February Resource Highlight

Monthly Mentor Meditation on…Black History Month

In the spirit of Black History month, our February highlight starts with the Museum of Black Joy [archive](https://www.museumofblackjoy.com/). Check out the archive and read Andrea Wall’s [bio](https://www.museumofblackjoy.com/the-artist) for a list of organizations that uplift the work of a growing list of artists and activists.

To support Black medical students and professionals, here are some recent studies to look into. A new [study](https://www.mededportal.org/doi/10.15766/mep_2374-8265.11200?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=&utm_campaign=&utm_content=) conducted a needs assessment, which concluded that the concept of “allyship” is not fully understood, and therefore not practiced on a regular basis in medical education and medical institutions. Although the study focuses on filling this gap specifically in residency, it is important for any medical practitioner at any point in one’s career. Medical students and professionals advocate for the health and wellbeing of everyone; a critical aspect of this position is supporting all marginalized communities, which requires in-depth knowledge of the data for each group. It is clear from the data that the outcomes for Black patients and Black medical students and professionals are quantitatively and qualitatively limiting. The goal of the study was, “to see an increase in the awareness and understanding of allyship principles, practical allyship competencies, and comfort in applying these skills in a clinical setting among participants.” The discussion clearly defines allyship in a practical sense, and shows the impact of intentional support in medical education communities.

This [study](https://www.mededportal.org/doi/10.15766/mep_2374-8265.11202?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=&utm_campaign=&utm_content=) created an educational acronym VITALS (Validate your feelings and experiences, Inquire to obtain clarification, Take time to mirror and reflect what the person says/emotes, Assume the best of each other and assume the need for clarity, Leave opportunities for follow up conversations, Speak up for others affected by negative biases/discrimination) for how to interrupt microaggressions as they come up. The workshop defines various types of microaggressions, which range from intentional, overt forms of discrimination to subtle, damaging invalidations through words and behavior. It also provides the acronym for communities to become more intentional about how to support people in those moments, while learning what we can to do help prevent them from happening.

Check out the resource guide linked on the ODEI Mentorship Program [website](https://www.med.uvm.edu/diversityinclusion/initatives/lcom_mentor_program), where you can find articles and podcast episodes centered on academic medicine.