities were very noticeable and common. This is the main reason Dr. Hardy has undertaken research in this area. Dr. Hardy's research background demonstrates a continual development of academic and research skills from the beginning of her doctoral studies. Dr. Hardy completed her PhD in Epidemiology in May 2008 at the University of Texas School of Public Health, with concentration in chronic disease epidemiology, and minors in biostatistics and health promotion. During her postdoctoral fellowship in health disparities cancer treatment research, Dr. Hardy acquired knowledge and skills to undertake research in this area that she is very passionate about. During this fellowship Dr. Hardy published several papers that focused on disparities in trends, treatment, and toxicity in a cohort of non-small cell lung cancer using Surveillance Epidemiology, and End Result (SEER)-Medicare linked data. Even in the area of receipt of hospice care and length of stay in hospice, disparities between race/ethnic groups compared to whites were obvious. These experiences enhanced Dr. Hardy's outlook on health disparities research, which has allowed her to gain hands-on experience in data management and data modeling.

2018-19 Health Disparities Research Education Program (HDREP) SCHOLAR DIRECTORY



Brittain Heindl, MD
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OHDR**

Dr. Brittain Heindl is a first-year Cardiology Fellow at the University of Alabama, Birmingham. He received his medical degree from the University of Mississippi Medical Center. He completed residency training at UAB hospital, after which he joined the faculty of the Forrest General Hospital Family Medicine Residency in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. While in Hattiesburg he served on the steering committee for the Edward Street Fellowship Clinic, at the time a new non-profit clinic. During fellowship he plans to pursue community-based preventive cardiovascular research, focused on interventions staged outside of the clinic to target hypertension and obesity.



Balasubramanyam Karanam, PhD
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Dr. Balasubramanyam Karanam is an Investigator and Assistant Professor at Tuskegee University in the Department of Biology and Cancer Research. Prior to joining Tuskegee University, he completed his PhD in India and a post-doctoral fellowship at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Dr. Karanam's research is focused on pathways of aggression in the cancer leading to health disparity among different races. He uses small molecules and peptides (chemical tools) to understand biological pathways. In addition, Dr. Karanam works closely with Health Disparities Institute for Research and Education (HDIRE) at Tuskegee University where he focuses on peer-education intervention programs in cancer, specifically for Alabama underserved communities which increases awareness and knowledge. He is the lead on a breast cancer project in the Minority Biospecimen /Biobanking Geographic Management Program (BMAP) consisting of nine research institutions in Southeastern region of USA. Dr. Karanam is a researcher on the Prostate Cancer Transatlantic Consortium (CaPTC), an open consortium comprising a team of prostate cancer scientists, clinicians, survivors, and advocates from North America, Europe, the Caribbean Islands, and West Africa to address the globally disproportionate burden of prostate cancer among Black men. Dr. Karanam has been recognized with honors, including the award for Excellence in Translational Research by Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

2018-19 Health Disparities Research Education Program (HDREP) SCHOLAR DIRECTORY



Dione Moultrie King, PhD, MSW
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**HDREP 2018
MHRC / DSW**

Dr. Dione Moultrie King is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She received her PhD and MSW from the University of Georgia and her BA (Sociology) from Spelman College. Professionally, she has worked with children and families providing clinical services in juvenile justice, child welfare, education, nonprofit and homeless settings. Dr. King's research interests include adolescent health risk behaviors such as dating violence, substance use, early and risky sexual practices, and adverse childhood experiences. Currently, she is focused on the role of health determinants in behavioral and sexual health disparities that impact the health of Black adolescents and young adults to improve behavioral health outcomes.



Lewis Lee, PhD, MSW
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**HDRTTP 2018
RCMAR**

Dr. Lewis Lee is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at the University of Alabama. He received his BA & MA from Korea University, MSW from the University of Pennsylvania, and PhD from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Lee has worked with various populations who are in need, including at-risk youths, adult inmates, and Asian immigrants. His primary research areas cover reentry of people with criminal histories, disparities in mental health service use, substance abuse, macro practice, and community-based participatory research. Dr. Lee has been involved in research and has published on mental health service use among persons coming into contact with the criminal/juvenile justice systems.

2018-19 Health Disparities Research Education Program (HDREP) SCHOLAR DIRECTORY



Cody Morris, PhD, MS
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**HDREP 2018
OHDRC**

Dr. Cody Morris is an Assistant Professor of Kinesiology in the Department of Human Studies at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). He completed his graduate work (PhD & MS) at the University of Mississippi and his undergraduate degree (BS) at Lipscomb University. His main line of research and expertise includes the impact of tactical occupations in different environmental conditions; ergonomics and physical fitness; and improvement of cardiovascular disease risk factors through methods of exercise programming. His collaborators and he aim to evaluate (and potentially improve) the safety of workplaces in hazardous occupations. His research questions are geared towards understanding the role that physical fitness plays in the ability of a person to perform their job safely and efficiently to reduce the risk of injury. Dr. Morris is an active member of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) as well its regional association (Southeast ACSM).



Soumya J. Niranjana, B Pharm., MS, PhD
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Dr. Soumya J. Niranjana is currently an Assistant Professor in the UAB Department of Health Services Administration at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She is a pharmacist by training, holds a Master's degree in Clinical Investigation Sciences from the University of Louisville and PhD in Medical Sociology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham where she was awarded Outstanding Graduate Student of the year from the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Niranjana's research interests include health inequalities in cancer and chronic respiratory diseases. She is particularly interested in understanding key contributory factors for these disparities and shaping policies that improve patient health outcomes in underserved communities.

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HDREP 2018
Creighton University

Dr. Kate Lewis Nolt is an Assistant Professor of Public Health in Creighton University's Graduate School in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies. She is also the MPH Practicum Coordinator for the MPH Program and specializes in the concentrations of Community Health and Healthcare Management. Dr. Nolt has been teaching for over 15 years in higher education and continues to work directly with communities to assess needs and evaluate community programs and services.

Dr. Nolt has a PhD in Kinesiology from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA, a master's degree in Public Health (MPH) with a concentration on Community Health, and a bachelor's degree in Public Health and Health Promotion. She did her post-doctoral work in Pharmaceutical Health Services Research at the School of Pharmacy at University of Maryland, Baltimore. Her presentation, publication and research focus include community health prevention and intervention program design, implementation and evaluation and behavior modification.



Caroline Presley, MD, MPH
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HDREP 2018
OHDR

Dr. Caroline Presley is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Preventive Medicine at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She received her medical degree from Baylor College of Medicine and trained in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at Vanderbilt. Subsequently, she completed the VA Quality Scholars Fellowship and during this time earned a Master of Public Health from Vanderbilt. Her research is focused on understanding the influence of emotional distress on health behaviors and outcomes in patients with a chronic disease, particularly type 2 diabetes, and developing and implementing sustainable behavioral interventions to improve outcomes in this population.

2018-19 Health Disparities Research Education Program (HDREP) SCHOLAR DIRECTORY



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Dr. Lecia G. Robinson is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences, at Tuskegee University. Dr. Robinson obtained her Bachelor's of Arts in Biology from Talladega College (Talladega, AL). She received her Master's in Biology and Ph.D. in Environmental Science from Jackson State University (Jackson, MS). Dr. Robinson's dissertation work was entitled "Bioactivities of Nigerian Grown *v. Amygdalina* Leaf Extracts on Breast Carcinoma Cells". Throughout her career, she has made it her life goal to bring more attention and focus to health disparities within the African American population. Dr. Robinson's research interests relate to breast cancer health disparities. Dr. Robinson's current project focuses on studying the effects of homeopathic agents in the treatment of estrogen receptor negative breast cancer.



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Dr. Yedeh Ying is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He completed his dental degree at the University of Pennsylvania and medical degree at Harvard Medical School. After completing his residency at the Massachusetts General Hospital, he went on and completed a fellowship in Head and Neck Surgery at Head and Neck Surgical Associates in Portland, OR. His clinical practice spans the spectrum of benign and malignant head and neck diseases and his research interests focus on reducing the disparities of oral health care and improving outcomes for head and neck cancer via early detection and education.

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HDREP 2018
University of South
Alabama

Dr. Kim Zlomke is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of South Alabama. Dr. Zlomke is also a core faculty member in the Clinical and Counseling Psychology doctoral program. She is a licensed child clinical psychologist, with doctoral training from Louisiana State University. She completed a post-doctoral fellowship in Adolescent Health at Texas Children's Hospital/Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. Zlomke's research focuses on parent child interactions across many different populations, including children with chronic illness and developmental disabilities. She is particularly interested in disparities in access to mental health screenings and mental health care as well as disparities in the health of caregivers of children with developmental disabilities.