



*Press Forward. Fear Nothing.*  
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## **Xavier University of Louisiana College of Pharmacy Hosts 17<sup>th</sup> Health Disparities Conference**

**New Orleans** – For nearly 100 years, Xavier University of Louisiana’s College of Pharmacy has remained true to its goal of eliminating health disparities. For the last 17 years, the College of Pharmacy has hosted its Health Disparities Conference to address community engagement, policy, practice, education workforce, and science in the hopes of promoting and achieving health equity. This year, the 17<sup>th</sup> Health Disparities Conference will be held from April 7 - 9th at the Sheraton New Orleans. Themed “Social Detriments to Health: Reaching Equity – Let’s Talk Solutions,” the in-person conference promises to provide attendees with a multi-perspective view of concerns and issues related to health disparities and health equity while highlighting solutions that use public health approaches to achieve health equity.

The conference is hosted by Xavier University of Louisiana’s Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities Research and Education (CMHDRE). Established in 2002 under the university’s College of Pharmacy, the CMHDRE’s initial focus was on the disparities among patients with diabetes and diabetes-related illnesses. As it has grown in support from faculty and staff, the center has expanded to focus on the social determinants of health, such as racism, policies, education, income, and the environment, which all contribute to health disparities. The conference seeks to share solutions to these factors to improve health outcomes.

“This conference allows us to have these important discussions around health disparities, the social detriments to health, and how we could work to achieve health equity,” said Dr. Kathleen Kennedy, Dean of Xavier’s College of Pharmacy. “Discussions about these topics are not enough; we also highlight and present solutions that can be applied. . That is what makes this conference so important.”

1Joshua Group, the conference organizer, has been helping establishments to create events like Xavier’s Health Disparities Conference that advance health conversations to improve healthcare conditions for nearly 20 years.

“We are excited to continue to partner with clients like Xavier to bring a forward-looking educational and information gathering of experts focusing on improving health outcomes such as this one to life,” said Kermit G. Payne, President of 1Joshua Group. “Our work revolves around providing programming to address the health needs and education of underserved communities and vulnerable populations. The annual Health Disparities Conference does just that.”

Each year, the conference recognizes the achievements of Dr. John Ruffin, the founding director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, through the John Ruffin Lecture series. The chosen lecturer is someone who champions the improvement of the health of individuals and communities by addressing issues in health policy, treatment, research and advocacy, like Dr. Ruffin. This year, the John Ruffin Lecturer will be Dr. Claudia Baquet, an affiliate professor at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy and the founder of the Hope Institute, LLC. Dr. Baquet advocates for quality health care for underserved and minority communities and populations, focusing on research relating to health needs, clinical trials, and models of care. The title of Dr. Baquet’s John Ruffin Lecture will be “Achieving Health Equity through Ethical and Trustworthy Community Engagement and Partnerships.”

Those attending the conference can look forward to interactive workshops, lectures, discussions, networking events, and more with a schedule determined by each participant's interests. Attendees will have access to key thought leaders in health disparities and health equity while participating in and interacting with sessions, presentations, research exchanges, and particular interest areas that will focus on solutions to achieve health equity. Participants will include students, pharmacists, physicians, nurses, physician assistants, health policymakers, health educators, researchers, and public health leaders whose work incorporates interdisciplinary approaches to health disparities and health justice.

"Our goal is to improve the health outcomes and the overall health of those within our communities," said Dean Kennedy. "With conferences like this, we can discuss health disparities, what factors contribute to them, and what solutions we can employ to fix them. Only then can we work toward eliminating these health disparities and move toward achieving health equity."

Visit the 17<sup>th</sup> Health Disparities Conference [here](#) for more information.

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### About Xavier University of Louisiana

*On the cusp of celebrating its first 100 years of service, Xavier University of Louisiana remains America's only historically Black and Catholic University and is ranked among the top HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) in the nation. Recognized as a national leader in STEM and health sciences, Xavier has historically produced more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Additionally, Xavier's College of Pharmacy is among the country's top producers of African American pharmacists.*

*Established almost a century ago in 1925 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as a place for African Americans and Native Americans to receive a quality education, Xavier has since expanded its programs in nearly every industry, including the arts, sciences, business, education, pharmacy, and political science. More recent additions in STEM-based master's programs and undergraduate options in robotics, bioinformatics, engineering, data science, neuroscience, and genetics have provided Xavier students (3,181 students) an unbeatable experience of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities, and life experiences. Xavier students collaborate with world-renowned faculty and experts in their fields to produce award-winning research and notable work. The winning Xavier formula provides students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls, developing all who choose to learn at the institution into the next generation of leaders and agents of positive change. Blessed with a mission to promote a more just and humane society, Xavier is leading the way to a brighter future for all. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit [www.XULA.edu](http://www.XULA.edu) or contact the Marketing and Communications Department at (504) 520-5425 or [XULANews@XULA.edu](mailto:XULANews@XULA.edu).*