



March 4, 2022

Happy Friday, Mount Sinai Community –

This week, we transition from Black History Month (February) to Women’s History Month (March). In observation of this changeover, we’re looking at how the Road Map’s anti-racist work lines up with and complements ongoing gender equity efforts at Mount Sinai—including for Black women and women from other under-represented minority (URM) groups.

Before we dive into the work, however, it’s important that we explain intersectionality: the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple

forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups. In the context of Black History Month and Women's History Month, this means acknowledging and openly working to address the unique ways racism and sexism can combine to impact women of color.

A [new study](#) published in the journal [Health Affairs](#) provides a telling example. The analysis found that Black women are overrepresented in health care jobs more than any other demographic group. At the same time, however, they are concentrated in lower-paying and higher-risk jobs—disparities that are likely at least in part products of structural racism and sexism.

Similarly, Asian American women face additional barriers to success based on the intersectionality of their identities. A [study](#) published in the *Harvard Business Review*, for example, found that while Asian Americans are the most likely group to be hired into high-tech jobs, they are the least likely racial group to be promoted into management and executive levels, a disparity that is only [exacerbated](#) for Asian American women.

The intersection of identities and the cumulative effect of multiple forms of discrimination are not unique to these groups—they impact all women of color, including Latina women, women of Middle Eastern descent, and others—but these are telling examples of the overlapping biases we must fight for all of our colleagues.

Here are some of the ways Mount Sinai is honoring Black History Month and Women's History Month and fighting the intersectionality of discrimination:

Black Women Leaders Connect

[Black Women Leaders Connect](#) is a Mount Sinai Health System Employee Resource Group (ERG), created by **Pamela Abner, Vice President and Chief Diversity Operations Officer**, and **Lyndia Hayden, Office for Diversity and Inclusion Director of Disparities and Data Analytics**, to forge relationships and connect with, support, mentor, and guide Black women colleagues.



Lyndia explained that members are actively engaged as mentors and sponsors within the Health System. “Prior to establishing Black Women Leaders Connect, Pam and I noted the common challenges Black women leaders experienced— both within and outside MSHS. We agreed that now more than ever, it is critical to support Black women

throughout their career journeys by expanding opportunities to recruit, promote, and elevate Black women in all sectors of the Health System. Our goal is to empower our Black female colleagues so they can realize their full potential, access their voice, and wield influence in Mount Sinai.”



Pam added, “Black Women Leaders Connect is a holistic process, breaking down hierarchies, and connecting Black women at senior leadership levels with colleagues at other levels of the organization and providing a platform that brings women together across the system to identify specific, actionable objectives and raise awareness around matters key to Black women both within Mount Sinai and our communities.”

The *Black Women Leaders Connect* Employee Resource Group

OUR AFFIRMATIONS

As members of the *Black Women Leaders Connect* ("Our Connection"), we commit to the following as we stand together in solidarity against racism:

- We WILL leverage our leadership roles to engage in and sustain necessary dialogue around diversity and solidarity across the Health System by facilitating focus groups and discussions, providing and suggesting resources that support causes that will impact and change laws, mentoring and coaching people of color, and supporting and partnering with the Office for Diversity and Inclusion.
- We WILL research, volunteer with, and donate to organizations that are committed to anti-racism causes, building safe and supportive communities for men and women of color, and increasing voter registration.
- We WILL sign up to participate in more research for Black and minority health, starting with the "All of Us" initiative to map our genomes for creation of targeted medicine.
- We WILL support, buy from and/or invest in Black-owned, Black woman-owned and minority-owned businesses, including banks, and share with others.
- We WILL sign and share petitions that bring attention to causes that fight injustice and unfair treatment of Black people.



We encourage all to stand with us as we strive to make a difference.

AS OF MAY 2021

Building Gender Equity Together Facilitated Dialogues Sessions

The [Office of Gender Equity in Science and Medicine](#) is hosting a series of dialogue sessions, inviting the Mount Sinai family to participate in conversations and develop powerful, community-led solutions to improve gender equity. The virtual 90-minute group conversations are facilitated by trained staff from the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and include "think tank"-style brainstorming sessions. Equity Action Teams of students, trainees, faculty, and staff then work closely with the Office of Gender Equity to turn solutions generated from the dialogues into action to advance gender equity.

Just Desserts, sponsored by the Icahn Mount Sinai Office for Women's Careers

Just Desserts is a monthly informal chat between staff, trainees, faculty, and outstanding women physicians and scientists. Each meeting is an opportunity for women to hear directly from other women as they share their accomplishments and career experiences, exemplifying how successful career paths are charted and sustained while celebrating colleagues' accomplishments.

Women's History Month Website Launch

This month, a Mount Sinai's Women History Month website will launch to

commemorate the trailblazing women who have made Mount Sinai history and to highlight allies who have worked to make our institution a more equitable place for everyone, regardless of gender, gender expression, or gender identity. The new webpage will include a digital archive exhibit and interactive timeline of gender equity at Mount Sinai. The site will officially launch later this month, and when it does, we will make sure to share the link.

When talking about intersectionality, it is also critical to reiterate our concern about the increase in violence against women across New York City. Integral to this conversation is acknowledging the increased, targeted violence against Asian American Pacific Islander women and the fact that black transgender women faced the highest rates of violent assault and murder recorded in the United States last year—on top of the high disparities in health and economic status our transgender and nonbinary Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities already face. At Mount Sinai, we are working through the Road Map and across the Health System to address these longstanding, nationwide inequities and provide spaces for BIPOC and AAPI women to be celebrated and empowered every single day.

March is also the month where we recognize and celebrate **National LGBT Health Awareness Week**, so look for Diversity Council and LGBT ERG sponsored tabling at each site lobby during the week of March 21-25.

We urge everyone to commit to learning more and joining upcoming events below and at [this link](#).

All the best,

Angela and Shawn

Join Us for an Upcoming Event

Chats for Change: With a Little Help from My Friends: The Role of Peer Influence in Anti-Racist System Change—Identifying anti-racist changes is one thing, but the journey to achieve them is another. Two questions that may help us in this process are continuously assessing if we are ready for change and how we create that change. Join Chats for Change on **Tuesday, March 8, from 12-1 pm** to dive into the power of peer influence and the role it plays in anti-racist change. This discussion will help us think about how institutional culture, individualism, and racism interact with this change process and impact your feelings about it. We will explore the conditions necessary for peer influence, who has access to this strategy, and the effect of hierarchical structures on feasibility and outcomes. We invite all members of the Mount Sinai community to join in this discussion as we consider what is, and is not, possible with a little help from our friends! [Join on Zoom](#).

Road Map for Action

Past Bulletins
