

Dear Smiley's Applicant,

It's been two years since George Floyd's murder. Our community is still recovering. Our work is not done.

As a cis, hetero, white man born to privilege, I have never experienced the racism, sexism, or homophobia that has been inflicted on so many in our country. I understand the protests to say George Floyd's name and the names of so many others and the need to demand change. Martin Luther King said, "Riot is the language of the unheard." I'm trying to hear, listen, and learn.

In the wealthiest country in the world, Black infant and maternal mortality rates are similar to the rates in the developing world. The incarceration rate of Black people compared to white people is shocking—and, in Minnesota, where we pride ourselves on our tolerance, hospitality, and inclusion, the educational disparity between Black and white people is among the worst in the country.

We say, "Black Lives Matter!" as a people, a clinic, a state, and a nation; this must be mirrored in our actions. As a department and a clinic, we are constantly exploring how we can be better, more honest, and more effective about issues of racism, diversity, and inclusion. This is a complex journey, not a single meeting or email. I am nervous because I know it will be hard and uncomfortable, and I am confident because of the people that accompany me on this journey.

As we continue this journey to become an antiracist residency and clinic, we are listening and learning. We have a curriculum on racism in medicine, health equity, and justice that is a sustained part of our didactics. We believe that having a more representative residency is good for our patients and is the right thing to do. This starts with the application review process. Board scores, proven to contain racial bias, are viewed as pass/fail. We have placed a greater value on journey traveled and applicants that identify with the patient population that we serve, which includes a large percentage of BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ and immigrants. Everyone in the application review and interview committee completes implicit bias training.

This is all with a five-year goal of increasing BIPOC to at least 50 percent of our residency. We can achieve this goal, and we need your help. We need you to trust us when we say we are working hard to make things better. Trust that we are striving towards equity with not just our words but our actions. Trust that we are committed to permanent change and integrating antiracism into every meeting, curriculum, and policy at our clinic and program. Trust us to provide you with an outstanding family medicine education as we grow together.

Tim Ramer, MD
Program Director