



## INTRODUCTION TO THE RCMI SYMPOSIUM

R. F. OCHILLO AND F. J. DENARO

R. F. OCHILLO AND F. J. DENARO  
Department of Biology, Morgan State University, 1700 East Cold Spring Lane,  
Baltimore MD 21251, USA  
FAX 1 410-319 3628; E-mail [Denaro@umbi.umd.edu](mailto:Denaro@umbi.umd.edu)

### The RCMI International Research Symposium: A Two Volume series.

1. The Ninth RCMI International Research Symposium
2. The Tenth RCMI International Research Symposium

## INTRODUCTION

The Division of Research Infrastructure at NIH has supported the Research Centers on Minority Institutions (RCMI) for over twenty years. This has enabled the affiliated Institutions to maintain critical and much needed research programs in the important area of Health Disparities. The importance of the existence of health care disparities was noted for example by, Dr. Margaret Hecklers (Task Force on Black and Minority Health, United States Office of Minority Health. *Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Black and Minority Health*. Vols. 1-8, Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services; 1985-1986). While important advances have been made in this area much needs to be done. Therefore, the relevance of this aspect of health care cannot be underestimated.

It is recognized that important health care advances can be better facilitated with education and the establishment of cutting edge infrastructural support. In this sense a key goal of the RCMI program is to develop the research capacity of predominantly minority institutions. In addition to the RCMI, there are several other programs. There is the Clinical Research Education and Career Development (CRECD) program, RCMI Centers of Clinical Research Excellence, and RCMI Clinical Research Infrastructure Initiative. The purpose of each of these programs is to expand and support medical research to improve the health of the nation's citizen's especially racial and ethnic minorities. For more information on these programs please refer to the NIH web pages:

[www.ncrr.NIH.gov](http://www.ncrr.NIH.gov)

One way that medical research and its clinical application produced by these programs can be facilitated and expanded is by the regular exchange of ideas among the scientists. RCMI promotes such an exchange by holding regular meetings. Published reports of these International Symposia have taken place for eight years now. The present volumes represent meetings Nine and Ten.

## RCMI THEME ISSUES

### *Ninth RCMI International Research Symposium in Baltimore*

The first Theme issue reflects some of the research produced in conjunction with the Ninth Research Centers in Minority Institutions (RCMI) International Symposium on Health Disparities. It was held on December 8-11 in Baltimore Maryland in partnership with Morgan State University. Morgan State University hosted the 9th RCMI International Research Symposium, which was in Baltimore, Maryland, on December 8-11, 2004 at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel. The RCMI Biomedical and Clinical Programs from all RCMI campuses contributed to this activity. In addition there were a number of invited speakers who are listed below:

Vice Admiral Richard H. Carmona, MD, MPH, FACS, Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service; James Gavin, MD, PhD, President, Morehouse School of Medicine; Marianne J. Legato, MD, Professor of Clinical Medicine, Columbia University; Vivian M. Pinn, MD,

Associate Director of Research on Women's Health and Director, Office of Research on Women's Health, National Institutes of Health; Floyd Malveaux, MD, PhD, Dean, College of Medicine, Howard University; Edgar R. Miller, III, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine; Robert Gallo, MD, Director, Institute of Human Virology, University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute; Judith Vaitukaitis, Director, National Center for Research Resources, National Institutes of Health, and Sidney A. McNairy, Jr., Associate Director for Research Infrastructure, National Center for Research Resources, National Institutes of Health.

### *Tenth RCMI International Research Symposium in Puerto Rico*

The second issue in the series is the RCMI 10<sup>th</sup> International symposium on Health Disparities was hosted by the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus, Universidad Central del Caribe and Ponce School of Medicine.

The 10th RCMI International Symposium on Health Disparities took place on December 13 - 16, 2006 at the Caribe Hilton Hotel in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Over 650 participants from the Caribbean, Brazil, Africa and the United States attended the meeting. The invited speakers are listed below:

Dr. Barbara Alving, Acting Director of the National Center for Research Resources (NCR), NIH; Dr. Sidney A. McNairy Jr., Associate Director for Research Infrastructure, NCR, NIH; Dr. Antonia C. Novello, Commissioner of Health, State of New York; Dr. Eric Hoffman, Director, Center for Genetic Medicine, Children's Research Institute, Washington, DC, and Dr. Benjamin Littenberg, Henry and Carleen Tufo Professor of Medicine and Nursing, University of Vermont. Dr. Louise E. Ramm, Deputy Director, National Center for Research Resources, NIH, and Dr. John Ruffin, Director, National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities, NIH, addressed the audience during the opening ceremonies.

The meeting offered a number of workshops and talks. These included focus sessions on research ethics, proteomics, grant writing, technology transfer etc.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

For the 9th RCMI International Research Symposium 2005, Baltimore, MD, we thank: T. Joan Robinson, PhD, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Morgan State University, and Juarine Stewart, PhD, Interim Dean, School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Morgan State University, as well as the Organizing and Scientific Program Committees for organizing a scientific meeting of exceptional quality.

For the 10<sup>th</sup> RCMI International Research Symposium 2006 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, we thank: Dr. Emma Fernandez-Repollet, Chairperson and Vice President for Research and Technology, Dr. Eddy R. Olivares, Dr. Yasuhiro Yamamura, Dr. Julio Benabe, Dr. Keith Norris. Local Organizing Committee: Dr. Emma Fernandez-Repollet, Dr. Jose Conde, Dr. Julio Benabe, Dr. Eddy Rios Olivares, Dr. Yasuhiro Yamamura, Dr. Richard Noel, Professor Luis Cubano for organizing a scientific meeting of exceptional quality.

We thank the administration of Morgan State University, Dr. Earl Richardson, President of Morgan State University and Dr. T. J. Robinson, the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost of Morgan State University.

We thank Ms. J. Odera for an excellent job of typing and correspondence with the authors. Her assistance was central for the completion of the two issues. The Morgan State Biology Department was of great help. We thank Mourad Fares of the Central Office of *Cell and Molecular Biology* for his assistance.

We would like to make known to the RCMI community the passing of Dr. B. He was a strong supporter of the RCMI efforts. He was an excellent world class scientist and will be missed by all.

The continued support of Dr. Sidney A. McNairy, Dr. Shelia A. McClure and Dr. Barbara Alving has never wavered over all these many years. We all express to you our thanks and gratitude.

Supported by Grants: Research centers in Human Services, Bethesda, Maryland, USA. The Minority Institution (RCMI/NCRR RR017581), Library of Medicine 467MZ401806 and NS31875 and MH-29494 National Institutes of 467MZ501386 of NIH. We also acknowledge Health (NIH), and Department of Health and support for the Neuropathy Association.