

# SHOWCASING YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

## DEFINING DIVERSITY

Research has shown that diverse research teams foster scientific innovation, increase the likelihood that research outcomes will benefit individuals from underserved populations and increase the participation of underserved populations in research studies (AACR 2024). NIH defines underserved populations as groups who have historically been excluded and underrepresented in the U.S. scientific workforce such as racial and ethnic groups, women and individuals with disabilities (NIH 2023). NIH also considers individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as those who have or are currently experiencing homelessness, first generation college students, and individuals living in rural areas and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Mervis 2019).

## IDENTIFY YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Advancing diversity and inclusion in biomedical sciences is vital to achieving health equity for all people in society (AACR 2024). Our formal and informal practices and contributions to creating a diverse and inclusive classroom, research environment and workforce can help underserved populations receive access to scientific research, educational opportunities and health information (NIH 2023). You do not need to hold an official DEI position to contribute to creating more inclusive research environments and more equitable practices in your workplace or classrooms. Incorporating inclusive practices, big or small, into your everyday professional workspace or community service can be meaningful for advancing health equity.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS:

- Mentoring
- Research
- Community Engagement
- Teaching
- Professional Service

*See our infographic for further suggestions.*

## DR. JAQUELINE AVILA

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I am committed to students who are underrepresented in research because I know first-hand how beneficial mentors are. When I was applying to graduate school, it was clear that other applicants had better research backgrounds or had gone to better colleges. However, a professor saw my potential and gave me a chance. Their support got me to where I am today! And that is the support I aim to give to my mentees on my research team. I try to advertise research opportunities in my lab for students taking my courses to provide opportunities for interested students to work with me if there is availability. This is how I met the student that I am currently working with on my U54 project. When I was interviewing at UMB, I highlighted my commitment to mentor underrepresented students and showed examples of students I had mentored during my training.



## WHERE TO SHOWCASE YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

- 1. Grant Proposals:** Funding sources, like NIH and NSF, often want to know what larger impact your research project and work will have on the broader society, specific populations, or in scientific fields.
- 2. Interviews:** Highlight how your contributions to diversity and inclusion support the mission of an institution, organization or company when applying and interviewing for an academic or non-academic position.
- 3. Professional Websites:** Emphasize your efforts to advance diversity and inclusion on your lab's official website for other researchers or students and in the About Me section of your LinkedIn profile for potential employers.

# OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE

## RESEARCH

- Participate in projects that highlight or address health inequities
- Focus research on underserved populations
- Promote practices that create an inclusive research environment

## OPPORTUNITIES CAN INCLUDE:

## MENTORING

- Serve as a mentor through a formal program (ex. U54 REC or CURE)
- Guide a student through application process for graduate school or fellowships
- Participate in a mentor training program

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Participate on a search committee
- Hold an official position within a professional organization
- Organize an event or join a conference planning committee

## TEACHING

- Lead or guest lecture courses on topics related to diversity & inclusion
- Use accessible teaching practices and policies in the classroom
- Design creative learning activities that address the differing abilities of students

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Volunteer at a community event
- Serve as a career day speaker at local schools or youth-focused organizations
- Give presentations on public health research and interventions to local groups or communities

