

# Structural Racism Accountability Committee Report to the Board of Trustees December 2023

**SUBMITTED BY:**

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## Executive Summary

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) Board of Trustees (BOT) Structural Racism Accountability Committee (SRAC) was formed in 2021 to ensure the recommendations of the 2020-2021 APA Presidential Task Force to Address Structural Racism Throughout Psychiatry (TFSR) are carried out. APA's BOT approved 18 actions recommended by the TFSR along with six directives on issues that need to be updated and monitored by the SRAC.

The 2023-2024 SRAC committee held one virtual meeting at the time of the December APA BOT meeting. During the SRAC meeting the dashboard was reviewed and SRAC discussed each action to identify necessary steps. In addition, the SRAC Chair reported on their meetings with the Assembly M/UR Committee and Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities.

At the Spring 2023 APA General Assembly, the action paper, "Addressing Structural Racism in the APA: Replacing Minority and Underrepresented (MUR) Terminology, authored by Drs. Isom and Dunlap, was presented and approved. APA, through the ongoing efforts of the SRAC, will collaborate with the Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities, the M/UR Community, and representative Caucuses, to find a replacement for the "M/UR" term.

The SRAC Chair attended meetings with the Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities and the Assembly M/UR Committee listening to proposals and discussions about name change. Some of the overall themes are as follows:

- Many members feel the name change needs to be discussed at a broader level within their caucuses and councils so that they have the scope and time to research and express their ideas without feeling restricted by a deadline.
- Several suggestions were proposed; however, many would need a description and explanation of their backgrounds and premises.
- A list of suggestions was submitted by the Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities and Black Psychiatrist Caucus.

### Proposed ideas:

- Assembly M/UR Committee has brainstormed the following proposed terms to replace M/UR:
  - Minoritized and Underrepresented Caucuses
  - Historically Excluded Groups
  - Diverse and Historically Marginalized Caucuses
  - Diverse and Historically Marginalized Communities
  - Diverse and Historically Underrepresented Communities
  - Assembly Committee on **E**quity, **A**ntiracism, **T**ransformation, and **E**mpowerment
  - EQUATE Committee (ASM)
  - EQUATE Caucuses (would be current M/UR caucus)
  - EQUATE Trustee (BOT)
- Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities has brainstormed the following proposed terms to replace M/UR:
  - Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI)
- Black Psychiatrist Caucus created a poll with six options as a proposed terms to replace M/UR:
  - Minoritized and Underrepresented Caucuses
  - Historically Excluded Groups
  - Diverse and Historically Marginalized Caucuses
  - Diverse and Historically Marginalized Communities
  - Diverse and Historically Underrepresented Communities
  - I don't like any of the above and would prefer a different name.
- Black Psychiatrist Caucus members suggested that a meeting be held with all M/UR Caucuses and the Assembly M/UR Committee to create a broader list and conduct a discussion followed by a potential preference list or voting system.

- Assembly M/UR Committee discussed the above propositions and advised that a broader discussion happens with more suggestions about name replacement.

In the next three months our SRAC priority will be to discuss how to create a streamlined process of collaboration with the M/UR Caucuses, Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities, and the Assembly M/UR Committee. Our next meeting is scheduled for February 2024, and we will continue to:

- Get feedback from SRAC members on various ongoing action items.
- Review data that has been already gathered.
- Metrics to evaluate impact.
- Integrate recommendations from the appropriate components.

## SRAC Membership

Chair:

Kamalika Roy M.D., MCR, FAPA – APA M/UR Trustee

Members:

Ramaswamy Viswanathan, M.D., Dr.Med.Sc. – APA President-Elect

Rebecca Brendel, M.D., J.D. – APA Immediate-Past President

Steven M. Starks, M.D., M.B.A. – APA Assembly Speaker-Elect

Richard Zang, M.D., - Chair of APA Assembly Committee on Resident-Fellow

Walter Wilson, Jr., M.D., MHA – Chair of APA Council on Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities

Gail Robinson, M.D. – Chair of APA Membership Committee

Ruby Castilla-Puentes, M.D. – General Member

Fiona Fonseca, M.D. – General Member

Octavio Martinez, M.D. – General Member

Linda Nahulu, M.D. – General Member

Linda Vukelich – General Member: District Branch Executive

Administration Staff Liaisons:

Regina S. James, M.D. – APA Deputy Medical Director and Chief, Division of Diversity and Health Equity

Gabriel Escontrías, Jr., Ed.D. – APA Managing Director, Division of Diversity and Health Equity

## SRAC Dashboard Update

### ACTION 1 – Established and On Going

**Share Black APA/APAF Fellows with District Branches to encourage leadership involvement & consideration as Assembly Representatives.**

APA Foundation's Fellowships reported the following:

A yearly email is sent to District Branch Presidents, Executive Directors, and APAF Fellows as an e-introduction for APAF Fellows and leadership of APA District Branches and State Associations (DBs/SAs) to connect. Most recent email sent on Friday, October 20, 2023, read as follows:

Dear District Branch Presidents, Executive Directors, and APAF Fellows,

This email serves as an e-introduction for APAF Fellows and leadership of APA District Branches and State Associations (DBs/SAs) to connect.

Investments in psychiatry trainees are essential to APA's future; the trainees represent the next generation of innovative leaders in psychiatry. At the same time, DBs/SAs are APA's local leadership and critical to the success and vitality of APA. This connection has been valuable to both trainees and DB/SAs.

Executive Directors, we have attached a list of the 2023 APAF Fellows, institutions, and contact information for trainees who would benefit from participating in the APA at a local level. Please filter the list to find the applicants in your area.

APAF Fellows, we encourage you to get involved at the local/state level to take full advantage of APA's opportunities. When you complete your training and transition to Early Career Psychiatrist (ECP) status, you will find these connections valuable to your professional development. For more information about APA's DBs/SAs, please [click here](#).

Please reach out to us for any additional information or concerns.

Best,

APA/APAF Fellowships Team  
American Psychiatric Association | American Psychiatric Association Foundation  
800 Maine Avenue, S.W., Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20024  
[psychiatry.org](http://psychiatry.org) | Please note our new mailing address

### ACTION 2 – In Progress

**Establish a mentor/sponsor program from senior Assembly leaders for Black psychiatrists.**

Association Governance reported the following:

Dr. Pozios plans to give an update at the March 2024 BOT meeting on the ongoing DEIBA activities of the Assembly. This allows the Officers more time to review and evaluate the actions assigned to it by SRAC, ongoing activities of the Assembly related to DEIBA, and after Synergy Consulting reports to the AEC at its February 2024 meeting.

### ACTION 3 – Established and On Going

**Include a presentation about advancement in the Assembly and assignment of a mentor/sponsor in the Assembly orientation.**

Association Governance reported the following:

Dr. Pozios plans to give an update at the March 2024 BOT meeting on the ongoing DEIBA activities of the Assembly. This allows the Officers more time to review and evaluate the actions assigned to it by SRAC, ongoing activities of the Assembly related to DEIBA, and after Synergy Consulting reports to the AEC at its February 2024 meeting.

#### **ACTION 4 – Established and Ongoing**

**Provide instruction to Assembly Nominating Committee on importance of nominating a diverse pool.**

Association Governance reported the following:

The Assembly Nominating Committee was given instructions this year about the importance of nominating a diverse pool of nominees, which was successful.

#### **ACTION 5 – Established and Ongoing**

**Have M/UR Caucuses and Committee of the Assembly submit nominations for Assembly leadership directly to the Assembly Nominating Committee.**

Association Governance reported the following:

Dr. Pozios plans to give an update at the March 2024 BOT meeting on the ongoing DEIBA activities of the Assembly. This allows the Officers more time to review and evaluate the actions assigned to it by SRAC, ongoing activities of the Assembly related to DEIBA, and after Synergy Consulting reports to the AEC at its February 2024 meeting.

#### **ACTION 6 – Established and Ongoing**

**Identify "Equity Advisors" to advise Assembly on all aspects related to diversity and equity.**

Division of Diversity and Health Equity reported the following:

A request for proposals was developed and posted seeking a diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and anti-racism (DEIBA) consultant for the Assembly. Two top consulting companies were reviewed and interviewed by the Assembly Executive Committee leaders, an Association Governance representative, and representatives from the Division of Diversity and Health Equity.

At the Assembly Executive Committee (AEC) meeting that took place from August 5-6, 2023, Synergy Consulting was introduced as the selected company to assist the Assembly in developing initiatives around a more inclusive Assembly body. Synergy Consulting provided the AEC with a brief overview of their background and the way in which Synergy Consulting will conduct its work. This includes three phases:

- 1) **Assessment:** This includes a review of APA governance documents, policies, procedures, a survey of the Assembly members, interviews with Assembly leadership, and observations of meetings.
- 2) **Development:** This involves the development of metrics around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging related to meetings, focusing not only on how the meetings are held but also how the participants felt about the meetings.
- 3) **Evaluation:** Once the tools/metrics are implemented, an evaluation will be created to ensure the successes are sustainable.

Synergy Consulting explained that the work surrounding DEIBA requires an individual to examine their attitudes, feelings, and perceptions ultimately to evoke some type of self-awareness that will lead to behavior change.

#### **ACTION 7 – Ongoing**

**Adopt consistent term limits for all Assembly Representatives & Deputy Representatives.**

Association Governance reported the following:

Dr. Pozios plans to give an update at the March 2024 BOT meeting on the ongoing DEIBA activities of the Assembly. This allows the Officers more time to review and evaluate the actions assigned to it by SRAC, ongoing activities of the Assembly related to DEIBA, and after Synergy Consulting reports to the AEC at its February 2024 meeting.

#### **ACTION 8 – Established and Ongoing**

**The leadership, Equity and Diversity Institute Advocate/Protégé Program for URM psychiatrists is currently being piloted. Additional formal sponsorship programs for URM psychiatrists may be developed.**

The Division of Diversity and Health Equity reported the following:

The 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort of the Advocate & Protégé Program has just begun with incoming SAMHSA MFP fellows which will allow for two years of data that can be utilized for a robust evaluation. DDHE anticipates that Advocates will assist Protégés with exposure, increased visibility and networking opportunities which can lead to enhanced leadership opportunities. Select outcomes measures include: perception of usefulness, satisfaction level, number of interactions (virtual & in person), number of networking opportunities, career development opportunities facilitated by advocate, percentage expansion of career network, and leadership positions obtained. Measurement tools will include written surveys, individual interviews, and/or focus group discussions, and other tools as appropriate. Protégés will be matched with APA leaders from the BOT, APAF BOD, and Assembly. Conversations to follow between DDHE and APAF on how more URM psychiatrists can benefit through the data collected after this cohort.

#### **ACTION 9 – Established and Ongoing**

**Require Nominating Committee to formally reach out annually to Council Chairs, Assembly Leadership, and District Branch Leaders for URM psychiatrist nomination suggestions for national office.**

Association Governance reported the following:

Dr. Pozios plans to give an update at the March 2024 BOT meeting on the ongoing DEIBA activities of the Assembly. This allows the Officers more time to review and evaluate the actions assigned to it by SRAC, ongoing activities of the Assembly related to DEIBA, and after Synergy Consulting reports to the AEC at its February 2024 meeting.

#### **ACTION 10 – Established and Ongoing**

**Require the Nominating Committee to create a database to track pool of potential URM nominees for national office.**

Association Governance and Marketing and Membership reported the following:

Association Governance does have a database from 2017 to 2023 with this data. In addition, Marketing and Membership confirmed that 82% of member profiles now have race/ethnicity information, improving over the 64% that were filled in as of July 2020.

Any requested report on this information will be forthcoming with the most recent data.

#### **ACTION 11 – Established and Ongoing**

**Prohibit campaigning for nationally elected APA positions except through APA-sponsored activities starting in 2022.**

General Counsel reported the following:

The Elections Committee prepared a report which was shared with SRAC and submitted to the Board of Trustees for recommendations to be adopted into the Elections Rules within the Operations Manual. Recommendations for consideration are below:

The Elections Committee recommends the Board consider the following as they move forward:

- Discontinue the Meet-the-Candidate Town Halls series due to low interest and participation rate in conjunction with increased member volunteer and staff time.
- In lieu of the Meet-the-Candidate Town Halls, consider:
  - Debate in each of the candidate categories.
  - Pre-recorded Candidate videos replying to a pre-determined set of questions.
- Continue other APA-managed campaign activities: APA Election Guide to the Candidates, APA Election website, and December Issue of Psychiatric News, and Short Videos of Candidates.
- Create an APA Community Platform specifically for each election cycle: All candidates will be added to the APA Community Platform – Elections. All voting APA members will be invited to opt-in for the APA Community Platform Elections.
- Allow individual campaigning by candidates and supporters under revised election guidelines which modify the Elections Guidelines based on the recommendations of the Presidential Task Force on Structural Racism in Psychiatry approved by the APA Board of Trustees in 2021. Following review of the 2 Year Pilot for the Elections Guidelines in election cycles 2021-22 and 2022-23, revisions were made in response to voter and candidate feedback on the election process.

Complete report can be viewed by referencing the past SRAC Report to the Board of Trustees: Recommendations for APA Elections Process.

#### **ACTION 12 – Ongoing Process**

**Prepare an annual report formally reviewed by BOT that documents APA leadership demographics and tracks 3-year trends.**

Marketing and Membership reported the following:

Appropriate APA units are collaborating to accomplish this action.

#### **ACTION 13 – Established and Ongoing**

**Require each group to demonstrate their attempt to achieve representation of M/UR members among the component membership.**

General Counsel reported the following:

The JRC is responsible for components and requires a “Yearly Assessment of Council,” requesting that the Councils provide a “brief summary of how the Council promotes and advances diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism.” The JRC report template also requests that the Council detail how the work



they are doing promotes DEIBA. The JRC is ensuring that the councils are complying with their plans and meeting the DEIBA objectives.

#### **ACTION 14 – Established and Ongoing**

**Require the review of Bylaw changes to ensure M/UR groups aren't adversely impacted.**

Association Governance reported the following:

Since the addition of this requirement in 2021, there has been only one bylaws amendment, which was to align the bylaws with the updated APA petition process (which simply changed timing of petitions). The bylaws changes were reviewed to ensure there was no adverse impact on any particular group.

The complete report can be viewed by referencing the past APA Bylaws Committee Report to Assembly May 2023.

#### **ACTION 15 – Completed and Ongoing**

**Enhance nomination process by disseminating rationale & chronology of the Component appointment and encouraging self-disclosure of demographic information to track progress over time.**

Marketing and Membership reported the following:

A survey might not be necessary as the outcomes of this action have been quite positive. On self-identification within member profiles:

Since 2020, APA has continued to place focused attention on the collection of member demographic profile information, including race and ethnicity. The following efforts have helped to drive a 28% increase in race/ethnicity completion within the member profile.

- Creation of a marketing page at [psychiatry.org/profile](https://psychiatry.org/profile) with videos from APA leaders about the importance of sharing demographics to advance diversity, equity and inclusion; with advertisements via email and Psychiatric News to encourage profile completion.
- Collection of demographic information during Annual Meeting and Mental Health Services Conference registration.
- User experience improvements to the member demographic profile portal.

In July 2020, APA had Race/Ethnicity data for 64% of U.S. members. In October 2023, APA now has Race/Ethnicity data for 82% of U.S. members. The Administration will continue to tack progress.

#### **ACTION 16 – Established and Ongoing**

**Mandate the APA share information and solicit nominations for Component membership.**

The Office of District Branches and Marketing and Membership reported the following:

The Communications team develops DB/SA News and Notes, a monthly e-newsletter, which looks to have included the item in the July and August editions (see attached) this year as follows:

***Nominations Now Open for APA Components and Board of Trustees***

*APA's success hinges on the expertise, knowledge, and input of its members. Learn more about APA leadership opportunities and nominate yourself or a colleague by Tuesday, August 15, for component service and Friday, September 1, for the Board of Trustees. [LEARN MORE](#)*

The Office of District Branches is ready and happy to coordinate SRAC meeting with the DB/SA Presidents and Executives. Options can include the in-person DB/SA Presidents Orientation during the APA Annual Meeting (which may include some DB/SA Execs) or during one of their monthly meetings.

Marketing and Membership will assist with developing a marketing survey of this effort if SRAC still feels it is warranted.

#### **ACTION 17 – Established and Ongoing**

**Approve APA Participation Policy language in stating each Component member must ensure their work takes into account diversity, inclusion, and antiracism principles.**

Association Governance reported the following:

In the Operations Manual, under the JRC “Yearly Assessment of Council,” it does request that the Councils provide a “brief summary of how the Council promotes and advances diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism.” The JRC report template also requests that the Council detail how the work they are doing promotes DEIBA. The JRC is responsible for ensuring that the councils are complying with their plans and meeting the DEIBA objectives.

#### **ACTION 18 – Established and Ongoing**

**Approve term limits for Committees and Council members and chairpersons (including Bylaws, Elections, and Ethics Committees).**

Association Governance reported the following:

An analysis of the data to see how this impacts M/UR leadership and participation in components is in process and will be shared with SRAC upon completion.