

Dear Mr. Nwerem, Mr. Head and members of the Black Employee Resource Group,

We are writing in response to your Aug. 31 email. First and foremost, we'd like to acknowledge and thank you for the time, consideration, thought and emotional labor that has gone into the BERG's anti-racism efforts at OHSU. While this is difficult work, we acknowledge the necessity of identifying and confronting structural racism at OHSU and dismantling it with fervor and intention. There is much that needs to be done and as quickly as possible. We apologize for all delays but understand the urgency. This letter addresses the requests that the BERG summarized on August 31, 2020, but please know that we are in receipt of the most recent communication from today (September 4, 2020). We'd like to propose a conversation facilitated by a mutually acceptable party in an effort to make constructive strides forward.

Before summarizing our responses to the requests outlined in the earlier letter, we'd like to share the attached, which we will use as a blueprint for our anti-racism work. As part of Dr. Du Vivier's new role and elevated responsibilities in addressing structural racism at OHSU, we believe that all actions we take must have some structure, metrics and accountability around them as you indicate. As we continue to transition publicly to being a fully anti-racist organization, we welcome the BERG's criticisms as a critical way to hold us and our organization accountable. Your efforts and contributions help us prioritize our efforts. We see this vital effort as one of learning and growth rather than from a position of being defensive. Some experts have described this work as a journey rather than a destination.

With that in mind, our responses to your initial requests and comments are as follows:

Request 1: Declare that OHSU has a ZERO tolerance policy towards racism that includes accountability, utilizing current, and new policies to enforce said zero tolerance policy (Asked 9-12 months ago)

OHSU Response: Our Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation policy was revised on Jan. 1, and is currently undergoing a second revision in response to the new Title IX regulations. We are using this as an opportunity to increase accountability in regards to the impact of racist actions, deeds or words. This will include heightened expectations and accountability for all managers to ensure incidents are properly escalated and addressed. We are attempting to be deliberate and informed in our decision-making on this topic. We are looking at how other organizations' attempts at instituting zero tolerance policies have failed to change behaviors. Rather than promote reporting, these attempts have actually hindered it according to some reports. In revising this policy, as well as the Code of Conduct, therefore, our work must be balanced to avoid processes or policies that result in the unintended consequence of perpetuating disparities and supporting racist structures. Once again, your request to hold us accountable and to drive our organization forward is critically important for this work and for that we thank you.

Our commitment is to ensure that every concern or complaint raised that cites racism, from microaggressions to blatant acts of racism, will be investigated with appropriate action taken. We are updating a disciplinary and remediation guide with input from outside experts, where the intent is to create a more just and equitable workplace. If members of the BERG are interested and willing, we continue to welcome discussion, your feedback and recommendations as we work to update this guide. We know that asking you is mentally and psychologically taxing, especially where there is little trust, confidence or satisfaction in the actions that have been taken to date. However, we remain committed to providing the help, resources and supported needed to help manage the trauma associated with this work as much as possible.

Request 2: Put up signs across campus that Racism in any form will not be tolerated at OHSU and its affiliates. (Asked 6-12 months ago)

OHSU Response: Signs have been developed, but to ensure we get this right, we are gathering an Ethics Committee to help determine our ethical responsibilities. We will also be seeking feedback from Employee Resource Groups on the signs before they are displayed.

Request 3: Put Black individuals with the credentials and background in positions of leadership to make decisions and lead the charge against racist behavior. Dr. Rosemarie Hemmings has been nominated several times. (Asked 9-12 months ago)

OHSU Response: Actions against racist behavior must be led from all areas of the university. All leaders, and every member, must see anti-racism work as part of their daily responsibility, and we must, as a community, ensure it permeates everything that is done at OHSU. With that said, however, part of our commitment to anti-racism is a willingness to undergo organizational structure changes to best position us for success in this regard.

To that end, we have elevated Dr. Du Vivier's role to senior vice president of diversity, equity and inclusion. As part of the president's executive leadership team, he will have expanded authority and responsibility to lead the charge to transforming OHSU into an anti-racist organization. The Center for Diversity and Inclusion has several other positions open; we encourage all qualified candidates to apply for those positions, and we will ensure people of color are well-represented in the applicant pool. This provides an important opportunity to complement expertise in the areas of the impacts of structural racism and actions that must be taken to become an anti-racist institution.

Request 4: Examine the data and start hiring, and promoting with emphasis on increasing the Black representation in positions of leadership as well as front level, middle tier and upper management. (Asked 9-12 months ago)

OHSU Response: We recognize that we need not only to report data accurately, but we must build a system of accountability that links these data with hiring practices and outcomes that support our university becoming an anti-racist organization. For example, a

number of projects are currently underway to improve our selection and hiring processes to reduce bias and discrimination. A few examples include:

- 1) Outreach reporting tracking form will be added to the position requisition and/or applicant tracking process.
 - Within the next month, OHSU will require all hiring managers and/or talent acquisition staff to complete a form identifying the outreach efforts taken to identify a diverse pool of candidates.
 - This information will be used to gauge effective recruitment strategies.
- 2) Affirmative Action Plan placement target data merger with HR systems
 - The 20-21 year Affirmative Action Plan data will be pulled from our Oracle employee data system this month with the data development and review to occur over the next few months. By the new year, the data will be merged with the HR applicant tracking system. Then, we will be able to proactively link our hiring targets to every job posting. Because of its complexity, AAEO/HR anticipate six months to complete this project.
- 3) Black employee development, career mobility and advancement
 - We have committed to developing a training and mentoring program for our employees of color to support upward mobility and career development.

A note about data: Standardized reporting data does exist on demographics and is reported at the aggregate level in our Affirmative Action Plan and OHSU Fact Book. Any OHSU member can request de-identified demographic data/the makeup of their department by completing a data request, answering any follow-up questions on usage, and providing a follow-up report on usage to HR/AAEO.

Request 5: Establish a department where Black employees and other under represented employees can go to report racist and bias behavior from employees and management and get actual RESOLUTIONS.

OHSU Response: We recognize that Black employees believe that they have not been heard by our organization and that reporting racist incidents has not led to sufficient resolution. Please know that HR and AAEO are open to feedback from any employee who may have reported and had an unsatisfactory experience. If this happens or has happened, please reach out directly to Greg Moawad, J.D., interim vice president of human resources.

We are actively looking for ways to mitigate bias in processes and practices. We have engaged an outside consultant with expertise in anti-racism to conduct an independent review of HR and AAEO policies and procedures for the presence of structural racism and the creation of mitigating efforts. We stand by to adapt processes, as allowable by law, to address structural racism and to hire additional personnel as needed.

Furthermore, we will be mandating intensive training for HR and AAEO staff, particularly those who participate in investigations and disciplinary action, about racism, its history, and its impact on our employees of color, including race-based trauma.

Finally, we are examining ways to recognize ERG leadership roles financially to acknowledge their important contributions.

Thank you again for engaging with us on this important topic, and allowing us an opportunity to respond. We appreciate your letters, the five requests, and the 14-point document previously submitted. We hope to continue partnering with you and the other ERGs to help OHSU become a truly anti-racist, multi-cultural institution, and we hope to continue this conversation in a facilitated session soon.

Sincerely yours,

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President

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