



POPULATION HEALTH GRAND ROUNDS PRESENTS

TOPIC:

What's the big Idea with Mississippi INBRE? Building Research Capacity and Engaging Diverse Communities in Mississippi

Monday, November 29, 2021 • 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Location: BigBlueButton or dial in 1-863-208-0022 (pin: 337 216 271)



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Objectives:

1. Identify research opportunities within the Mississippi INBRE network.
2. Describe the project aims of the Mississippi INBRE Community Engagement and Training Core
3. Name the various projects and activities supported by the Mississippi INBRE Community Engagement and Training Core.

Dr. Elasri: I serve as the Program Director and Principal Investigator of the Mississippi INBRE program. The mission of the Mississippi INBRE network is to build up biomedical research in the state. I have accumulated extensive experience in the administration of the INBRE network. We have built deep relationships with faculty and administrators at all Partner Undergraduate Institutions and the Research Institutions in Mississippi. This is very critical to the accomplishing the goals of INBRE because our success depends on healthy and strong collaborations with all our partners. I have worked closely with all the PUI biomedical investigators to help them establish competitive research programs in cancer, infectious diseases, and obesity. I have assisted them in negotiating teaching release time, address student mentoring issues, prepare proposals, and to find ways to improve their research infrastructure. Our team have developed our three summer programs (MIRS, MISS, and MIOS) into full and immersive experiences for Mississippi students that not only train students in biomedical research or public health but also in career development program. One of the overarching themes for our network is addressing health disparities in the state. We have focused on underserved communities by developing a partnership with My Brother's Keeper Inc. (MBK) which has extensive infrastructure within the African American community. The biomedical infrastructure we have built through INBRE was designed to promote new independent investigators and is critical for the success of the proposed project. The MBK-INBRE partnership is unique and represent the largest network of minority community-engagement organization in our state. The complementary cadre of experts can be rapidly deployed to address statewide health issues in coordination with the Mississippi State Department of Health and health care providers.

Dr. Jennifer Lemacks is an Associate Professor at the University of Southern Mississippi School of Kinesiology and Nutrition and registered dietitian by trade. Her research is driven by a passion to reduce preventable chronic disease disparities in underserved populations through behavioral therapy targeting nutrition and physical activity behaviors. She has received ample training in community-based participatory research methods and health interventions. She has directed a project funded by the National Institutes of Health to explore how to utilize churches to deliver obesity management interventions to young to middle-aged African Americans in South Mississippi. She has also directed a youth mentorship and nutrition program focused on improving diet and social behaviors of 5th graders in the Mississippi Delta. She serves as director of the Mississippi INBRE Telenutrition Center (<https://telenutritioncenter.com/>) and manages three projects that address COVID-19, obesity, and diabetes health disparities among African American, Native American and other underserved Mississippians. She is also creator of the Mississippi INBRE Outreach Scholars program that engages students in community outreach and research activities over a 10 week intensive summer period. She is one of the founding organizers of the Mississippi Health Disparities conference (<https://www.mississippihealthdisparities.org/>).

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