

## Research teams awarded funding to fight health disparities in the Mississippi Delta

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Perinatal epidemiologist Emily Harville (left) and Endowed Regents Professor Lizheng Shi are part of two teams of investigators given 2018 CORNET awards for research fighting health disparities in the Mississippi Delta.

A new consortium backed by Tulane University, the University of Mississippi Medical Center and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center has awarded collaborative research grants to two teams of investigators fighting health disparities in the Mississippi Delta.

The Delta Clinical and Translational Science Consortium, [which was launched this summer](#), created the 2018 Collaborative Research Network (CORNET) Awards in Health Disparities Research to give seed funding of up to \$75,000 to support innovative, interdisciplinary, team-based health disparities research in the region.

“The CORNET Awards create a powerful synergy by pulling together complementary strengths among our Delta Consortium partners,” said Laura S. Levy, PhD, vice president for research at Tulane. “The awards demonstrate our commitment to address significant problems of health disparity through a team approach.”

The [2018 CORNET Award](#) winners are:

- “Transgenerational research on child health in the Delta” by Emily Harville (Tulane), Claire Simpson (UTHSC) and Bettina Beech (UMMC). The project will develop a large, multigenerational study of African-American and white Delta residents to better understand how health disparities develop and are transmitted across generations.
- “Geographic, income and racial disparities in continuity of care and their effect on health care utilization for obesity-associated chronic conditions” by Lizheng Shi (Tulane), James E. Bailey (UTHSC) and Joshua R. Mann (UMMC). The study aims to inform ongoing health system improvements across the South and to attract funding for research that helps communities most affected by disparities invest in health system transformation to reduce disparities and improve health.

“Through the work that the Delta Consortium is doing, we know there is an increased interest among our researchers to find solutions to complex health issues faced by people in our region,” said Steven R. Goodman, PhD, vice chancellor for research at UTHSC. “The high response to the CORNET Awards opportunity and the potential impact the two winning projects will have for our community members is overwhelming. I congratulate all the selected collaborative team members.”

Envisioned by Levy, Goodman, and Richard L. Summers, MD, vice chancellor for research at UMMC, the CORNET Awards in Health Disparities funding opportunity was first announced to investigators in July at the inaugural Delta Clinical and Translational Health Disparities Conference in Jackson, Mississippi.

“UMMC is proud to support the recipients of the CORNET in Health Disparities Research Awards,” Summers said. “There is tremendous power in collaboration and

we look forward to seeing the difference these projects will make in the lives of our children and how they will impact the quality and management of healthcare for our most marginalized populations.”

[Click here](#) to learn more about the CORNET Awards.

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Laura Levy