

May 7, 2026

## Announcing the Next Editor-in-Chief of Birth Defects Research Journal

I am pleased to report that the next Editor-in-Chief of our Society's journal, *Birth Defects Research*, will be Russell S. Kirby, PhD, MS, FACE. Russ will join our current Editor-in-Chief, John M. Rogers, PhD, as co-lead of the journal from June 1 through the end of this year, when John's term concludes. This overlap will ensure a smooth leadership transition.

Russ has been a member of BDRP since 1994 and has served on numerous committees, including the Communications Coordination Committee, Nominations and Elections Committee, Public Affairs Committee, Membership & Engagement Committee, Publications Committee, and three Program Committees. He chaired the Publications Committee from 2020–2023, and during that period, also served as an ex officio, nonvoting member of Council.

Russ is currently Distinguished University Professor and Marrell Endowed Chair in the Department of Community Health Sciences, College of Public Health, at the University of South Florida. Over his career, he has worked as an analyst, statistician, and epidemiologist in the state health agencies of Wisconsin and Arkansas; as a faculty member at Arkansas Children's Hospital, the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, and the University of Wisconsin Medical School; and, since 2002, as a professor of maternal and child health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and now at USF. He brings more than 40 years of experience in birth defects surveillance, epidemiology, and prevention, including leadership of statewide programs in Arkansas and Florida, as well as consulting experience supporting the establishment and expansion of programs in numerous other states. His research spans much of perinatal and pediatric epidemiology and maternal and child health, and he brings a strong international professional network across the U.S., Canada, Europe, and beyond.

Russ also has an extensive editorial background, including serving on other journal editorial boards in roles such as Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editor. Russ has been involved for many years as an editor of the annual special issue of BDR featuring research from the National Birth Defects Prevention Network. Russ has authored or coauthored nearly 450 peer-reviewed papers, 54 of which were published in *Birth Defects Research* or its predecessor journals.

We are very grateful that Russ has agreed to take on this important role at the helm of BDR, and we are confident he will lead the journal with distinction.

I would also like to thank John Rogers for his exemplary service as BDR Editor-in-Chief of since 2022. I look forward to recognizing John for his contributions at the Annual Business Meeting this June.

Finally, thank you to the Editor-in-Chief Search Committee, led by Sonja A. Rasmussen, MD, MS, on which I was pleased to serve. The committee included Christopher J. Bowman, PhD, DABT; Carolyn Kapron, PhD; Wendy Nembhard, PhD, MPH; and Michiko Watanabe, PhD, as well as Paul Trevorrow of Wiley Publishing.

Sincerely,

Prägati S. Coder  
BDRP President