

BGSA Letter of Support for Underrepresented Minority Students

To the current and future graduate students of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine,

The recent tragedies involving racial and social injustice have emphasized to the BGSA Executive Board the need to commit additional resources and effort towards fighting for racial equality within the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (UPSOM). The latest incidents of violence against black citizens has starkly highlighted the need for this commitment and the fact that it is long overdue. Oppression and white supremacy are not new issues, and it is clear that any previous efforts to promote diversity and inclusion within our organization were not sufficient. The purpose of the BGSA is first and foremost to reflect the needs of the UPSOM graduate student community that it represents. We would like to make it clear, now more than ever, that we are committed to listening and supporting the students of color in the graduate programs of UPSOM, and that we are committed to promoting a lasting effort in fostering a diverse and inclusive environment within the UPSOM.

Going forward, the BGSA executive board aims to make diversity and inclusion an integral pillar of our graduate student association, and to promote both actionable and long-term goals to further this aim. We know that being an ally does not stop at words but also requires action. Most fundamentally, the BGSA will restructure itself beginning with the incorporation of a Chair-ship position dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion in all aspects of BGSA Programming. Additionally, these efforts will not be limited to the Diversity and Inclusion Chair but will be consciously considered in all aspects of BGSA operations moving forward. A comprehensive, expanding list of our current objectives can be found [here](#). Additionally, the BGSA Executive board recognizes the importance of listening and the need to self-educate in order to be an active participant in uplifting the voices of students from underrepresented minorities within our community. As such, we welcome any and all feedback, suggestions, and resources. An online platform for submissions to the BGSA can be found [here](#). All submissions will have the option of being anonymous.

We are strongest when we uplift all members of our community, when we approach others with compassion and patience and a willingness to listen. We recognize that the magnitude of effort required to address the problems that we are facing is greater than any one student. We recognize that this needs to be a sustained effort that will go beyond any of our own time here at UPSOM. So, with that the BGSA invites you to join us in listening, learning, and taking action.

Sincerely,

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