

By Sade Graves Aug 06, 2020



Join the Chancellor's 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge

Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla is calling all Tritons to join him in taking one action a day, for 21 days, to further our awareness, compassion and understanding of the detrimental effects of structural racism on people of color in America. The [Chancellor's 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge](#) launches on Aug. 7 and will run through Sept. 4. This inaugural challenge will center on anti-Blackness and the Black experience.

The nation is experiencing deep civil unrest paralleling the height of the Black civil rights movement that occurred between the 1950s and 1960s. People of all backgrounds are joining together to protest racism and the systemic disadvantages that Black people continue to endure in this country.

Chancellor Khosla finds the show of solidarity demonstrated to be encouraging, and he is eager to engage our campus community, including alumni, in open



and respectful dialogue on anti-racism during this pivotal movement for change.

"The goal of this inaugural challenge is to assist us in furthering our awareness, compassion, understanding, and engagement around anti-racism, with a focus on the Black American experience," said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. "We are beginning with anti-Black racism because, for most people, it is the most difficult to explore and discuss. By starting with anti-Black racism, we deepen our capacity to understand how oppression and systemic biases broadly impact other communities such as Latinx, Native American, and LGBT communities, among others. The Chancellor's 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge will engage students, faculty, staff and alumni and challenge us all to take action to become literate in discussing race, equity, diversity, and inclusion."

The Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), will lead this campuswide initiative.

"Anti-racism work is both necessary and critical to UC San Diego's journey towards inclusive excellence," said Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Becky Petitt, "and the Chancellor's 21-Day Challenge is an opportunity for the campus community to be part of the journey through education and self-reflective work."

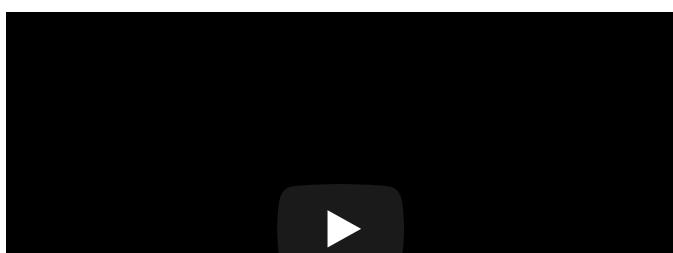
The anti-racism curriculum, curated by EDI, uses a social justice framework to impart knowledge and guide learning around power, position, privilege, perception and process, throughout the course of the challenge. The selected pieces are frank and evocative. They provide a foundational level of anti-racism education for participants to build on and explore more deeply.

The content will be introduced weekly and include resources to read, watch or listen. The selected pieces might make some uncomfortable or challenge some's personal beliefs as the initiative imparts the reality of how the country has arrived at this current turning point in our history. EDI will lead community webinars about the content provided at the end of each week to review main concepts through a panel Q and A session.

"Ultimately, we want people to understand that dismantling racism isn't about putting down one group to uplift another," said Vice Chancellor Petitt. "It's about examining how the systems we've created disadvantage entire communities, while at the same time, affording advantage to others. The Challenge gives us space to engage as a community on these structural imbalances and the societal norms we've constructed, and collaborate on how we create a world in which everyone can thrive."

Advancing inclusive excellence at UC San Diego

It has been just over two months since George Floyd, Jr. was killed by police in Minneapolis, Minn. His grievous and unconscionable death ignited Black Lives Matter protests around the





world, driving America's predisposition to anti-Blackness so far into the light that it can no longer be ignored.

Videos of police brutality, vigilante violence and racially motivated 9-1-1 calls have flooded mainstream media and social media platforms leaving people wondering, what are we doing to stop this? Locally, our UC San Diego community is asking what we, as an institution, are doing to ensure our Black campus community feels safe and supported.

The university's commitment to being an inclusive campus is goal two of five in our [UC San Diego Strategic Plan \(PDF\)](#), which guides our efforts to be a leading student-centered, research-focused, service-oriented, public university. Goal two from the Strategic Plan:

Cultivating a diverse and inclusive university community that encourages respectful open dialogue, and challenges itself to take bold actions that will ensure learning is accessible and affordable for all.

In 2019, the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion published the [Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#) to direct UC San Diego's path forward in realizing this transformational goal. The plan was developed in partnership with thousands of campus community members over 3 years; feedback and ideas were collected through individual interviews, focus groups, engagement with resource groups for students, faculty, and staff, and climate surveys.

The plan is framed by three core tenets:

Access and Success: attract, retain and support a diverse faculty, staff and student body with the goal of reflecting California demographics and achieving institutional excellence at UC San Diego.

Climate: create and foster a positive and welcoming climate where we value, include and support all at UC San Diego.

Accountability: ensure institutional accountability throughout UC San Diego departments and divisions.

Also detailed, is an outcome-based assessment plan to measure leaders' progress and drive accountability. In the fall of 2019, the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion held the first annual accountability meeting where Vice Chancellors and Deans presented on how they are advancing our institution's diversity and access goals within their units, based on their own established priorities.

In May 2020, the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion published [EDI Best Practices for Faculty, Staff, and Students \(PDF\)](#), which were compiled from the unit leader presentations that were shared during the annual accountability meeting.



Most recently, EDI developed and introduced the [Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#) [Strategic Planning Toolkit](#) ([PDF](#)) (July 2020) to better support our Vice Chancellors and Deans with preparing unit and division specific action plans.

The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is currently providing consultation to Vice Chancellors, Academic Deans and other unit leaders in preparation for the second accountability meeting, scheduled to begin in November 2020.

Support for Our Black Campus Community

The Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion operates a number of programs and initiatives that support our underrepresented populations, which includes Black faculty, staff and students. The [Black Academic Excellence Initiative](#) and our [Black Resource Center](#) (BRC) were established in 2016 and 2013, respectively, to strengthen support for our Black campus community members.

EDI is also collaborating with campus partners to address issues critical to improving the Black experience for our students, faculty, and staff, and will ensure that these efforts are aligned with our long-term inclusive excellence strategy.

UC San Diego Alumni Engagement hosted a webinar [Battling Anti-Blackness](#), featuring Vice Chancellor Petitt, distinguished alum Kimberley Phillips Boehm, who is also President of our Alumni Board of Directors, John Muir Provost, K. Wayne Yang , and doctoral student James Crawford. The webinar was part II of our [Tritons Tackling Racism series](#), a joint production between the Alumni office and EDI. The Battling Anti-Blackness presentation featured perspectives from key leaders on what it means to be anti-Black, how we activate our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and how to combat structural racism and anti-Blackness.



Our [Black Staff Association](#) launched a four-part workshop series in July, [Born Free: Healing & Transcending Racism](#), to provide "a safe space for the campus community to discuss, understand, and address systemic racism."

Vice Chancellor Petitt affirms that the nationwide uprising over the last couple of months is not a moment, it's a movement, and she encourages everyone to join the movement in a way that is meaningful to them. EDI has established the [Building a Movement for Racial Justice](#) giving campaign to help support the work in becoming a more inclusive campus for our students, faculty and staff.

"We must be willing to educate ourselves. Only when we understand how we might be sustaining systemic racism or perpetuating harmful biases can we begin to unravel them, and *that*," said Vice Chancellor Petitt, "that is doing the work. It's going to require everyone to do their part for us to be successful. The outpour of concern for the well-being of our Black campus community members gives me hope that we'll get there together."

For people looking to educate themselves on social justice and inequity, the EDI website features curated resources on [COVID-19 and equity, diversity and inclusion](#) and [Anti-Racism](#). And of course, be sure to register and take part in [the Chancellor's 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge](#).

Learn more about how UC San Diego is advancing inclusive excellence at [diversity.ucsd.edu](#).

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