



**BROWN**  
Alpert Medical School

OFFICE OF THE CHAIR  
Department of Psychiatry and Human  
Behavior

Dear DPHB Community,

Recent events, including the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color and the horrifying racial violence towards Black people remind us of the persistent, longstanding, and painful injustices in our country. We acknowledge the stress and pain our Black colleagues are feeling. We say emphatically that Black lives matter.

We see this moment as an important tipping point at which we, as a Department comprised of mental health professionals, must challenge ourselves and our systems to change. Below, we provide some strategies we plan to promote as we commit to enacting change.

We will challenge ourselves to move from our current Departmental efforts of promoting cultural competence and reducing implicit bias to an agenda of advocacy, activism, and doing the work to be anti-racist.

We acknowledge that as individuals, health care providers, and members of this community we must confront our own racism and privilege, and critically evaluate the institutional structures of our workplace and academic department, even when it makes us uncomfortable. This work must be done by the white members of this community as we cannot put the burden on our colleagues and trainees of color to continuously challenge injustices when they occur by the systemic policies, overt acts of discrimination and harassment, or more subtle forms of racism such as microaggressions. We encourage all of you to create open spaces in faculty and staff meetings, research team conferences, and ongoing meetings with our trainees to continue this conversation over time to enact real change.

We will also strive to incorporate a social-justice lens in our educational offerings for trainees and for faculty. We will hold faculty accountable for addressing not only diversity but structural racism as they teach and supervise our trainees to provide care for the vulnerable patients they serve.

We have long recognized that racial and ethnic diversity is a weakness of our department, and that our ongoing efforts have not helped us in achieving our goals of more diverse training cohorts or more diverse faculty. The progress we have made is not enough. We will deepen our ongoing commitment to recruiting trainees of color to apply to, interview at, and match to our programs, and to enhance the diversity of our faculty. This will involve using our existing strategies and developing new ones, such as enhancing our outreach and support of applicants of color, as well as redoubling our efforts to retain trainees and faculty of color.

We will continue and enhance our support of ongoing initiatives relating to diversity in the DPHB, including the efforts of the Diversity Committee, the Diversity Mentoring Program, and the Diversity Faculty Research Award. We will seek other opportunities to provide support to trainees and faculty of color beyond these existing structures, without relying on those faculty to be the ones providing the support and education.

We expect our learning environments to be safe, respectful spaces for all staff, faculty and trainees. We call on our hospital systems to commit to ongoing evaluation and reporting of discriminatory events that occur. It is only through looking at these data that we will be able to make meaningful change.

We will commit to amplifying Black voices, including those of Black psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and other mental health workers. We provide some resources below, collected from many trainees and faculty, to help us in this journey. We encourage all of our white colleagues to read, reflect, learn and continue on the journey of being anti-racist.

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Peggy McIntosh: <https://www.raciaequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf>

A discussion on moving from cultural competence to anti-racism by Dr. Thelma Bryant-Davis: <https://www.nicabm.com/moving-from-cultural-competence-to-antiracism/>

Forging Diversity-Science-Informed Guidelines for Research on Race and Racism in Psychological Science (Miller, Stern, & Neville, 2019): <https://spssi.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/josi.12356>

A document of Anti-Racist Resources for White People and Parents: [Anti-Racist Resources for White People](#)

A syllabus on Institutional Racism: <https://daily.jstor.org/institutionalized-racism-a-syllabus/>

<http://bit.ly/ANTIRACISMRESOURCES>

Sincerely,

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