

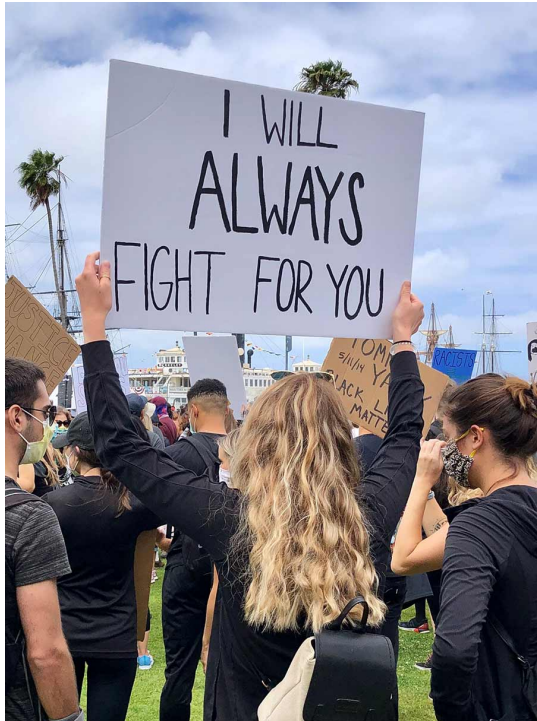


The White Allyship, Action & Accountability Initiative strengthens our anti-racism work and improves the way we teach, lead and support one another. Photo by Erik Jepsen/University Communications.

UC San Diego Launches White Allyship Initiative to Support Anti-Racism Work

New initiative aims to educate and support white campus community members in continuing anti-racism work at UC San Diego

Last summer was a period of reckoning over ongoing racial violence in the U.S. An estimated 15 to 26 million people nationwide took part in Black Lives Matter movements in June 2020 after the death of George Floyd. There is a demand for change, and a growing number of allies who are organizing to ensure that it happens.



The White Allyship, Action & Accountability Initiative is open to people of all races and ethnicities, with a focus on how our white campus community members can organize, engage and partner to eliminate systemic racism.

Students, faculty and staff at UC San Diego have been spurred to take action as well. In August 2020, Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla invited all to join the 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge to better understand the detrimental effects of structural racism on people of color in America. In response to the campus community's desire to strengthen white allyship in particular, the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is launching the White Allyship, Action & Accountability Initiative. The goal is to move from awareness to action by developing and deepening white ally capacity to identify, engage and mitigate racism, and share in the responsibility for creating an anti-racist campus.

“UC San Diego is committed to doing its part to end systemic racism,” said Chancellor Khosla. “Building upon our successful 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge, where we laid the foundation for informed conversations concerning anti-Blackness, we are taking another step toward our goal. The White Allyship Initiative strengthens our anti-racism work and improves the way we teach, lead and support one another to achieve equitable outcomes at UC

San Diego.”

Lead within your sphere of influence

What is allyship? It is an opportunity to re-evaluate personal beliefs through listening; taking action to dismantle systems of oppression; and consistently working together to advance equity for those who are disempowered. The White Allyship, Action & Accountability Initiative is open to people of all races and ethnicities, with a focus on how our white campus community members can organize, engage and partner to eliminate systemic racism.

April 30 Webinar: Creating a More Racially Just Campus Environment at UC San Diego (Part 2)

Is it enough to simply not say or do anything racist? Or do these times demand that our white leaders, faculty, staff and students develop more capacity and courage to be active allies and change agents to dismantle racism? All are invited to join in a discussion on these topics and more from 9:30-11 a.m. on April 30 with Kathy Obear, president of the Center for Transformation and Change and co-founder of the Social Justice Training Institute and Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Becky Pettit.

[Register for the webinar here »](#)

“My office is often asked by campus community members and units how to be better allies and improve the campus experience for Black and other minoritized students, faculty, and staff,” said Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Becky Pettitt. “Each of us has an opportunity to lead in our own spheres of influence. This program helps individuals understand the concepts of racism, notice the ways anti-Blackness shows up, build accountability, and contribute to change as allies.”

The program offers self-paced resources that faculty and staff may complete individually or as a group to encourage accountability and enhance the overall learning experience. The program begins with an examination of the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that individuals hold which contribute to the persistence of structural inequality and racism. Next, participants will learn key terminology and concepts to expand thinking and inform constructive conversations that support anti-racism and ally work.

“I see this program as a vital component of creating a culture of caring, equity and understanding at UC San Diego because everyone—not just our Black, Native, Latinx and other people of color—is needed to stamp out bias, prejudice and racism in our society,” said Bryce Besser, Senior Litigation Analyst with Environment, Health & Safety, who is involved in the White Allyship program as a representative of the Staff Association Executive Board.



Bryce Besser, Senior Litigation Analyst with Environment, Health & Safety, who is involved in the White Allyship program as a representative of the Staff Association Executive Board.

Those who engage with the educational resources will apply a racial lens to analyze current policies and practices to create more inclusive outcomes. The program will also offer greater understanding of how white allies at UC San Diego can help address systemic racism and integrate changemaking behaviors in their respective roles on campus.

A collection of resources is available to spark learning, including books such as “Me and White Supremacy,” by prominent author and speaker Layla Saad, that reveals how white privilege contributes to systemic racism; articles on topics such as how to effectively engage with Black friends and colleagues about racism; videos that discuss subjects such as the difference between allies and co-conspirators; and webinars that assemble experts to converse on strategies for confronting anti-Blackness in education.

A roadmap for collective transformation

The Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) continues to collaborate with leadership and other campus partners to address issues critical to improving the climate for BIPOC students, faculty and staff, in accordance with the university's long-term inclusive excellence strategy.

For ideas on advancing inclusive excellence, campus units are encouraged to review the [EDI Best Practices for Faculty, Staff, and Students \(PDF\)](#) report, which was shared during UC San Diego's first annual accountability meeting in 2019. For support with division-specific action plans, EDI prepared the [Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence Strategic Planning Toolkit \(PDF\)](#).

For individuals looking to educate themselves on racial justice, EDI offers curated resources on [COVID-19 and equity, diversity and inclusion](#) and as well as [anti-racism](#). For those who would like to review the Chancellor's 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge or facilitate the challenge with a group, [visit the Chancellor's 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge homepage](#) for full access to the anti-racism curriculum, webinars and a facilitation guide to help make the most of your engagement.

"We do have work to do as an institution," said Pettitt, "but I remain encouraged that we, as a campus community, do not shy away from acknowledging our shortcomings and actively work to do better."

[Learn more about the White Allyship, Action and Accountability Initiative.](#)



Kathy Obear, president of the Center for Transformation and Change and co-founder of the Social Justice Training Institute.

Keep up with campus news by subscribing to *This Week @ UC San Diego*