



TO: University of Massachusetts Medical School Community
FROM: Michael F. Collins, MD, Chancellor and Senior Vice President for Health Sciences
Terence R. Flotte, MD, Executive Deputy Chancellor, Provost and Dean, School of Medicine
DATE: Feb. 2, 2021
SUBJECT: Current and future investments in diversity & equity

As we have discussed with the campus community over the past year, our personal, professional and institutional commitment to a more just, equitable and unified path forward for our campus is sincere and profound. At UMMS, we embrace and celebrate the full richness of people, perspectives and experiences. We aspire to create an academic community where all are—and feel—welcome and able to thrive.

Together with you, we have made much progress; our strategic plan, IMPACT 2025, is imbued with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. If you visit our [Diversity in Action](#) website, you will see an overview of some of the recent health equity initiatives underway at UMMS. Our collective work is far from finished. We aspire to create a safe space for honest dialogue and common ground, and are committed to policies, training and incentives to increase the representation of people of color in positions of leadership.

Today, we were pleased to announce new investments that will be made across our entire enterprise to advance our public mission and to make progress toward our goals; these investments support ideas that were brought forth by students, staff, faculty members and deans. As you read about some of our investments highlighted below, know that these investments will help us achieve the goals outlined in our strategic plan, including:

- Increasing the number of underrepresented faculty, students and staff;
- Strengthening the education and preprofessional development of diverse learners; and
- Nurturing a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment.

Faculty Representation

To recruit more underrepresented faculty, we have secured a multiyear contract with Koya Partners to develop of a pool of diverse, talented faculty who may be open to recruitment when opportunities arise. Koya Partners will help us deepen our relationships with historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions.

We will also add a third Diversity KL2 Scholar and be more intentional in supporting networking, professional development, and visiting professor or speaking opportunities for diverse faculty.

As announced earlier this year, we have promoted Milagros Rosal, PhD, to serve the Medical School's first vice provost for health equity. Given her decades of experience in health equity and community-focused research, Dr. Rosal is an ideal leader to help us coordinate and advance our work, especially when it comes to recruiting more diverse faculty. On this front, Dr. Rosal will work closely with our new vice provost for faculty affairs; recruitment for this position is underway now.

Student and Learner Representation

To recruit more students who are underrepresented in medicine, science and nursing, some of the critical steps we will take include:

- Increasing the size and number of Chancellor's Scholarships, providing full-tuition scholarships to underrepresented in-state and out-of-state students accepted to the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Nursing;
- Launching Chancellor's postdoctoral positions in biomedical research and nursing to recruit diverse postdocs interested in pursuing academic careers; and
- Strengthening our pipeline programs. Because we know how important it is to nurture young learners' interest in health sciences, our proven Baccalaureate MD program will be expanded to 25 participants and the Summer Enrichment Program will also be expanded to 15 students.

Addressing Bias and Racism in Curriculum

We have heard our learners' calls to update the curriculum for current and future classes. Our commitment to the DRIVE initiative—which stands for Diversity, Representation, and Inclusion for Value in Education—is unchanged. This means our teaching will continue to concretely address bias and racism in the health sciences and we will continue to do all we can to eliminate bias and racism in the learning environment.

Staff Representation

Our colleagues in Human Resources have expanded outreach to local communities and, specifically, to reach more veterans, people with disabilities and underrepresented populations. In collaboration with our managers and our Human Resources team, we have set a goal to increase hiring and internal mobility of diverse staff by 5 percent or more each year. In 2015, a quarter of all staff hires at the medical school were diverse. By 2020, this figure was 34 percent, an increase of nearly 40 percent over five years.

We want to thank our colleagues and academic and student leaders across the Medical School community who have come together in constructive ways to identify where and how we can improve. This is the hallmark of an institution on the right path and committed to fulfilling its social mission.