I am pleased to announce my selection of Leandris Liburd, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.A., as director of the Office of Minority Health and Health Equity (OMHHE), effective January 31, 2011.

I thank Tami Kicera for serving as acting director of OMHHE since October 2010. During that time she helped assure connections across the agency and with partners and colleagues in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). She will return to her duties as deputy director of OMHHE.

Leandris is a respected leader with many years of experience addressing community health, health disparities, and social determinants of health. She has held a variety of leadership positions at CDC since joining the agency in 1987. Most recently, Leandris served as the chief of the Community Health and Equity Branch in the Division of Adult and Community Health in the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, where she directed a broad range of public health programs, including REACH U.S., one of CDC’s flagship health disparities reduction initiatives. In her new capacity, she will provide agency leadership, direction, and accountability for CDC’s policies and programs to ensure they are optimally effective in improving minority health and achieving health equity. Leandris will serve as the agency lead in coordinating CDC engagement with HHS, other federal agencies, national organizations, and the public on issues of health equity.

Please join me in thanking Tami and welcoming Leandris to this important position.

Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, CDC, and
Administrator, ATSDR