

CENTER FOR HEALTH DISPARITIES

December 2020

[ECU Center for Health Disparities](#)

Meet the CHD Faculty & Staff



Dr. Keith Keene
CHD Director



Cheryl Denney
Grants Administrator



Tracy Kono
Administrative Assistant



Jukelia Bess
Outreach Coordinator



Dr. Daniel Dickerson
Education & Training Core Director



Dr. Charles Ellis Jr.
Research Core Director

Internal Advisory Board



Dr. Paul Gemperline
(Graduate School)



Dr. David Paquette
(SoDM)



Dr. Cindy Putnam Evans
(Arts & Sciences)



Dr. Peter Schmidt
(BSOM)



Dr. Kathryn Verbanac
(REDE)



Dr. Heather Wright
(Allied Health)



Dr. Anisa Zvonkovic
(HHP)



Farewell and Congratulations

The Center for Health Disparities extends its gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Ronny Bell for his service as CHD Co/Associate Director since 2016. We wish Dr. Bell continued success as he embarks on the next chapter of his career as Director of Cancer Health Equity at the Wake Forest Comprehensive Cancer Center. Congratulations on your new position and you will be missed greatly!

Noteworthy CHD Accomplishments

Recent Grants & Awards

- Keith Keene, Michael Brewer** (Biology), and colleagues at the University of Virginia School of Medicine were awarded a 4-year \$2.3 Million National Institutes of Health NICHD R01, "Using Integrative Omics as Biomarkers and Diagnostic Tools for SIDS" (R01 HD101518-01), to comprehensively evaluate genetic, epigenetic, and metabolomic profiles as clinical diagnostic tools and novel biomarkers for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- The CHD serves as the administrative home for a \$1.2 Million CARES ACT Funding proposal (PIs: **Maria Clay** and **Greg Kearney**) focused on COVID-19 Geographical hotspots and Vaccine Distribution.
- CHD Researchers **Molly Jacobs, Charles Ellis, Keith Keene** receive \$10,000 award from Bristol Myers Squibb to study "Racial Disparities in Stroke Outcomes". The goal of this proposal is to examine the impact of social networks on stroke outcomes in African American and White stroke survivors residing in the eastern NC stroke belt.
- Daniel Dickerson** initiates the CHD Undergraduate Fellowship. **Ono Abbulimen**, EC Scholar and Early Assurance student, has been named the first CHD Undergraduate Fellow.
- Keith Keene** was awarded the American Stroke Association 2020 Stroke Progress and Innovation Award (3rd Prize Winner).
- Keith Keene** was selected as a member of the ECU Fiscal Sustainability Coordinating Committee (FSCC).

Recent Publications

Ellis C, Jacobs M, Keene KL, Grubaugh AL. The impact of COVID-19 on racial-ethnic health disparities in the US: Now is the time to address the problem. *J Natl Med Assoc.* 2020. Sep 8:S0027-9684(20)30173-5. doi: 10.1016/j.jnma.2020.08.008. PMID:32917409

Keene KL, Hyacinth HI, Bis JC, Kittner SJ, Mitchell BD, Cheng YC, Pare G, Chong M, O'Donnell M, Meschia JF, Chen WM, Sale MM, Rich SS, Nalls MA, Zonderman AB, Evans MK, Wilson JG, Correa A, Markus HS, Traylor M, Lewis CM, Carty CL, Reiner A, Haessler J, Langefeld CD, Gottesman R, Mosley TH, Woo D, Yaffe K, Liu YM, Longstreth WT, Psaty BM, Kooperberg C, Lange LA, Sacco R, Rundek T, Lee JM, Cruchaga C, Furie KL, Arnett DK, Benavente OR, Grewal RP, Peddareddygar LR, Dichgans M, Malik R, Worrall BB, Fornage M, on behalf of the COMPASS, SIGN and METASTROKE Consortia. A GWAS Meta-Analysis of Stroke in 22,000 individuals of African descent identifies novel associations with stroke. *Stroke.* 2020 Aug;51(8):2454-2463. doi: 10.1161/STROKEAHA.120.029123. PMID:32693751

Ellis C, Jacobs M, Keene K, Bell R, Dickerson D. COVID-19 and the Potential Devastation of Rural Communities: Concern from the Southeastern Belts. *Annals of Family Medicine.* 2020. Available at: <https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/154715>.

Ellis C, & Jacobs M (2020). The complexity of health disparities: More than just black-white differences. Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups, SIG-10. *Gerontology.* In Press

Johnson L.A., **Ellis C,** (2020). Chemotherapy in the last 30 Days and 14 Days of life in African Americans with lung Cancer. *American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine.* doi: 10.1177/1049909120969125. Online ahead of print. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049909120969125>

Ellis C, (2020). COVID-19 Racial-ethnic disparities should not be a surprise: So what next? *Journal of the National Black Association of Speech, Language and Hearing Special COVID-19 Issue,* 15(2), 98-100.

Johnson L.A., Melendez C, Larson K, Moye J, Schreier A, **Ellis C** (2020). Using demographics to predict palliative care access in inpatient facilities in rural North Carolina. *Journal of Rural Health.* Epub ahead of print. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jrh.12507>

The **goals** of the CHD are:
1) Develop an integrated research agenda focused on genomic, environmental, physiological, and social determinants of health;
2) Expand community partnerships;
3) Create pipeline programs and training opportunities in health disparities.

CONGRATULATIONS to:

Dr. Joseph Lee (HEP) appointed interim Director for School of Social Work

Dr. Alice Richman named Interim Associate Dean for Research for the College of Health and Human Performance

For a full list of CHD affiliate faculty, please visit [Administration | Center for Health Disparities | ECU](#)

16th Annual Jean Mills Symposium. The ECU Department of Public Health, Center for Health Disparities, Department of Psychiatry, and the West Greenville Health Council sponsored the 16th Annual Jean Mills Symposium. For a live recording visit: <https://ecu.webex.com/webappng/sites/ecu/recording/playback/b6021573cc924c9f8772fc7e94bb8335>

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