

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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Dear ACS Members:

Diversity, Inclusion & Respect is a core value of the American Chemical Society (ACS). Recent events have prompted all of us at ACS to take a critical look at how this core value is reflected in all that we are and all that we do. As part of this reflection, ACS has engaged in discussions with its staff, governance, and membership about how we can be a stronger and more positive force in the battle against racism within the chemistry enterprise. These discussions revealed that there is much work to be done, and continued input needed, to fully realize our core value.

While we stand in solidarity with our Black and Brown members and condemn racism, discrimination, and harassment in all forms, we recognize that this work is a journey that requires sustained resolve and commitment. We appreciate that no single statement or single program can eradicate decades of racism, discrimination, bigotry, intolerance, and harassment. We realize that real progress will require regular measurement to gauge and monitor the effectiveness of our efforts to ensure that we are on course to improve things.

Informed by the above referenced discussions and additional input, ACS has taken some initial steps that build on and expand beyond existing efforts.

- Committed an additional \$1 million dollars toward advancing our core value of Diversity, Inclusion & Respect. Half of those funds will support the [ACS Bridge Project](#), an effort to increase the number of chemical science PhD degrees awarded to underrepresented minority (URM) students. The remaining funds will support other related initiatives, which we are in the process of identifying.
- Designated our Diversity, Inclusion & Respect Advisory Board (which includes the chairs of the ACS committees under the diversity umbrella) as the central coordinating body for related issues impacting ACS and its membership. This governance body has been tasked by the ACS Board of Directors to develop an action plan based on concrete recommendations to guide ACS in its journey to ensure that our Black and Brown members and colleagues, as well as all disadvantaged groups, are afforded the same rights and opportunities as those afforded to those of privilege.
- Updated our [Diversity, Inclusion & Respect webpage](#) to include resources for ACS members and the general public, such as helpful readings, courses and multimedia resources related to this area. The webpage will be the central point for the Society to post its messages and actions related to Diversity, Inclusion & Respect.

These actions build on several efforts already existing or underway at ACS to support Diversity, Inclusion & Respect, such as:

- [The ACS Scholars Program](#) that annually provides approximately \$900,000 in renewable scholarships to 350 underrepresented minority students majoring in undergraduate chemistry-related disciplines.
- [ACS Project SEED](#), a paid summer internship program for economically disadvantaged high school chemistry students to work in real laboratories, with real scientists serving as their mentors.
- A [suite of initiatives](#) actively seeking to increase diversity and address bias within our community of editors, peer reviewers and authors across our 60-plus scientific journals.

All of these efforts, however, are just the initial foundation that we will continue to build upon moving forward. We know that tangible and concrete steps involve far more than crafting lofty statements of resolve and instituting quick fixes, so we are working hard to develop efforts for meaningful and sustainable change.

We ask for your continued help as we work towards improving ourselves, our organization, and our enterprise. Only by working together will we be able to make real progress towards a truly better world.

If you have suggestions and ideas helpful to this mission, please send them to secretary@acs.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luis Echegoyen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Luis" being more prominent and the last name "Echegoyen" written in a more compact, connected style.

Luis Echegoyen, Ph.D.
2020 President
American Chemical Society