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# **Racial Marginalization and Health Inequities Task Force Final Report**

Spring 2021

**Executive Summary**

The American College Health Association (ACHA) formed the Racial Marginalization Health Inequities Task Force (RMHI) in fall 2020. The 10-person task force received the following charges:

- Create a resource guide for training curriculum and tools on racism, xenophobia, and oppression, with particular resources for health and wellness centers.
- Create a white paper on racial marginalization for board review November 2020.
- Create a white paper on health disparities for board review November 2020.
- Propose suggestions for organizational improvements to promote and engage in anti-racist work.
- Serve as expert consultants to campus leadership learning about or engaging in anti-racism work.
- Represent ACHA as a spokesperson with media requests coming through the association.

The task force focused its efforts on examining ACHA's organizational culture to identify opportunities for organizational improvements toward a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse environment for individual and institutional members. The task force chose to defer the white paper-related charges to existing efforts related to racial marginalization and health disparities in which college health scholars and practitioners were already engaged. The task force also believed that to adequately position itself as a principal leadership organization for advancing the health of college students and campus communities, providing tools and resources on racism and other forms oppression, ACHA must first focus on organizational improvements to ensure diverse, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable engagement among its broad and diverse membership base.

In addition to regular convenings among an interdisciplinary group of college health scholars and practitioners, the task force employed four data and information gathering strategies to inform the proposed goals and actions in this report. An ad hoc sub-committee of the task force created and implemented a mixed methods diversity, equity, and inclusion survey of ACHA membership. To supplement the findings from this survey, the ad hoc sub-committee also hosted listening sessions to gather additional membership feedback. The task force also reviewed program submissions for the annual meeting between 2016 and 2019, to identify any trends in representation among presenters and session topics, with an emphasis on content related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Finally, the task force benchmarked relevant professional organizations to identify opportunities and models that ACHA could leverage as the organization engages in its own efforts to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The major findings of the RMHI Task Force are presented in themes based on the review of the four data inputs that inform this report's proposed goals and actions: lack of representation, ongoing active engagement in anti-racism efforts, access to leadership and transparency, fostering growth and a sense of belonging among BIPOC membership, and clear opportunities for addressing racial grievances within ACHA.

Based on the findings of the RMHI Task Force's data and information gathering efforts, we identified five primary goals with proposed actions for ACHA as first steps in the organizations journey to advance health equity and racial justice within its organization and in support of its membership:

- **Goal 1: Improve diversity of membership and membership contributions to reflect diversity in identities among individual members, institutional type among member institutions, and the student populations they serve.**
- **Goal 2: Signify organizational commitment to advancing health equity and racial justice by enhancing structural support through policies, resource allocations, hiring practices, program planning processes, and organizational structure.**
- **Goal 3: Establish and maintain an organizational culture and environment that embraces and affirms diversity among our membership, while advancing equity to enhance inclusion and sense of belonging among members of historically marginalized racial identities.**

- **Goal 4: Advance diversity, inclusion, equity, and racial justice as core competencies for all organizational leaders, staff, and membership, ensuring that they can identify and explain the root contributors to inequities and access tools to address those inequities and advocate for racial justice within ACHA and their respective institutions.**
- **Goal 5: Enhance accountability by developing and maintaining mechanisms to increase transparency about the organization’s progress toward becoming anti-racist and anti-oppressive.**

The proposed goals and actions reflect a synthesis of findings from the RMHI Task Force’s four primary methods for data and information gathering from ACHA’s membership. To this end, the report ends with critical opportunities for ACHA to carry the work of the RMHI Task Force forward.

The full report can be viewed [here](#).

The ACHA Board of Directors’ response to the report can be viewed [here](#).



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