



## Message from the Project Directors Kathryn Hassell, MD & Janet Thomas, MD

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**October 2016**

Dear friends and colleagues,

Many of us are beginning to see Fall colors as the nights become more brisk and the holiday season approaches. Along with the brisk nights, MSGRC is expecting a busy end to 2016. Read on to find out what the future is bringing for MSGRC.

### **Newly released RFA**

We are excited to share with all of our stakeholders the recently released Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the new cycle that will begin June 2017. The application for the new cycle will be for Regional Genetic Networks (RGNs). The Mountain States region will continue to cover our current eight states- AZ, CO, MT, NM, NV, TX, UT, WY.

The main areas of focus for RGNs include:

- linkage of medically underserved populations to genetic services
- implementation of quality improvement (QI) activities to increase connection with genetic services for the underserved
- implementation of innovative telemedicine models focused on clinical genetics outreach
- provision of resources to genetic service providers, public health officials and families

MSGRC is asking for any feedback or input on the application for the new cycle and will also be working with some of our regional leaders on our competitive application. The FOA is **linked below**. We want to hear from you!

[FOA](#)

## Welcome new MSGRC Evaluation Research Assistant

In September 2016, Deborah K. Niyongabo was hired as a research assistant to work with Liza M. Creel, MSGRC Evaluator, at the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences. In collaboration with Liza, Deborah will be working on a summative evaluation report describing MSGRC activities and accomplishments over the previous four years as well as contributing to data collection and analysis for the current year. Deborah is currently pursuing a PhD in Public Health Sciences with a specialization in Health Management. She also works as a research assistant in the Infectious Disease Division at the School of Medicine. Deborah has a research interest in Health Policy at the national and international levels with a specific interest and service delivery and management systems within hospitals and health centers. She previously worked as an intern in Niamey, Niger for the Health Department for the Samaritan's Purse organization. In that work, Deborah co-managed a pilot program on malaria prevention and hygiene practices in Goroual Secondary School. Niyongabo has an MPH with a concentration in Global Health from Liberty University. She also received a Bachelor degree of Science in Public Health from the University of Maryland, College Park.

## Calling consumer advocate groups in our region!

MSGRC is always interested in fostering relationships with the consumer advocacy and support groups in our region. We are proud to have many of our Consumer Advocacy Workgroup members in leadership positions with these organizations that serve a vital role in supporting families in our region. Interested in having an organization you are involved with featured on our Facebook page? Please contact [mbrown@mountainstatesgenetics.org](mailto:mbrown@mountainstatesgenetics.org)!

## Other Items of Interest

- MSGRC will be attending the National Coordinating Center (NCC) Telegenetics Workgroup meeting in late October. We are excited to share some of our past and current projects we have supported in this realm. Dr. Dale Alverson, past president of the American Telemedicine Association will be joining us to share his expertise with the NCC and other RCs.
- In early November, we will be headed back to DC for the NCC Project Director/Manager meeting. We are pleased to be joined by longtime Trish Thomas, who will be presenting with us on past efforts and future strategies to reach American Indian groups in our region.

**Warm wishes for a festive and safe**

## Halloween!

Last month we were delighted to receive a photo of Joyce's neighbor in Nova Scotia, Dawn, a darling young filly. To keep with our theme we'll end this message with Hoot the owl. While hard to compete with Dawn he certainly does add some Fall festivity to a workspace! Please have a wonderful Halloween and we hope to hear your thoughts on the FOA as we prepare for our writing activities.



Warm regards,

Handwritten signature of Kathryn Hassell, M.D.

Kathryn Hassell, M.D.  
Project Director

Handwritten signature of Janet Thomas, M.D.

Janet Thomas, M.D.  
Associate Project Director

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