HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST: IDEA HOSTS BOOK CLUB EVENT

More than 45 participants, including P&LM faculty and staff, joined the IDEA committee’s first book club discussion of Ibram X. Kendi’s How to be an Antiracist on September 30. Author Kendi uses his own family and school experiences to show how he came to understand racism, first through his own Black body and then his unique biases. His willingness to be vulnerable, says his editor, on a topic many Americans avoid at all costs, is what sets him apart from other writers. “He’s brave.”

The book is not an easy read. In fact, many stated they reread the first 8 chapters ahead of the session. The IDEA team broke the full cohort into small groups and provided questions for guided discussion, led by one or more committee members.

The book club is an important part of the committee’s strategy to create a safe space where faculty, staff, and trainees can explore ideas using their own experiences toward a greater understanding of diversity and inclusion. It is essential that participants can speak freely without fear of being judged or fear that there will be any reprisal because of their comments.

Kendi himself stresses that being antiracist is demanding and never-ending work. “You’re constantly assessing to make sure you’re expressing antiracist ideas, to constantly make sure you are supporting antiracist policy. And to be anti-racist is to admit those times we’re being racist and to commit to, of course, changing.”

A second book club meeting took place October 29 to review chapters 9-15. Many participants expressed awe over the breadth of the content as well as Kendi’s ability to frame broad concepts and historical inflection points through his own learning journey. During the concluding session in December, participants proposed action items for the Department, such as providing incentive points for DEI training and advocacy, ensuring positive mentorship leading to new opportunities and promotions is equally available to all faculty and staff, and developing inclusion SOPs for the full department community, so that that guidelines and policies are known and accessible to all.

The book club will reconvene in the spring, with a new text to be announced that will be purchased by the Department for all who are interested.

IDEA HOSTS BIAS TRAINING WORKSHOP

On October 8 from 12-1:30pm, Dr. Brian Gittens facilitated an interactive virtual workshop for P&LM where participants explored their own attitudes towards race and its influence on their own roles within the department. Gittens used case review, research, and discussion to explore the relationship between racial bias and micro-aggressions.

In breakout groups, participants shared experiences after reflecting on Gittens’ content. He called upon all to think of a time they personally witnessed a micro-aggression. How did it feel? How did you react? Did you wish you had reacted differently? Throughout the full group session, Gittens called on participants to role play, using tools he provided to identify and mitigate racist behaviors and their impacts.
Gittens said being in this ‘learning’ space is challenging for everyone: those who feel they have been victimized in past interactions, both aggressively and subtly, must reach for grace, while those who have been guilty of micro-aggressions out of ignorance need to practice humility and a willingness to change.

Gittens is a diversity and inclusion executive, human resource professional, researcher, educator, and consultant with more than 29 years of operational and administrative experience. He recently served as the Associate Dean for Human Resources, Equity, and Inclusion for the School of Medicine and Public Health at UW-Madison. He is currently serving as the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

CONFERENCE AND OTHER EVENTS

Pathways to Physician Diversity: A National Summit 2022
Phoenix, AZ, February 17-18:
https://ce.mayo.edu/special-topics-in-health-care/content/pathways-physician-diversity-national-summit-2022

AMEC 2022: Annual Medical Education Conference
April 13-17, 2022
In-person in Orlando, FL, at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort:
https://snma.org/page/AMEC2022

BIO Clinical Trial Diversity Summit Summer 2022 Virtual Summit:
Building a Sustainable & Equitable Clinical Development Ecosystem:
https://www.bio.org/events/bio-clinical-trial-diversity-summit

ABRCMS 2022: November 9-12 Anaheim, CA (pending COVID-19 Updated Status):
https://www.abrcms.org

READING FOR INCLUSION

Nature: Work: The Heart of the Black Stem Pipeline

Five academics describe how historically Black colleges and universities have shaped their careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics

NATURE: Career Column

Breaking the Binary by coming out as a trans scientist
https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-00521-1

Sloan Kettering: In the News

Out of the Closet, into the Lab: Five LGBTQ Scientists Share Their Stories
NRMN News

*What does it take to mentor a biomedical student with a disability?*

https://nrmnet.net/blog/graduate/2017/05/22/what-does-it-take-to-mentor-a-biomedical-student-with-a-disability/

The Scientist News and Opinion

*Biodiversity Innovations from Women Less Likely to be Adopted: Study*

https://www.the-scientist.com/news-opinion/biodiversity-innovations-from-women-less-likely-to-be-adopted-study-69149

STAT NEWS: IN THE LAB

*Females are still routinely left out of biomedical research – and ignored in analyses of data*


**IDEA COMMITTEE PARTNERS WITH NIH-LSAMP SUMMER PROGRAM**

Committee members met with Yulanda Essoka, Director of Penn’s NSF-LSAMP summer research program. The ten-week program is fully sponsored by the NSF initiative *Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation*, a renowned program of more than 30 years that strives for scholar success. Named for former congressman and civil rights activist Louis Stokes, the program goal is to support historically underrepresented students in the STEM fields. Students partner with a researcher or clinician for hands-on learning and observing patient care, activities that generally culminate in a poster and paper. LSAMP encourages students to attend conferences, also funded by NSF. The IDEA Committee is exploring possibilities for participation, launching summer 2022 with one student pairing, and building to two-three student sponsorships next summer.

Any interested faculty should reach out to IDEA Committee Chair, Nicole Aqui, MD, PhD. Email: aqui@pennmedicine.upenn.edu

**VISITING CLERKSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR URIM STUDENTS**

The Visiting Clerkship Programs for Underrepresented Minority Medical Students encompass numerous opportunities for 4th year medical students to explore rotations at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP), Penn Presbyterian Hospital (PPMC), and Pennsylvania Hospital (PAH) in a number of subspecialties. Link: http://www.allianceofminorityphysicians.org/penn-urm-visiting-clerkship-program.html

**IDEAS IN ACTION**

*Laboratory Medicine Angels in Motion* donated and assembled 100 bags of goods!

As an MLK day service project, the *P&LM Angels in Motion (AIM)* team donated and assembled "Blessing Bags" to distribute to people suffering with substance-use disorder in the Philadelphia area.
AIM consists of a diverse group of individuals, showing that substance-use disorder does not discriminate based on race, economic status, or locale. AIM will distribute these bags, which are the first line of communication with so many of their recipients. The bags are also sometimes their only food for the day. *P&LM AIM* reached its goal of 100 bags plus additional donation of goods!

_Angels in Motion: Changing the way those suffering with the disease of addiction are treated, one life at a time:*

https://aimangelsinmotion.org/

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**Celebrate Black History February 2022**


https://campusphilly.org/2021/02/01/8-ways-to-celebrate-black-history-month-in-philly/