

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

UCR Today

Psychologist Receives High Honor From NAACP

UC Riverside's Carolyn Murray is the recipient of the 2018 Dr. William Montague Cobb award for special achievements in public health at the local level

By [Iqbal Pittalwala](#) On JULY 12, 2018



Carolyn Murray is a professor of psychology at UC Riverside.

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RIVERSIDE, Calif. – [Carolyn B. Murray](#), a professor of [psychology](#) at the University of California, Riverside, has been awarded the 2018 Dr. William Montague Cobb award for special achievements in public health at the local level, presented annually by the National Health Committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or [NAACP](#).

The award is given to an outstanding individual in a local community “in recognition of special achievement in areas of social justice, health justice advocacy, health education, health promotion, fundraising, and research.”

Murray received the honor for her many years of research and activism addressing health disparities in the African American community. She will receive the award on July 16 at the [Annual NAACP Convention](#) in San Antonio, Texas.

“The College is thrilled to learn that our colleague Dr. Carolyn Murray has been honored with receiving this award,” said Milagros Peña, dean of the UCR College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

“The NAACP has led the nation as an organization and a voice to removing barriers, particularly for people of color, and, in doing so, holding our nation to its stated purpose of ensuring political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens. To have Dr. Murray’s scholarship and career be recognized by the NAACP is one of the highest recognitions one can receive in one’s career, and speaks so truly to Dr. Murray’s achievements.”

Murray joined UCR in 1980. Broadly, her research covers ethnicity, race, and health. She has published extensively on doctor-patient interactions, how culture is a factor in health, how racism and mental health are linked, the psychology of health disparities among African Americans, gender disparities in physician-patient communication among African American patients in primary care, and how mental health disparities in the African American population in California can be addressed and eliminated.

Murray’s research interests include the dynamics of the African American family. Specifically, she conducts developmental research on the socialization practices used by African American families. She also studies the processes by which African American children are prepared to participate successfully in society at large.

She is the founder and executive director of the [University STEM Academy](#), a program housed in the UCR psychology building, that teaches children to be health ambassadors. Aimed mostly at African American students in grades six through nine, the academy, which is home also to a mini medical school, creates a healthy and active learning environment to increase participants’ academic skills and performance, and develop their leadership skills.

Murray has published research papers in several leading peer-reviewed journals and authored numerous book chapters in a variety of scholarly texts. Currently, she is writing a lay book for African American parents on how to advocate on behalf of their children within the educational system.

She has won numerous awards and honors, including the Distinguished Teaching Award from UCR, the Riverside Countywide YWCA “Woman of Achievement Award in Education,” the UCR Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research, and the Association of Black Psychologists Distinguished Psychologist Award. She is the recipient also of the NAACP Riverside Branch’s Roy Wilkins Award, UCR’s Outstanding Black Faculty of the Year, and the UCR Graduate Division’s Award for Commitment to Graduate Diversity.

“I am deeply honored to receive this award from the NAACP,” Murray said. “It gives me a solid platform to bring the public’s attention to the dire state of health in the African American community and beyond. I would like to thank the [local NAACP branch](#) for its ardent support in helping address this issue. Life expectancy has decreased two years in a row for Americans, a grave concern that is largely unreported. This award will serve as a reminder that my crusade against health disparities, particularly in the African American community, must continue. Our work is far from done.”

William Montague Cobb, for whom the award is named, was a pioneering 20th-century physical anthropologist. Born in 1904, he was the first African American to earn a doctorate in anthropology. He also earned a doctor of medicine degree from Howard University Medical School. He was a scholar on the concept of race and its negative impact on communities of color. He served as president of the NAACP from 1976 to 1982. He died in 1990.

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