

Dear UW Medicine Board Members,

In December 2017, students and community members participated in a week-long sit-in at the University of Washington School of Medicine (UW SOM) in protest of the racism that has long been present at the institution and that ultimately affects the patients students are trained to serve. Founded on land that has been forcibly taken from the Duwamish tribe, UW SOM is situated in a state where systemic injustices are rampant. This state holds the Northwest Detention Center, one of the biggest immigrant caging centers on the West Coast. Police brutality and the criminal (in)justice system continues to take the lives of Black and Brown folks, as evidenced by the recent killing of Charleena Lyles and the state-sanctioned building of a Youth Jail. Gentrification in turn is worse now more than ever, pushing communities of color – especially those who are queer and trans - from their homes and neighborhoods. These systemic injustices result in profound ill-health in marginalized communities. When these communities pass through healthcare institutions like UW Med, however, they face poor and unequal treatment at the hands of providers who never learned to undo the biases they carry. For medical students to become physicians who can provide care to patients of color, we must learn to dismantle the ways in which systemic, institutional, and interpersonal racism harm these communities. The organizers of this campaign believe that this dismantling work at UW SOM is possible. This work however cannot be done without movement towards a truly liberatory medicine that centers the wisdom and knowledge of oppressed people both locally and globally. It cannot be done without bold, new anti-racist leadership and the allocation of significant financial resources to community organizations that are rooted in and committed to the healing and liberation of people of color. In light of a movement toward a liberatory teaching and practice of medicine, here are the demands that came out of the December 2017 sit-in at the UW SOM:

1. **We demand that the University of Washington School of Medicine allocate \$500,000 per year starting in the fiscal year 2019 for the design and implementation of a community-run Liberation Medicine School and to the establishment of a community-managed Healing Justice Fund.**

This funding should start in the fiscal year 2019 as a demonstration of the UW SOM's commitment to uprooting racism and centering power in communities of color. The UWSOM institution will have no creative control or decision-making power over the Healing Justice Fund (HJF) or the Liberation Medicine School (LMS).

- a. Historical context for the HJF and for LMS
  - i. Institutions of western medicine have long profited off the exploitation and labor of communities of color. While white institutions and organizations accumulate wealth that is then invested into upholding racist policies and

practices, POC-centered organizations that are committed to racial, healing, and economic justice continue to be defunded.

- ii. An institution like UWSOM that is founded on oppression and colonialism needs to undergo a fundamental foundational shift before it can serve marginalized communities. While the School of Medicine works on itself, a space outside the confines of this institution can and must be created where marginalized communities as a collective can account for our own medical education – an education that is based in liberatory, decolonizing, and anti-oppressive theories and practices

b. Purpose of the HJFund

- i. To divert resources to community organizations and in Seattle that work towards the liberation and well-being of communities of color, especially those who are Black, trans, queer, immigrants, Muslims, and or indigenous to lands colonized by western nations (with important consideration to those organizations working to undo white supremacy and anti-blackness, and or who serve black individuals who span multiple intersectional identities)

c. Purpose of LMS

- i. To create medical curriculums designed and taught by marginalized communities that is centered on liberation, anti-oppression and decolonization; that engages students in diagnosing and treating systems of oppression instead of pathologizing individuals; that affirms the knowledge and experiences that communities of color have about our own healing and medicine; and that aims for the healing and self-actualization of marginalized communities.

**2. We demand that the University of Washington School of Medicine provide full tuition scholarship for Black and Indigenous medical students starting with the entering class of 2020.**

- a. The demand for free tuition for students of color was made of the school in 2016 and we repeat it here. We make this demand in the name of reparations for centuries of racial and economic oppression of Black and Indigenous communities, and to challenge UWSOM to honor its commitment to undoing institutional racism by redistributing wealth and power.

**3. We demand the resignation of Paul Ramsey, the current CEO of UW Medicine and Dean of UW SOM, from the position of Dean of UWSOM.**

- a. Historical context

- i. Since 1997, Paul Ramsey has served as warden of a medical institution that equips future doctors *to do harm* in marginalized communities. For most of his tenure as Dean of this institution, he has remained passive to concerns that students of color have brought up about how to improve the learning environment so it is a more equitable space. In his passiveness, he perpetuates an environment steeped in pain and violence for these students as well as for the patients of color that all medical students at UWSOM are being trained to inadequately serve.
  - ii. For a school that brought in a revenue of over \$1.3 billion in 2016, which includes \$200 million in gifts, Paul Ramsey is to be held responsible for the limited resources that are allocated to build real power in communities of color so we can determine what approaches to healing, justice, health and medicine work for us. A lack of money is not an excuse, nor are poorly funded service learning programs that still maintain the white power structure.
  - iii. Currently, Paul Ramsey has three paid positions: CEO of UW Medicine (last available salary figure, 2009, \$787,500); Dean of UWSOM (salary \$280,700); and Executive VP for Medical Affairs (salary \$47,300). This alone highlights the willed acceptance of inequality in the school and a prioritization of funneling wealth toward rich white administrators instead of toward community of color-driven initiatives that will lead toward a liberatory practice of medicine.
- b. Specifications for the demand for Paul Ramsey's resignation from Dean of UWSOM
- i. Resignation of Dean Paul Ramsey is required by June 2018.
  - ii. A hiring team is assembled that is comprised of a majority of marginalized students and community members who have proven commitments to anti-oppression, decolonization, and collective liberation. This team will create the criteria and process for the selection of the new dean. This group has the final say in who is selected.
  - iii. A new dean with a deep intersectional analysis and practice who can guide UWSOM through a collective process to become an anti-racist institution is hired.
  - iv. Effective immediately upon hiring, this dean will organize the school toward a commitment to building real power in communities of color so we can determine what approaches to healing, justice, health and medicine work for us. This entails shifting from a diversity and inclusion approach (which looks like plucking students of color out of communities of color and expecting them to conform and assimilate into the white power structure to get liminal access to power) to an anti-oppression, decolonizing and collective liberation approach that decenters and dismantles whiteness and white supremacy at the UWSOM

**4. We demand for the resignation of Leo Morales from the position of Chief Diversity Officer and the re-design of the Center for Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion to better support students of color.**

a. Historical context

- i. The current diversity center at the UWSOM is limited in its ability to support marginalized students, especially students of color. This limitation is due to several reasons:
  1. Intentional under-funding by the UWSOM, to be expected of an institution that does not prioritize marginalized students.
  2. An “inclusionary” approach where students of color are expected to assimilate into this white institution instead of the institution shifting to meet us where we are
  3. An incompetent Chief Diversity Officer who, in his compliance with an institution that is only interested in maintaining the status quo, allows the school to propagate an illusion of change.
  4. Ejection of previous CEDI staff members of color who were capable of understanding and validating the experiences of students of color at this institution and who took active steps to create safe spaces for us.
  5. Location within A300, the general UWSOM administrative suite which serves as a fear space for students of color who are in tense relationships with the administration

b. Specifications for the demand for Leo Morales’s resignation as Chief Diversity Officer and restructuring of CEDI

- i. Resignation of Leo Morales is required by June 2018.
- ii. A new CDO is hired who has the skills and drive to lead and collaborate on anti-racism efforts at UWSOM, who is willing to take equitable non-color blind approaches to supporting students from historically oppressed racial backgrounds, and who has a demonstrated record of speaking truth to power
  1. That the new CDO, supported by the Dean of UW SOM, is capable of working with students, CEDI staff, and other interested members of the community to re-structure CEDI such that it is a safe and liberating space for students of color and that it has enough staff to carry out its mission.
- iii. A hiring team is assembled that is comprised of a majority of marginalized students and community members who have proven commitments to anti-oppression, decolonization, and collective liberation. This team will create the criteria and process for the selection of the new CDO and will have the final say in who is selected.

We look forward to implementing these demands with stakeholders of UW School of Medicine and interested community members in order to move towards the practice of a medicine that is liberatory and racially-just.

Sincerely,  
The Liberate Medicine Campaign Team  
March 2018