ELSI FRIDAY FORUM

ELSI Friday Forum
Friday, September 13, 2024 12-1:30 PM ET US/9-10:30 AM PT

Session Title:

Enhancing Access for Historically Marginalized Populations using the Translational Genomics Pipeline

Date and time: Friday, September 13, 2024 | 12pm ET US / 9am PT US

Moderator: Markia Smith, PhD

Presenter: Shawneequa Callier, MA, JD

Presenter: Melissa Davis, PhD

CERA Coordinator: Sandra Soo-Jin Lee, PhD

Staff: Ashlin Amano, David Lamb, Faryn Fairweather, Grace Morris

[BIOGRAPHIES]

Moderator: Markia Smith, PhD

Markia Smith, PhD (she/her), is a Senior Expert I Data Scientist at Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research. She earned her PhD in Pathobiology and Translational Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she utilized integrative genomic approaches to investigate the genetic and environmental factors contributing to cancer and health disparities in historically marginalized populations. Dr. Smith specializes in cancer genomics, computational biology, and epidemiology. Her work involves conducting integrative analyses of omics data and clinical variables to identify biomarkers for therapy response and resistance. She is involved in various projects that leverage biomarker assays and clinical trial data to enhance insights into oncology clinical trial outcomes. Her contributions include biomarker profiling studies and the development and implementation of analytical tools, with a focus on translational implications for patient outcomes, addressing data bias, and exploring the ethical, legal, and social implications (ELSI) of data. Passionate about workforce diversity in genetics and genomics, Dr. Smith has been a key advocate for fostering a global community of Black geneticists and professionals in related fields. Since 2020, she has served as co-founder, Founding President, and Board member of Black In Genetics.
Link to Full Biography: https://www.blackingenetics.com/profiles/markia-smith

Panelist: Shawneequa Callier, MA, JD
Shawneequa Callier is an Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of Clinical Research and Leadership at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. For thirteen years, she has also served as a Special Volunteer at the Center for Research on Genomics and Global Health at the National Human Genome Research Institute, NIH. She is a lawyer with nearly two decades of experience assessing the ethical, legal, and social implications of emerging technologies, with a focus on advancing equity and justice in genomics research. She works on various projects funded by the US National Institutes of Health.
Link to Full Biography:
https://apps.smhs.gwu.edu/smhs/facultydirectory/profile.cfm?empName=Shawneequa%20Callier&FacID=2051569427

Panelist: Melissa B. Davis, PhD
Melissa B. Davis, PhD is the newly appointed Director of the Institute of Translational Genomic Medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine, and Distinguished Investigator with the Georgia Research Alliance. She also serves as Scientific Director of the International Center for the Study of Breast Cancer Subtypes (ICSBCS), (Interim) Director of Health Equity for the Englander Institute of Precision Medicine and Associate Professor of Cell and Developmental Biology in the Department of Surgery and at Weill Cornell Medicine in New York, NY.
Dr. Davis has published groundbreaking findings that established a new lens to study associations of biological factors in cancer outcomes as related to genetic ancestry. Specifically, she has discovered links between African ancestry and tumor burdens that have a disproportionate burden in people across the African diaspora. Her work is a prime example of how inclusion of diverse ethnic groups can empower research designs for discovery of novel or unique tumor biology.
Link to Full Biography:
https://www.msm.edu/RSSFeedArticles/2022/November/MelissaBDavis.php

[FROM OUR PANEL]

From Shawneequa Callier, MA, JD:
Bentley, A. R., Callier, S. L., & Rotimi, C. N. (2020). Evaluating the promise of inclusion of African ancestry populations in genomics. *NPJ genomic medicine*, *5*(1), 5, Evaluating the promise of inclusion of African ancestry populations in genomics | npj Genomic Medicine (nature.com)

Bentley, A.R., Callier, S. and Rotimi, C.N., 2017. Diversity and inclusion in genomic research: why the uneven progress?. *Journal of community genetics*, *8*, pp.255-266, Diversity and inclusion in genomic research: why the uneven progress? | Journal of Community Genetics (springer.com)

Mills, M.C. and Rahal, C., 2020. The GWAS Diversity Monitor tracks diversity by disease in real time. *Nature genetics*, *52*(3), pp.242-243, The GWAS Diversity Monitor tracks diversity by disease in real time | Nature Genetics

White-people-only DNA tests show how unequal science has become | MIT Technology Review

[FROM CERA]

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Please use this link to access Unequal Access to Genetic Testing and Follow-up Care curated by Carolyn Neuhaus, PhD, Research Scholar, The Hastings Center.
https://elsihub.org/collection/unequal-access-genetic-testing-and-follow-care