



IMAGN!

Increasing Minority Awareness in Genetics – Now!



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MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October 4th Conference to Examine Issues in Race and Genetics

Note to Editors: Reporters and others interested in attending this conference must register by Sept. 30 at <http://www.event-wizard.com/imagn>

Washington, D.C.-The Congressional Black Caucus and The Johns Hopkins University will host a meeting of African American leaders to examine issues in race and genetics on October 4 from 9 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., at the Marriott At Metro Center, 775 12th Street NW, Washington, DC. Reporters, editors, producers and others are welcome to attend.

Understanding the genetic basis of diseases that disproportionately affect the Black community could lead to improved prevention, treatment, and cures. Until now, there has been too little research to fully understand the role of biological and genetic differences in racial health disparities. The meeting, entitled **IMAGN! Increasing Minority Awareness of Genetics-Now!**, will address the current status of genetic medicine, future directions for genetics research, and the potential uses -- or misuses -- of genetics outside of the medical context.

"The assignment of 'race' can be traced through American history as having a direct impact on the current health outcomes and health disparities confronting the Black community. The prevalence of diseases such as hypertension, diabetes and the overall state of African American health constitutes a national crisis. It's time to discuss these issues very candidly," says Congressman Elijah Cummings, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and Johns Hopkins University Genetics and Public Policy Center will bring together political, community, business, religious and opinion leaders from the Black community to examine the challenging questions raised by advances in genetics and their impact on the Black community.

"This conference will be an important step in providing the necessary tools to assist the CBC and other leaders in the African American community to discover just how advances in genetics can best be harnessed to help alleviate current health disparities," says Congresswoman Donna M. Christensen, who chairs the CBC Health Braintrust.

(MORE)

Speakers at the conference will include:

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Congressman, Maryland

The Honorable Donna M. Christensen
Congresswoman, U.S. Virgin Islands

Tony Brown
Host of Tony Brown's Journal on PBS & PBS YOU

Aravinda Chakravarti, Ph.D.
Professor of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University

Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director, National Human Genome Research Institute

The Honorable Andre Davis, J.D.
Judge, U.S. District Court of Maryland

Georgia Dunston, Ph.D.
Professor of Microbiology, Howard University

Troy Duster, Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology, New York University

Reverend Brenda Girton-Mitchell, M.Div., J.D.
Associate General Secretary, National Council of the Churches of Christ

Patricia King, J.D.
Professor of Law, Medicine, Ethics, and Public Policy
Georgetown University Law Center

Charles Ogletree, Jr., J.D.
Professor of Law, Harvard Law School

Dorothy Roberts, J.D.
Professor of Law, Northwestern University Law School

Maya Rockey Moore, Ph.D.
Vice President, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.

Carol Swain, Ph.D.
Professor of Political Science and Law, Vanderbilt University

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The Genetics and Public Policy Center is a part of the Phoebe R. Berman Bioethics Institute at The Johns Hopkins University and is funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts. The mission of the Genetics and Public Policy Center is to create the environment and tools needed by decision makers in both the private and public sectors to carefully consider and respond to the challenges and opportunities that arise from scientific advances in genetics.

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