

Dean Forbes and the College of Biological Sciences:

In response to racism in STEM and in the community at large, CBS has committed to creating a culture of anti-racism within the College. Over the past few months, members of the CBS alumni established the Alumni Anti-Racism Council to discuss racism and how race-related issues within the College impact students. It is our expectation that progress can be made to address these concerns while also recognizing that these recommendations are only a first step toward creating an inclusive, equitable, and anti-racist culture. As proud alumni of CBS, we are encouraged by the College's commitment to this critical work and are honored to play a role in helping create a foundation on which to build. Based on Alumni Anti-Racism Council discussions, we have identified a number of actions the College can take to create an environment where Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) can feel welcome, safe and supported. These recommendations include:

- **Hire and support the retention of BIPOC faculty and staff.** Being able to see faculty, students and staff from various backgrounds and identities signals that the College is supportive of everyone and takes seriously the value of diversity.
- **Create a culture of ongoing social justice and racial equity learning.** All members of the CBS community must be exposed to baseline knowledge about historical and persistent inequities and be open to continued learning in order to foster a safe and supportive environment for all students.
- **Integrate anti-racism into the CBS curriculum.** CBS curriculum should be adjusted to include the willing and unwilling contributions of BIPOC individuals to the advancement of science, as well as actively discussing ethical topics related to racism in science.
- **Establish and support programs to reduce barriers and inequities faced by BIPOC students.** CBS must take steps to address inequities in both the K-12 education system and within CBS. This means developing or improving processes around access to research opportunities, advising and resources for BIPOC students.
- **Facilitate opportunities for connections with BIPOC alumni.** Connecting with alumni from diverse backgrounds and identities is a powerful way to support BIPOC students. They can provide a road map based on lived experiences.
- **Modify structures that promote a competitive environment.** CBS must improve the academic culture by altering the messages students receive in Nature of Life,

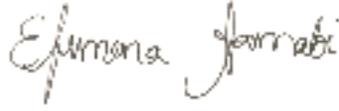
Foundations of Biology (lecture and lab) courses, fostering personal relationships between students, and reducing comparison inherent to a curved grading structure.

Additional context and details related to the recommendations identified above are included in the attached report. Just as the College holds every student to a high standard, we intend to hold CBS to a similarly high standard in its commitment to combat racism with the college and ultimately the University of Minnesota. We ask for regular progress updates to be shared with the entire community through the CBS annual report. Additionally, we propose the continuation of alumni involvement in this work by transitioning the CBS Alumni Anti-Racism Council to serve as an ongoing advisory board to the College, and we request a meeting with Dean Forbes in December 2021 to get a progress update.

Sincerely,



Divya Alley, 2020



Efemona Famati, 2019



Suzie Hsu, 2014 & 2020



Gemechu Mekonnen, 2019



Emmanuel Okematti, 2019



Jocelyn Ricard, 2020



Andrea Veloria, 2019



Sakina Walji, 2018



Mohamed Yakub, 2015



Aryn Lipnicki, CBS Student Services



Stephanie Xenos, CBS Marketing
Communications & External Relations