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Introduction

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The 10th Anniversary of the establishment of the Tuskegee University National Center for Bioethics in Research and Health Care represents a decade of initiatives directed at transforming the painful memory of the United States Public Health Services Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male into a new commitment to community empowerment and the formation of a new paradigm that places ethics at the center of scientific inquiry.

The manuscripts presented in this issue of the *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* represent the views and findings of an array of researchers from different ethnic communities within the U.S., united by one common thread: They all represent communities plagued by health disparities that adversely impact them in comparison with national and local averages. Minority and underserved communities often lack adequate access to information regarding their health and often, when information is available, it is not presented in a manner that lends itself to community acceptance. In the fight to reduce health disparities, however, minority institutions are often the unsung heroes.

Minority-serving institutions (MSIs) are trusted members of their communities, with their faculty often serving in multiple capacities within the community at large. Such individuals work on behalf of their institutions to raise awareness about health disparities and to disseminate helpful health information. The papers in this issue speak to the vital role of minority institutions serve in the fight to reduce health disparities in their communities through innovative research approaches that address some of the most pressing health issues facing our society. Additionally, each paper includes a discussion of the relevant bioethical issues and implications of the research. These discussions provide the moral context that

must be incorporated in future research efforts that have a direct impact upon human beings and their environment.

In accordance with the role of MSI in combating health disparities, this publication is dedicated to the 10th Anniversary of the Tuskegee University National Center for Bioethics in Research and Health Care and its collaborative partnerships with The Historically Black Colleges and Universities Research Network, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Morehouse School of Medicine/Tuskegee University/University of Alabama at Birmingham Comprehensive Cancer Center Cancer Research Partnership.

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