



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement on Racism, Social Injustice, Discrimination, and Violence Against African American and Black Communities from the Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA)

Washington, DC, June 9, 2020 – As a diverse and inclusive organization with a history of distinguished African American and Black Board of Directors members, staff, volunteer leadership, and prize recipients, we stand together against racism, social injustice, discrimination, and violence.

We are all outraged at the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor at the hands of local police and of Ahmaud Arbery by vigilantes. These horrific killings are only the most recent and visible in our country's 400-year history of human rights violations against Black communities. AUPHA abhors our country's history of slavery; structural, systemic, and institutional racism; prejudice and discrimination; and, violence against Black individuals and communities. What we are witnessing is the work of a conscious and unconscious system designed to deny dignity and safety to some of us. We know we have profound work to do to foster and sustain an inclusive environment, dedicated to addressing fully racism, social injustice, and discrimination. And, we know we must do this work together.

As the global leader in health management and policy education, what has AUPHA done in the past, what are we doing currently, and what will we do in the future?

Our Past:

Diversity has long been one of AUPHA's core values. In 2013, AUPHA commissioned a report (funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation), "Studying Issues Limiting Underrepresented Minorities in Teaching and Tenure in Healthcare Management," by three of our esteemed colleagues. Our Cultural Perspectives Forum is one of 16 Faculty Forums, and is focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our Diversity With Inclusion Committee is one of only four select committees of the AUPHA Board. Among a richly diverse team of seven, two of our AUPHA staff members are Black, and in our recent past as many as half of our staff members have been from communities of color.

Our present:

For 2020, the recipients of all three of AUPHA’s most prestigious awards, the William B. Graham Prize for Health Services Research, the Gary L. Filerman Prize for Educational Leadership, and the John D. Thompson Prize for Young Investigators, are people of color, and one recipient is African American. Just as we pivoted to address the COVID-19 pandemic for our 2020 Annual Meeting, we are now responding to focus on the most recent incidents of social injustice toward the Black community. We have added a plenary presentation, “Health Equity: Moving Beyond the Legacy of Racism and Discrimination,” to be delivered by Dr. Vetta Sanders Thompson, E. Desmond Lee Professor of Racial and Ethnic Studies, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University, St Louis. The plenary will be followed by a panel discussion of AUPHA member colleagues representing undergraduate and graduate programs; the focus will be on what academic programs need to do for the coming year and how AUPHA can better serve our programs and faculty with regard to social justice and equity.

The Future: Following our April election, the number of Black AUPHA colleagues serving on our Board of Directors has increased from one to three members. This fall, AUPHA will add to its statements of mission, vision, and values a “philosophy statement” that has diversity at its core. AUPHA is strengthening its partnerships and collaborative initiatives with the National Association of Health Services Executives (NAHSE). As a member of the Federation of Schools of the Health Professions (FASHP), AUPHA will work across the health professions to address the effects of social injustice and inequities on the health system, health, and our society.

At AUPHA, we are committed to our efforts to eliminate the scourge of racism, social injustice, and discrimination that plagues our country and our world. AUPHA’s contributions will be to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for all communities of color in our governance, management, and membership; to work with our program members to enrich the pool of candidates for faculty positions and student admissions; and, to ensure that undergraduate and graduate students in health management and policy are competent in the areas of social and racial justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Leigh W. Cellucci, PhD, MBA
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AUPHA is a global network of colleges, universities, faculty, individuals, and organizations dedicated to the improvement of healthcare delivery through excellence in healthcare management and policy education. Its mission is to foster excellence and innovation in health management and policy education, and scholarship. It is the only non-profit entity of its kind that works to improve the delivery of health services – and thus the health of citizens – throughout the world by educating professional managers at the entry level. AUPHA’s membership includes the premier baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral programs in health administration education in the United States, Canada, and around the world. For more information, please visit www.aupha.org