



April 20, 2021

To Faculty, Staff, and Students:

As many in our community and across the nation react to the verdict in the trial of Derek Chauvin, who was found guilty in the death of George Floyd, I am writing to acknowledge the stress and tension that many have been feeling during this period of social turbulence and to reaffirm our university's commitment to creating an environment free from racism and other forms of bias. I am heartened by the supportive response that so many members of our university community have exhibited to one another in these difficult times, and in particular, I am pleased to share the recommendations of the President's Task Force on Equity and Inclusive Excellence (EIE). This Task Force, which began its work in October 2020, has been focused on understanding racial and other inequities that may exist at Stevens, making recommendations for improvement and creating an environment where all members of our community can thrive.


Last month, I [announced](#) that the Task Force's final report and recommendations have been shared and discussed with the President's Cabinet, Stevens' Academic Council and the Human Resources Committee of the Board of Trustees. The [final report is now available](#) on the Diversity & Inclusion website, and I encourage all to review it in its entirety.

The recommendations presented in the final report represent the work of the Task Force over months of investigation and research, and with considerable input from the community. In the coming months as Stevens resumes more normal operations, I and administrative leaders will carefully review each of the recommendations and discuss how and when they can be implemented. Our efforts will focus initially on the five priorities identified in the report, and recommendations of the Task Force will inform and influence Stevens' next 10-year strategic plan which will be developed over the coming year. The Task Force's five priority recommendations are summarized below:

1. Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into all relevant major areas of the 2022-2032 Stevens strategic plan to strengthen university commitment to DEI.
2. Increase faculty diversity with a focus on individuals from underrepresented groups to inspire student engagement and drive innovation in research and teaching.
3. Enable Stevens graduates to be versed in the challenges, opportunities, and issues of DEI and to effectively interact in a diverse workplace.
4. Build capacity among faculty and staff to influence Stevens' culture and climate to ensure all members of the community feel a sense of belonging and experience Stevens as a place where they can thrive.
5. Enhance communications to the campus community to increase awareness of DEI activity and progress and to reinforce how DEI is valued at Stevens.

Stevens has a responsibility to leverage the strength that our diverse community contributes to education and research; to prepare our students to succeed in an increasingly diverse society and workplace; and to support to the greatest extent possible all members of our vibrant community. The EIE Task Force recommendations provide a roadmap to build on current successes and employ best practices to establish new policies and practices. Once again, I would like to thank all of the Task Force members for the considerable time and thought they gave to advancing Stevens' continued commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Per aspera ad astra,


Nariman Farvardin
President

