



## ACS Virginia Section

### DRAFT for Executive Committee Review & Revision

Combined Statements Submitted by Michael Hunnicutt & Charlene Crawley, July 11, 2020

**Subject:** Racial Justice and Equality, and the ACS's Core Values of Diversity, Respect, and Inclusion

Dear Fellow Virginia ACS Section members:

In light of the dual US health and social justice pandemics and the spotlight on systemic racism heightened by the prominent killings of African Americans, the VA ACS Executive Committee affirms to renew our commitment to increase the participation and representation of racial, ethnic and gender minorities within our community. As expressed by [ACS President Luis Echegoyen](#), "*diverse chemistry learners and professionals continue to experience rejection, isolation, aggression, and harassment by their peers leaving them disillusioned and their work undervalued.*" The ACS-VA section is nationally recognized and awarded for efforts from initiatives such as Project SEED, Women Chemists, Younger Chemists and Minority Affairs Committees, among others, that provide targeted support, development, and outreach to our underrepresented Virginia STEM students and professionals. However, we recognize that programming efforts alone are not enough.

Indigenous Native Americans and African Americans of the diaspora (i.e. enslaved) populations of the US have been strategically isolated and stripped of their cultural historic origins and community, stigmatized, and denied educational and professional opportunities for hundreds of years. We must continue to be strategic in our understanding of ways to bridge the gap caused by this isolation and seek new ways to, welcome and unite these and all other ethnic minorities within the majority STEM community. Therefore, we need your individual voices, ideas, and participation to re-evaluate our policies and practices to actively remove systemic barriers to participation by all in the ACS community. The first step is to understand the ramifications of [systemic racism](#), brave conversations that seek to [get to the root of racial injustice](#), and help [White Americans to relate](#) to the perceptions and perspectives of people of color. Each of us is faced with the question, "What can I do?" We encourage all ACS members to demonstrate excellence in our professions; greatness brings authority to speak and effect change. We should use our successes to advance racial justice and equity. Together, we have an opportunity to build a stronger and more inclusive ACS.

We invite you to share your [thoughts and ideas](#).