

Yale School of Medicine's Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice

Yale School of Medicine (YSM) strives to create a diverse and inclusive community of students, faculty, and staff, where social justice issues are inherent to our curriculum and broader culture. Through outreach, education, and advocacy, the school is working to promote the creation of a diverse interdisciplinary healthcare workforce who reflect and serve the diversity of the community. While there is more work to be done, we are committed to continuing our efforts on this critical front. YSM students have been tremendous advocates for diversity, inclusion, and social justice issues at YSM and beyond, and we are grateful for their leadership.

We also appreciate White Coats for Black Lives' (WC4BL) advocacy for diversity, inclusion, and social justice. In response to WC4BL's communication to YSM, we believe the most effective way to highlight our commitment to these critical issues is to provide some examples of the important steps we have taken to date.

1. Appointment of the Inaugural Deputy Dean for Diversity and Inclusion at YSM

Darin Latimore, M.D. began this new role in January 2017. Working closely with YSM senior leadership, he is responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive plan for furthering diversity, equity, and inclusion at the school, including a robust recruitment, development, and retention program for faculty, students, and staff.

2. Establishment of the New [Office of Diversity, Inclusion, Community Engagement, and Equity \(DICE\)](#)

DICE is working on important initiatives across multiple fronts, including:

- Health and science pipeline programs

For example, the Yale Summer Enrichment Medical Academy, launched last year to serve local community college students interested in advancing the goals of diversity in the health professions, working toward reducing health care disparities, and improving health care for all. Students participate in an intensive science curriculum designed to improve success in upper-division science courses that are required for

pre-med students. There is a focus on learning how to become a successful medical school applicant and how to navigate the application process. There is no fee to attend and students receive a \$500 stipend, as well as help with transportation costs. Nineteen students attended the inaugural program and up to twenty-five are expected to participate this year.

- Inclusion

DICE supports, celebrates, and encourages informative discourse about the differences among our YSM community members. Student feedback is actively sought and responded to. Efforts to create a more inclusive environment are wide ranging, including:

- A monthly social for underrepresented medical and PhD BBS students.
- A mentorship program for underrepresented students and trainees.
- Maintaining relationships with house staff and faculty organizations that work towards inclusion.
- Working with the YSM administration to highlight accomplishments of graduating underrepresented minority students; for example, the Peter Grannum Prize is awarded annually to an outstanding African-American graduate.

- Equity

DICE works to support student advocacy for social justice within and beyond the campus community, by partnering with Yale and local organizations to provide informative and actionable dialogue on key issues of social justice.

3. Creation of [Committee for Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice](#)

Chaired by the YSM Dean, the YSM Committee for Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (CDISJ) is comprised of students, faculty, and members of the administration. CDISJ was established at the start of 2016, in direct response to the advocacy of the student group *Next YSM*. The mission of CDISJ, which meets monthly, is to:

- Establish sustainable reforms that increase diversity among trainees and faculty;
- Foster an inclusive environment that fully values all members of the YSM;
- Enhance training on issues of health inequity; and
- Advance social justice within YSM and in our broader community.

To meet these goals, the committee is developing concrete actions around:

- Education and research
- Student admissions and faculty recruitment
- Student support and wellbeing
- Anti-oppression training, bias reporting, and transparency
- Physical environment

4. Establishment of a Health Equity Thread in the Recently-revised YSM Curriculum

The YSM Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee (EPCC) commissioned and funded a faculty and student led sub-committee in 2016 to study specific gaps in our recently-revised curriculum in the area of diversity, inclusion and social justice. The sub-committee completed their work and submitted their report to the EPCC in March 2018. The sub-committee’s recommendations include the development of a robust Health Equity Curriculum at YSM. This will be accomplished by creating a Health Equity Leadership group that will develop the curriculum thread and work with the Course and Clerkship Directors to implement and advise on curriculum content.

Some of the other recommendations of the subcommittee currently under consideration include the establishment of an Experiential Learning Program in the curriculum that involves projects based on community identified needs and priorities in New Haven and the creation of a Certificate in Health Justice for those advanced learners who are seriously considering careers anchored in health justice work.

5. “Introduction to the Profession” Course for First-Year Students

This is a required course that includes a significant focus on equity and social justice topics. For example, there are sessions on Health and Human Rights: Advocacy in Practice as well as Just Medicine: Facing Inequality in Training and Practice.

6. Social Justice and Health Equity Electives

- Establishment of the [“US Health Justice” Course](#)

This interprofessional elective for physician associate, medical, public health, and nursing students was created in 2014, as a result of the initiative of students. The goals of the course are:

- To educate health professional students about social determinants of health and the obstacles to favorable health outcomes encountered by marginalized populations; and
- To empower students by building the necessary skill sets to facilitate health justice movements and act as effective patient advocates.

Topics include implicit bias, social determinants of health, radical compassion, community partnerships, homelessness, mental health, substance abuse, intimate partner violence, women's health, incarceration, primary care, trauma, and LGBTQ issues in healthcare.

- Funded international clinical electives for all students interested in [global health](#).

YSM believes global health is founded on the principles of social justice. On these rotations medical students care for underserved patients while learning about the challenges health systems face in attaining health equity for all; the social, economic and political determinants of health; advocacy for individual patients and communities; and commitment to cultural humility and cross-cultural communication.

- Social justice domestic clinical rotations

In addition to the Global Health clinical electives in international settings, the school has a group of clinical electives in domestic settings that expose students to different models of providing health care to underserved populations, including Native American reservations and Appalachia.

7. Initiatives to Prevent, Identify, and Respond to Bias and Discrimination

- **Implicit Bias Training**

Implicit Bias Training has been initiated in numerous departments and programs at YSM, and is also being provided for residents and medical students.

- **Creation of Committee to Study Bias in Clinical Grading and Narrative Evaluation**

- **Training Program**

YSM faculty developed a training program, which educates trainees about encounters with patients who use harassing language based on ethnicity, gender, gender identify or expression, race, or sexual orientation.

- **Course / Clerkship Evaluations**

Every student evaluation for a course, clerkship, and elective includes questions about experiences and witnessing of behaviors including discrimination. All reports require follow-up by the curricular leaders and the appropriate departmental chairs

to ensure that the incidents are investigated and appropriate steps taken. These reports are then reviewed by the school's Education Policy and Curriculum Committee and shared with departmental and curricular leaders.

8. Raising Awareness of Social Justice and Racism

- [Medical Education Day Keynote in 2017](#)

Dr. Camara Jones, whose research focuses on the impacts of racism on the health and well-being of the U.S., was the "Med Ed Day" keynote speaker last year. Med Ed Day draws a large audience and is devoted to recognizing the critical role of medical education at the school.

- **2018 YSM Commencement Speaker**

Fitzhugh Mullan, author of [White Coat, Clenched Fist: The Political Education of an American Physician](#), is this year's speaker. This choice reflects the ethos of the school to focus on critical issues of social justice in medicine.