

The PhRMA Equity Initiative: A Year in Review

Systemic racism is real. Black and Brown communities face discrimination and experience disproportionately higher rates of health disparities across the United States. The COVID-19 pandemic emphasized the critical need to address these health disparities that stem from broader inequities and identify actionable ways for the biopharmaceutical industry to build a stronger, more equitable health care system.

So we created the PhRMA Equity Initiative. In 2020, we established clear objectives to improve health equity, enhance diverse participation in clinical trials and build a workforce that better represents the diversity of the United States. To achieve these objectives, we're working to improve affordability, access and data to better understand and measure the health disparities that we know communities of color consistently experience throughout the United States.

Investing in the Future of Health Equity

Our greatest impact can only be achieved when we include the voices of those most affected in our conversations, which is why we decided to take a community-first approach and establish the **Collaborative Actions to Reach Equity (CAREs) grant program** in April 2020. Recognizing that each community faces unique barriers, the CAREs grant program aims to support local and national solutions to address health inequities through partnerships with community-led organizations. These awards invest in and support initiatives and research that drive meaningful change on the ground to advance health equity.

The CAREs grant program not only supports the efforts of grantees to advance equity, but also helps support the identification of potential community-led best practices towards scalable, practical interventions that can be applied to other communities, disease states or public health concerns to advance health equity.

- **Using Community Health Workers to Prevent COVID-19 in Low Income Black Communities**, Sisters in Birth, Inc. in Hinds, Madison and Rankin counties, Mississippi
- **Breaking Down Barriers to COVID-19 Vaccination for African and African Americans**, Bridge-Pamoja in Portland, Oregon
- **Supporting Access to COVID-19 Vaccines in Teens, Young Adults, and American Indian/Alaska Native Communities**, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

To date, the CAREs grant program has already distributed nearly \$400,000 in funding to projects from eight organizations.

You can learn more about the 2021 awardees [here](#).

\$400,000
given in CAREs grant
funding



Getty Israel
CEO,
Sisters in Birth, Inc.



Pastor Levell Thomas
CEO and President,
Bridge-Pamoja

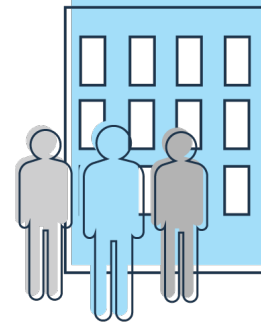


Donna Meltzer
CEO,
NACDD

Rebuilding Trust & More Representative Data

Building a more equitable health care system begins by **earning and building trust, and fostering diverse representation and participation** in every step of the new medicine pipeline. In 2020, PhRMA member companies voluntarily developed the first ever, industry-wide clinical trial diversity principles. These principles build on our commitment to earn trust and address the systemic issues that deter Black and Brown communities from participating in clinical trials, so that people who want to participate, can. Our industry-wide principles took effect on April 14, 2021. They include an acknowledgment of historical wrongs and medical mistrust, a focus on inclusivity in trial design and a commitment to adopt appropriate policies (i.e., scientifically driven and patient responsive study design and target enrollment, eligibility criteria and recruitment plans) intended to help enhance clinical trial diversity.

In June 2021, PhRMA held a workshop to build off of these principles. Over 500 participants representing 150+ organizations joined PhRMA for a clinical trial stakeholder workshop. Twenty-nine PhRMA member companies participated in this two-day gathering to discuss the need to rebuild trust in underrepresented communities, identify the root causes of health inequities, and engage in innovative efforts to diversify across the clinical trial ecosystem. The takeaways from that workshop were gathered and shared in [this report](#). You can see highlights from the workshop [here](#).



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Empowering the Next Generation

Building a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the United States is also a critical step in our efforts to improve representation in the biopharmaceutical industry. On October 27 and 28, 2021, PhRMA held our inaugural graduate summit and career expo, Pathways to Success in Biopharma. We welcomed over 600 virtual attendees representing 224 schools from across the country. The summit was a joint partnership between PhRMA, [Center for Healthcare Innovation](#), [United Negro College Fund](#) and the [Ernest E. Just Life Science Society](#). Over the course of the two-day summit, attendees enjoyed 15 virtual booths with industry leaders, 13 company breakout rooms and 5 expert panels to learn about career pathways in the industry.

After the summit, over 350 resumes were distributed to member companies from participants looking for opportunities in the biopharma industry across research, legal, business, marketing and accounting.

367
resumes distributed to
member companies

from participants looking for opportunities in the biopharma industry across research, legal, business, marketing, and accounting.

As of November 2021, the [event webpage](#) has been viewed over 18,000 times – and continues to receive traffic from visitors looking to access resources and revisit summit information even after the event has ended. As part of PhRMA’s Equity Initiative, we’re excited to offer more events like this in the future.

We’ve also recently partnered with [Women of Color in Pharma](#) in order to support and grow the leadership skills of women of color in pharma and the life sciences. We’re excited by the future – and to watch the many talented students enter the field with the aim of changing lives and improving health outcomes for all patients.

Growing Our Audience & Impact

Across social media, PhRMA Equity Initiative content served more than 23.9 million impressions resulting in 938,107 engagements across all platforms in 2021. Additionally, 55,500 users have interacted with equity content on PhRMA.org, mostly through our policy comments and the [PhRMA.org/equity](#) homepage. On the PhRMA.org/equity webpage alone, we’ve hit over 9 million views. We also regularly distribute an equity newsletter with 2,000 subscribers boasting a 45% average open rate among target audiences. Make sure you get our monthly Equity Newsletter updates at [PhRMA.org/equity!](#)

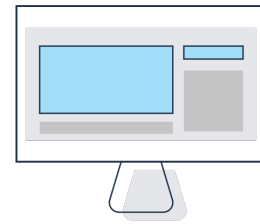
PhRMA’s Equity Initiative was also covered by the Washington Post, U.S. News & World Report, and featured in an interactive storytelling article published by POLITICO.

We believe that our Equity Initiative requires holding spaces for open, ongoing conversations about how to impact meaningful change. In June, we sponsored an Atlantic Equity event featuring HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra sharing administration priorities on health equity and our COO Lori Reilly in conversation with Quita Highsmith of Genentech about the importance of diverse clinical trials. Every month, PhRMA hosts virtual lunches with approximately 40-50 stakeholders invested in our mission to improve health equity. In 2021, we were able to hold space for many critical conversations, measure the current landscape and identify opportunities for us to improve health equity in the industry and within our communities. In 2022, our work continues and we look forward to making more progress in the new year.

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PhRMA.org/equity
webpage

Fueling Change Through Policy

In an effort to advance policy solutions, PhRMA has submitted several comment letters to Congress and to Federal Agencies promoting policy efforts to advance equity. You can read these comments at [PhRMA.org/equity](https://www.phrma.org/equity). This includes comments for National Institutes of Health/Unite, CMS Quality Programs, OMB Advancing Equity in Underserved Communities, and the Congressional Caucus on Social Determinants of Health. PhRMA's comments letters are intended to use our voice in Washington to push for meaningful change that will improve health equity, enhance clinical trial diversity, and foster greater support for our emerging STEM workforce.

PhRMA has released several research reports and papers to add to the body of work on health disparities. This research explores a variety of topics, including how gaps in available data often exacerbate health disparities and create barriers to change, and how many of the medicines currently in development address diseases that disproportionately affect communities of color.

View our [Disparities in Data Design](#) and [Medicines in Development](#) report.

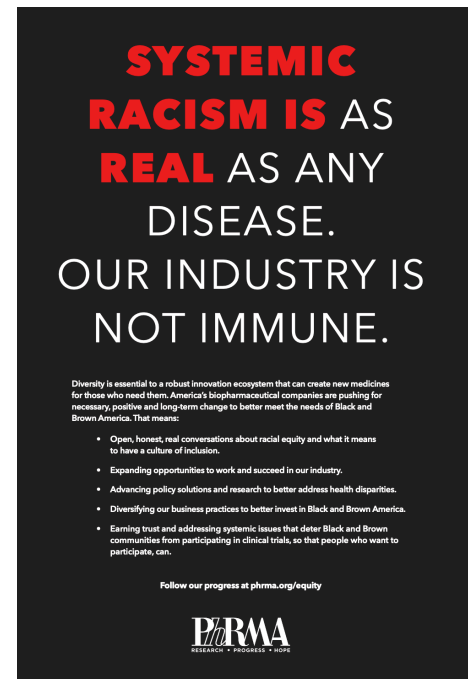
Additionally, we sponsored the AMCP Racial Diversity in Plan Design Forum, a report that seeks to identify potential structural issues within the current formulary and benefit design processes that may lead to racial health disparities or inequality and identify viable solutions to reduce racial health disparities in the use of medications and related therapies.

Diversity and equity are critical to the work that we do. Every day, biopharmaceutical researchers across America are working to discover the next scientific breakthrough that could change lives. We firmly believe that through innovation, we can help create a better future for us all.

6

comment letters

to Congress, Federal Agencies to advocate for health equity policy changes



Staying true to our 2020 Racial Justice Principles.