



## **Cardiology Diversity Statement**

In order to ensure diversity in our Cardiology Fellowship we seek to find fellows from diverse backgrounds and experiences by; 1) reviewing best interview practices with all our Faculty and House Staff involved in House Staff recruitment to ensure we optimize our practices to ensure a diverse complement; 2) educating our Faculty and House Staff involved in House Staff recruitment regarding our Program's philosophy on the importance of diversity in GME training to ensure optimization of the Program and patient care; 3) blinding our application review to gender and race; and 4) ensuring we have a diverse group that is participating in House Staff recruitment.

Through our application review and selection process we educate our faculty on searching for applicants from a diverse social and cultural experiences in an effort to train Cardiologists to seek a diverse perspectives on leadership, cardiovascular health care delivery and education. We aim to mirror the mission of the American College of Cardiology and ensure that we attracts and provides rewarding careers and leadership opportunities for the full range of talented individuals. We hope that by doing this, that the diverse health needs of cardiovascular patients and populations are met by cardiovascular clinicians sensitive to and prepared to meet the unique needs of their gender, cultural, racial and ethnic and other dimensions of diversity.

Our Graduate Medical Education office is dedicated to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Over the last several years, there have been several additions to our organizational structure and initiatives launched. In August 2020, our GME convened a GMEC Subcommittee dedicated to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Health Disparities (DEI-H). This group of ~20 faculty and house staff has met approximately monthly to work on education, research, and collaboration across the institution. Education and awareness has been created through our social media platform and engagement with like-minded organizations and our AU GME community. In October of 2020 and March of 2021, the subcommittee convened panels for group discussion centered first around multiple types of micro and macroaggressions faced by House Staff in a healthcare system that were related to race, ethnicity, gender, etc. Anonymous responses were obtained to the case scenarios from House Staff in addition to those who participated live. The second session was specific to only micro and macroaggressions perpetrated by patients. Patient advocate representatives, faculty, and House Staff led a stimulating discussion. A similar session was help in October of 2021. These activities help with retention and support of a diverse House Staff. In February of 2021, in response to the limitation of virtual interviews, the committee organized a webinar for applicants who interviewed to specialties across the institution. This was supported by the Dean, DIO, and program leaders across AU and had over 100 registrants. The webinar was focused on highlighting the learning environment and Augusta as a place to live but

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also the many DEI-centered activities on campus that increase the pipeline into our Program. In August 2021, we conducted a similar ‘first look’ webinar for applicants focusing on diversity, which had almost 460 registrants. These activities help with recruitment and selection of a diverse House Staff. The DEI-H GMEC subcommittee is also working on an alternative space for House Staff and faculty to seek advice. While anonymous reporting systems, an ombudsman, and HR are accessible to the House Staff, we are looking into a ‘safe space’ for House Staff to seek advice in difficult situations that may be affected by DEI issues. We are working on the logistics of resources, training of faculty and House Staff, and subsequent development of ‘AU Allies’ group that may serve this purpose. This will help with retention and support of a diverse House Staff. In February of 2022, another webinar was held with House Staff across the institution to discuss the social determinants of health (basic definitions, perceptions of the institutional resources, and the greater social impact). We engaged House Staff in a pre-webinar anonymous survey and a live webinar. Finally, our subcommittee is close to launching a climate survey for the House Staff and working on the next recruitment webinar in August 2022. These activities help with retention and support of a diverse House Staff and ensure our House Staff can provide better care to a diverse patient population. In addition to these subcommittee efforts, other sessions were provided to House Staff during our Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum (IRCC) sessions to include “inclusivity in patient care” and “Considerations in Providing Care to Transgender and Gender Non-binary People”. It is our intent that our House Staff see our commitment to diversity thus allowing us to ensure diversity in trainee recruitment, selection, and retention.

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