

# Diversity in DoS



**China Hardison**

The Department of Surgery (DoS) Staff Anti-Racism Workgroup was asked to join the 2021 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Forum hosted by UW Professional Staff Organization (PSO) held on October 20, 2021. Joanna Ames, Residency Education Specialist, Kelsey Pullar, Research Coordinator, Susan Marx, Vice Chair, Finance and Administration, and I were honored to be presenters as it was an opportunity to highlight our Diversity Council and bring awareness to the DoS Anti-Racism Workgroup which was formed by staff for staff. Many people in our Department didn't know such a staff-based group existed.



**Susan Marx**



**Joanna Ames**



**Kelsey Pullar**

In the PSO presentation we provided a short history of the DEI within the Department, including the creation of the [Diversity Council](#), comprised of faculty, residents and staff, who are working on so many amazing things. The Council continues to be instrumental in our work and is always a great resource. However, they simply cannot do it all and quite frankly they shouldn't have to. The Anti-Racism Workgroup was established on August 3, 2020, shortly after the murder of George Floyd. We were outraged, felt helpless, wanted to act, all while supporting and furthering the work of the Diversity Council. The conversations have been difficult as we focus on making systematic and tangible changes within the Department. We hope that our work also inspires a shift in UW culture, centering and intertwining diversity and inclusion in our everyday practices and policies. We want this to be the norm across the University.

We communicated to the PSO that our Anti-Racism Workgroup acknowledges that systems reproduce themselves and many of these systems are inherently racist and biased. The Anti-Racism Group has begun the work to dismantle systems and raise awareness in our Department. Examples that we shared with the PSO include the following:

- Curated a staff hiring toolkit which will be standardized, with structured tools and processes to aid hiring committees and managers in recruitment and selection of a more diverse community.
- Working with UW DoS HR on developing training for hiring committees/managers to use the tools effectively.

- Revised the staff Core Competencies to include DEI as the foundation of who we are, and in partnership with HR and the Vice Chair of Finance and Administration.
- Launched an Anti-Racism Education Series in our monthly staff meetings where guest speakers present topics centered in DEI and Anti-Racism Work such as "Microaggressions: What Are They, Why They Hurt And What To Do About Them in Our Medical System" presented by Dr. Kanter.
- Partnered with the Diversity Council to highlight cultural celebrations such as Native American Heritage Day, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Juneteenth, which includes links to organizations within those communities where you can learn, volunteer or donate to them and/or businesses you can support.

Our staff Anti-Racism Workgroup members show up every week and challenge each other to continue the work. It requires honesty, respect, trust, clear intentions and accountability. We must listen and hear each other which often times results in sitting in our own discomfort. Yet through the discomfort is where the real opportunities for sustained change exist. We are proud of the work we've done and thank our colleagues for their support. We look forward to seeing what we accomplish next.

**China S. Hardison**

*Program Operations Specialist, General Surgery  
Member, Anti-Racism Workgroup  
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