

October 9, 2020

Dear Prospective Resident,

I am thrilled to welcome you to Wake Forest Baptist Health and to share our inclusion and diversity vision. We are very proud of our work in this area and excited that you are considering joining us. I am confident that as you consider Wake, you will see our energy and dedication to creating a learning and working space where everyone feels included, valued, and respected.

Dr. Julie Freischlag, our Dean and CEO for the health system, is a profound champion for this work. In fact, she has given talks, built institutional structures, and provided the support to make this work real and sustainable. In the Office of Inclusion and Diversity, our work is inspired by a Maya Angelou quote: “Do the best that you can until you know better, then when you know better, do better.” Building on this, we are dedicating resources and empowering leadership to ensure educational opportunities exist across the medical center (know better), so that we can inspire intrinsic motivation to take action to ensure an equitable experience for everyone (do better). At the core, all of our work is about delivering high quality patient care. By making a commitment to ensure that everyone feels included, valued, and respected, we are committing to a culture of care. That care translates to our interactions with patients, staff, providers, and learners across our system.

To this end we have launched our inclusion and diversity strategic plan that centers on four pillars: professional development and education (how we learn); perspective and climate (how it feels to be in the organization); policies, programs and practices (how the organization works); and presence (who is in the organization). Within these pillars, we are taking a data-driven approach so we can not only identify the opportunities that exist, but also deploy tactics that make a difference.

Listed below is a small example of the initiatives we lead in support of creating equitable spaces throughout the health system, and represent opportunities you will be able to engage:

- **LGBTQ+ Panel Series:** A series of panel discussions shared the lived-experiences of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer patients, staff, faculty and clinicians within the health care system and resources for how we can all be allies.
- **WAKE Active Bystander Training:** The program has become a model for several other health systems by educating participants on how everyone can be an ally by interrupting instances of incivility, including microaggressions and bias, recognizing that everyone has a role in maintaining inclusive spaces.
- **Affinity Groups:** Similar to employee resource groups, these groups provide opportunities for individuals to connect with others who have a similar identity or experience for the purpose of mentorship and kinship and providing education to the rest of the system. Currently, affinity groups include: Veterans Society, LGBTQ+ and Allies, Jewish, Muslim, African-American/Black, Latinx/Hispanic, Indigenous People (American Indian, Pacific Islanders, etc.), and White Affinity Group for Racial Equity. We know this isn't comprehensive and we are adding affinity groups all the time, so this is also an opportunity for you to lead by nominating a new group.
- **Finding Your Voice, Sharing Your Truth, Leading to Change:** This weekly conversation serves as a learning opportunity for our all members of our health system to engage around issues of race. Many of our panelists and speakers are our own faculty, staff, physicians, and learners, sharing their experiences, understanding, resources, and research on race. We average more than 200 participants per week and have a tremendous following.
- **Crucial Conversations Training:** This pilot brought to a small number of influential leaders from across the organization a two-day nationally recognized training on how to engage in difficult dialogues where stakes are high in order to have respectful and impactful discourse.
- **Liaisons / Champions / Coaches Training:** We provide foundational training and resources on inclusion and diversity to several existing groups such as Safety Coaches, WIMS (Women in Medicine and Science) Liaisons

who already act as departmental liaisons, coaches, and champions to equip them to perform their roles using an inclusive lens and providing additional allies who can further support marginalized individuals and address inequities within their departments, units and teams.

- **Cultivating Inclusive Spaces:** This pilot program is designed as an advanced course to allow those who have been through entry level or foundational programs to begin to develop, apply and implement strategies that cultivate inclusive space in their workplace or personal lives.
- **Staff Council:** We established an opportunity for staff (non-faculty) to provide feedback based on their perspective and hear from leadership on organizational decision-making. The inaugural class has been outstanding and really is tackling difficult issues that will improve the experience for all our employees and learners.

Finally, I would like to point out that Wake Forest Baptist Health is a great place to learn, work, and discover, as well as a place that is committed to you and your success. We have various opportunities for you to engage around your identity or your experience. From mentorship to being part of an affirming and supportive community, we have a lot to offer and are growing every day. We would love for you to join us and be a contributing partner in this important work.

Respectfully,



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