BOSTON UNIVERSITY

WHY SUPPORT RESEARCH AT THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH?

SO YOU CAN HELP SCIENTISTS IDENTIFY THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF DISEASE PREVENTION, UNPACK HEALTH DISPARITIES, AND TURN SCIENCE FICTION INTO REALITY.

And that's just for starters. Through $291.6 million in research grants, Boston University has been helping the National Institutes of Health (NIH) improve human health and even save lives.

THE BLIND SIDE OF COVID-19 MEASURES

As the COVID-19 pandemic took off, Boston University biostatistician Laura Forsberg White built a modeling system to determine how effective pandemic interventions, including limiting travel, closing businesses and schools, and sheltering-in-place, have been at reducing disease spread when seen through a local lens. With NIH funding, she will pay special attention to vulnerable groups such as those living with HIV or tuberculosis, people experiencing homelessness, and substance users. She is also drawing on data from colleagues in New York City, South Africa, the Philippines, and Ukraine, and sharing her findings with researchers around the world. When it comes to halting a global pandemic, the more open eyes, the better.

WHY ARE BLACK WOMEN AT HIGHER RISK FOR FIBROIDS?

Black women are up to three times as likely as white women to develop uterine fibroids, leading to heavy bleeding, anemia, and infertility and billions of dollars in US healthcare costs each year. BU epidemiologist Lauren Wise has grant support from the NIH to measure what role pollutants such as phthalates, PCBs, PFAS, and BPA are playing. Her study of Black women—who are at high risk for exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals and for uterine fibroids—will tell us more about the impact of widespread pollutants and racial disparities in uterine fibroids, and how we can level the playing field.

UNHAUNTING OUR MEMORIES

What if scientists could manipulate your brain so that a traumatic memory loses its emotional grip on you? No, this isn't the plot of a Christopher Nolan movie. With an NIH Early Independence Award, BU neuroscientist Steve Ramirez and his team hope to show just how pliable memory is. They believe that stimulating the hippocampus, a small structure in the brain, could someday allow clinicians to enhance positive memories or suppress negative ones. So far, the results in mice are promising. And the therapeutic implications are enormous for those haunted by troubling memories that manifest as PTSD, depression, and anxiety. Now, that's a plot twist millions might like to see.

We hope you'll give strong consideration to supporting research funding for the NIH. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the role that NIH research plays in our daily lives, please visit bu.edu/federal.

Boston University Federal Relations

BLACK WOMEN HAVE A HIGHER RATE OF FIBROIDS. A BOSTON UNIVERSITY RESEARCHER WANTS TO KNOW WHY.

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