

From: LCOM Office of the Dean

Sent: Friday, June 18, 2021 11:57 AM

Subject: On Behalf of Dean Page and Dean Tandoh – Juneteenth

Dear Larner Community,

Tomorrow we commemorate Juneteenth, the day in 1865 when, two-and-a-half years after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, those who were enslaved in the state of Texas finally were informed of their emancipation. Juneteenth has been called our country's "second Independence Day." As of yesterday, this is a national holiday as well. A year has passed since we last acknowledged this day, and we wish to reaffirm our commitment to social justice, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Over the last year, we have seen our country continue to reckon with issues of systemic racism and social justice. Among the Black, Indigenous and people of color who have been subjected to racism and discrimination, this last year individuals of Asian descent have been targeted in a way unseen since the Second World War. As was highlighted a year ago, the issues of social justice, equity, diversity and inclusion are longstanding, and our outrage must translate to constructive actions that will ensure change in our community and throughout the nation. In our efforts to address these issues, we are providing an update on some of the efforts here at the Larner College of Medicine:

We continue to meet regularly with, and have increased funding for, our **student groups focused on equity in medicine** including the LCOM Social Justice Coalition (now a recognized medical student leadership group) as well as our affinity groups (Student National Medical Association, Latino Medical Student Association, Gender and Sexuality Alliance, American Medical Women's Association, and the Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association) to address issues that impact the learning environment and our community.

The **Dean's Advisory Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DACDEI)** is currently in the process of evaluating outcomes for initiatives implemented over the past three years, as outlined in our strategic diversity plan.

We have put into effect a **new annual pipeline scholarship program** to support two students unrepresented in medicine at full tuition for the Masters in Medical Science degree in preparation for matriculation into our medical education program. This represents a substantial investment in the pipeline for underrepresented groups in medicine and science, to complement ongoing and anticipated efforts to reach students of all ages.

We have charged an **Anti-Racism Task Force** to acknowledge the history and culture of racism within the institution of medicine and its impact on learners, healthcare providers and patients. The task force will conduct a longitudinal exploration of our

curriculum in partnership with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Office of Medical Student Education to dismantle the impact of racism on medical education and prepare our future physicians to address healthcare inequities. We also are examining ways to apply a similar lens to our graduate curricula.

In support of the success and well-being of our students, faculty and staff, we have created a **Mental Health Task Force** with a focus on wellness, resiliency, mental health, depression and suicide prevention. The task force will identify gaps and recommend measures to optimize the Larner College of Medicine's effectiveness and provide equitable access for all individuals regardless of geographic location or personal circumstances.

In closing, as we approach this important day, we ask for your continued support and engagement as we work to better address the shameful inequity, injustice and racism that confront the lives of Black, Indigenous and people of color in America. We still have so much more to do. We also ask that you help us promote an environment that makes everyone in our community—students, staff and faculty—feel valued, supported and safe. Our professionalism statement emphasizes cultural humility, kindness and respect characterizing our daily interactions. We will continue to work with you as we embrace this aspiration and strive to live it every day.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Page, M.D.
Dean

Margaret Tandoh, M.D.
Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion