Moments to Movement: Dismantling Racism in the School of Medicine

Executive Summary

As communicated in the SOM’s Turning a Moment into a Movement: Dismantling Racism in the Duke University School of Medicine and Beyond virtual event on June 16th, the Duke University School of Medicine is committed to developing a strategic plan to dismantle racism in our local environment and the broader community and to advance knowledge related to the health impacts—and mitigation strategies—of racial inequity. Subsequently, SOM launched four constituent-based steering committees to identify key issues and opportunities related to dismantling racism and to engage the constituencies in formulating recommendations to advance our objectives. The four committees include:

- Health Professions Students Steering Committee
- Graduate Students and Postdoc Steering Committee
- Faculty Steering Committee
- Staff Steering Committee

In addition to the constituent committees, we are engaging with leaders from our major research entities, including CTSI and DCRI, to build a robust research agenda.

As we anticipate commonalities across groups as well as a need to prioritize recommendations, an Oversight Committee of approximately twenty SOM representatives has also been formed to help integrate the committee findings, prioritize recommendations, and address any gaps. The committees are diving deeply into structures, formal and informal processes, and culture that may contribute to racial inequities in order to make tangible recommendations on changes that will advance us towards our goal of dismantling racism at DUSOM. This will take time.
Through our planning efforts and the actions that follow, we will

- Significantly enhance racial diversity, equity, and sense of belonging across all constituents in the SOM
- Train a current and future healthcare and biomedical research workforce that is intentionally anti-racist within a broader context of social justice
- Foster educational and career development and satisfaction of all students, faculty, and staff
- Advance knowledge related to the impact of racism and racial inequities on health and biomedical sciences through our teaching, research, and clinical missions—and utilize our expertise to develop and deploy solutions for our local, regional, and national communities
- Establish DUSOM as an educational and research leader and agent of change towards an anti-racist culture
- In collaboration with the University, develop innovative partnerships with our community colleagues to advance careers in science and technology