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## **Oklahoma City Infant Mortality Summit Is March 5th**

The Oklahoma City-County Health Department Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Program will conduct the OKC Infant Mortality Summit: An African American Perspective on Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at the Northeast Regional Health and Wellness Center, 2600 NE 63<sup>rd</sup> in Oklahoma City.

The Summit, funded by a grant from the Oklahoma Chapter of the March of Dimes, features keynote speaker Dr. James Collins, a professor of pediatrics at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. He is the medical director of the neonatal intensive care unit and the associate director of the pediatric residency program at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.

Dr. Collins was featured in the episode "When the Bough Breaks" in the PBS series on "Unnatural Causes: Is Inequity Making Us Sick?" He has been the principal investigator on several grants examining racial and ethnic group disparities in perinatal outcome. He will discuss the social determinants of racial and ethnic group disparities in birth outcomes in his presentation entitled "Zip Code vs Genetic Code."

Over the past several years the infant mortality rate in Oklahoma has seen a trend downward. However, African American infant mortality rates have remained consistently two times high than Caucasian rates.

"We need to not only reduce our overall infant mortality rates, but make sure that we are also eliminating the disparities that exist for our minority populations," said FIMR Supervisor Kelli McNeal.

The goal of the Summit will be to launch a taskforce that will work to reduce the African American infant mortality rate in our community.

For more information contact Kelli McNeal, FIMR Supervisor, 405-425-4406

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