MISSISSIPPI URBAN RESEARCH CENTER
Online Journal of Rural and Urban Research
CHALLENGING MINDS, CHANGING LIVES

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Editor's Message: The primary focus of the Jackson State University *Online Journal of Rural and Urban Research*, founded by the Mississippi Urban Research Center, is to improve the quality of life through basic and applied research. The current issue will showcase scholarly articles and commentaries that focus on "Health Disparities within Urban and Rural Communities." Despite great effort, racial and ethnic minorities within urban and rural communities continue to experience lower quality of health services, are less likely to receive routine medical procedures, and have higher rates of morbidity and mortality than non-minorities.

We hope that the current issue will inspire academicians, community members, and policy makers to bridge the health disparity gap through advocacy, research, policy, and community mobilization. Nearly 100 years after Mahatma Gandhi's inspiring speech, his call to action continues to ring true, *"If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him."* It is our honor to offer you the Jackson State University *Online Journal of Rural and Urban Research* **Special Issue** on "Health Disparities within Urban and Rural Communities."