

# **Dream Symposium at Tulane Highlights Advances in GI Research**

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The Dream Symposium will be held December 6-7 in the Hutchinson Building at Tulane School of Medicine.

Under-represented populations face significantly higher rates of gastrointestinal and liver diseases, with Black and Hispanic patients often experiencing worse outcomes due to disparities in care. The Dream Symposium, hosted by the John W. Deming Department of Medicine's Section of Gastroenterology & Hepatology at Tulane University School of Medicine, seeks to address these inequities head-on by bringing

together healthcare providers, researchers, and educators to discuss advancements in digestive care and innovative approaches to treating these vulnerable communities.

Statistics show that Black patients have higher rates of colorectal cancer and are more likely to die from the disease compared to other groups, while liver diseases disproportionately affect Hispanic populations. These disparities are due in part to delayed diagnoses, reduced access to advanced treatments, and gaps in medical research that focus on groups that are under-represented in medicine.

The symposium, which offers AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™, will cover a wide range of topics, including:

- Liver Tumors in Minority Populations
- Pancreatic Cancer
- Colorectal Cancer
- Serum Biomarkers for Colon Polyps
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)
- Liver Transplant Disparities
- Celiac Disease in African American Populations
- New Innovations in Advanced Endoscopy
- Food Insecurity and GI Health
- AI in Medicine

Designed to elevate the overall knowledge of healthcare professionals, the symposium aims to identify gaps in understanding, particularly about under-represented populations, and motivate participants to develop networks that can address disparities in GI and liver care.

Reflecting on the success of last year's event, organizers have noted the rapid growth of the symposium, with a significant increase in both participation and the scope of topics covered. The 2023 symposium featured compelling stories from researchers, awardees, and participants from various local institutions, creating an environment for collaboration and knowledge sharing.

The Dream Symposium continues to expand its focus on cutting-edge research and innovative approaches in gastroenterology, setting the stage for even greater engagement in 2024. Attendees can expect to hear about the latest developments in technology, treatments, and initiatives aimed at reducing disparities and improving patient outcomes.

"There have been ongoing discussions about ways in which to drive improvement for communities with GI and liver diseases, but actionable solutions and interventions based on these discussions have been minimal," said Sarah Glover, DO AGAF, the C. Thorpe Ray MD Chair in Medicine and Section Chief of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at Tulane School of Medicine. "The goal of this conference is to innovate those actionable solutions experts in our field feel we are missing for marginalized populations with GI and liver diseases."

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