FROM THE DIRECTOR



RCMI—Celebrating 20 Years of Achievement

HIS ISSUE OF THE NCRR REPORTER commemorates the 20th anniversary of the Research Centers in Minority Institutions (RCMI) Program and the achievements of the RCMI scientists around the nation.

When Congress appropriated funds to create the RCMI program 20 years ago, it called attention to the disparities in the health status between minority and majority Americans. Today in the United States, infant mortality, diabetes, stroke, AIDS, heart disease, and a variety of cancers continue to claim a disproportionate toll on minority populations. However, as the articles that follow demonstrate, RCMI researchers have made critical contributions to addressing the health issues in minority populations. Examples of their efforts are seen in improved treatments for AIDS, heart failure, kidney disease, and many other areas of biomedical research.

In creating the program, the Congress also emphasized the important role that minority institutions have traditionally played in training professionals who provide health care to minority communities. Over the past two decades, RCMIs have maintained that tradition, training nearly 36 percent of the minority Ph.D.s in biomedical and behaviorial sciences and more than 30 percent of the minority M.D.s in the United States, as reported in FY 2003.

Numerous NIH Institutes and Centers have provided cofunding to RCMI activities, and these contributions also are recognized in the articles that follow. As with all research endeavors, collaboration is essential. We at NIH, and especially at NCRR, congratulate the RCMI researchers and administrators, and we look forward to their future achievements.

Barbara Alving, M.D.

Acting Director, NCRR

Reporter

This quarterly publication of the National Center for Research Resources fosters communication, collaboration, and resource sharing in areas of current interest to scientists and the public.

EDITOR

Joyce McDonald, NCRR

Managing Editor **Victoria L. Contie**

Publications Supervisor Shirley Coney-Johnson

Please send comments and ideas about future articles to:

Office of Science Policy and Public Liaison, NCRR/NIH
One Democracy Plaza
6701 Democracy Blvd., 9th floor
Bethesda, MD 20892-4874
Telephone: (301) 435-0888
Fax: (301) 480-3558
E-mail: info@ncrr.nih.gov
Web site: www.ncrr.nih.gov

INSIDE

SUMMER/FALL 2005, VOL XXIX, NO. 3

CRITICAL RESOURCES

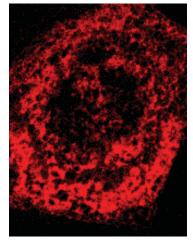
4 Minority Research Program Celebrates 20 Productive Years

Collaborations enhance efforts to address health disparities.

SCIENCE ADVANCES

Estrogen in a New Kind of Bind

Newly discovered estrogen receptor sheds light on cancer and its treatment.



Research to Reality

14 Birthing Twins—and Technologies

An experimental surgery moves out of the laboratory and into medical practice.

15 News from NCRR

On the Cover: Physician Keith Norris heads an effort to translate research findings into improved outcomes for patients susceptible to chronic kidney disease, which disproportionately affects minority populations. NCRR's Research Centers in Minority Institutions Program—now celebrating its 20th anniversary—strengthens this type of biomedical research at minority institutions nationwide.

PHOTO BY JOE TORENO