

Guest Editorial

New Department: Highlighting Skin of Color

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It is our pleasure to present the first article in a new recurring series in *Cutis*[®] entitled, *Highlighting Skin of Color*. The need for this series arose from an analysis of the changing demographics of the US population. As the total number of individuals with skin of color in the United States approaches 85 million, the dermatology community is increasingly confronted with either cutaneous diseases that occur more frequently in these individuals or present differently.

Over the past several years, several centers have been created to fill the void by providing expertise and knowledge in the emerging area within dermatology, "skin of color." The Skin of Color Center of St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center was established in 1998 under our leadership to further the science of skin of color by addressing the needs of these individuals from a clinical and research perspective. The Institute for Black Skin Research, directed by Rebat Halder, MD, was established later in 1998 at Howard University, and the L'Oreal Institute for Ethnic Hair and Skin Research, directed by Victoria Holloway, MD, was created in 2000. There have been many pioneers in dermatology who have almost single-handedly furthered the science of skin of color over the past decade, most notably William Kenney, MD, at Howard University. Other institutions that have educated the dermatology community for many years concerning skin of color include The Institute for Pigmentation and Vitiligo, directed by Peal Grimes, MD, and the Department of Dermatology at King/Drew Medical Center, under the leadership of A. Paul Kelly, MD. The mission of these centers is the diagnosis, treatment, and research of cutaneous disease in individuals with skin of color. In addition, these centers strive to educate the dermatology community about these diseases and related issues.

Cutis is taking one additional step in educating the dermatology community about issues related to skin of color: our new series, *Highlighting Skin of Color*, is designed to significantly increase the

dermatologic literature on this issue. The section will assist clinicians in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with skin of color; present basic scientific research that will expand the knowledge of the structure, function, and biology of skin of color; and inspire further research. This section of *Cutis* will describe the science of skin of color as it pertains to the following individuals: Mexican/Mexican American/Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or those from other Spanish cultures; African, Caribbean Black, and African Americans; individuals from the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent (Asian Indian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, Burmese, Hmong, Pakistani, Thai), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders (Samoan and Guamanian); and Native Americans.

The first article in this series is devoted to a thorough discussion of the challenges and associated limitations of defining the term *skin of color* and a review of population demographics. We are committed to the important task of furthering the understanding of the science of skin of color.

Call for Articles

We invite you to submit articles related to all aspects of skin of color including but not limited to: basic scientific research, clinical and epidemiological research, diagnostic and therapeutic advances, surgical pearls, cultural habits or practices, and clinical case reports. Guidelines for authors will follow the standard format as required for all *Cutis* publications as outlined in the "Information for Authors" printed in each *Cutis* issue and available on our Web site at www.cutis.com. We look forward to an informative and enlightening exchange of information during the coming years. We trust that this recurring series will serve to further the understanding of skin of color for all practitioners.