



# CMSRU Update

News & Information from  
Cooper Medical School of Rowan University

June 12, 2020

## Welcome!

Welcome to our online newsletter for communicating news, events, activities and accomplishments for members of the CMSRU community! Formerly called “Weekly Update,” we’ve changed the name to **CMSRU Update**.

If you have a story you wish to share, please send a few well-crafted paragraphs with the “who, what, when, why and how” and a suggested image to **Sharon Clark** at [clarks@rowan.edu](mailto:clarks@rowan.edu). To ensure your email isn’t overlooked, please put “**CMSRU Update Submission**” in the subject line of the email. CMSRU Update will be published bi-weekly on Fridays.

## National news sparks important conversations about racism at CMSRU and beyond



The recent murder of George Floyd at the hands of law enforcement in Minneapolis has resulted in important conversations happening across the country about racism in America. Last week, the CMSRU community came together to address issues and show support for our Black students, faculty and staff.

On Tuesday, CMSRU hosted a special virtual gathering on racism. CMSRU leadership, faculty, staff and students expressed thoughts, shared vulnerabilities and spoke up in support of peers and colleagues of color during this emotional Town Hall event.

“We want our community to know that your voices were heard, and we stand with you,” said **Jocelyn Mitchell-Williams, MD, PhD**, associate dean of diversity and community affairs at CMSRU, in a follow-up communication about the event. “Racism, hatred, discrimination and injustice have no place at our institution and will not be tolerated.”

On Friday, CMSRU partnered with Cooper University Health Care to hold two virtual events to show solidarity and support for the White Coats for Black Lives movement. Dr. Jocelyn Mitchell-Williams provided

**PICTURED LEFT:** *CMSRU Dean Annette C. Reboli, MD, took a knee on the Cooper helipad during a solidarity event last Friday. Pictured with Dr. Reboli are (left to right): Anthony Rostain, MD, chair of psychiatry; Eric Kupersmith, MD, senior vice president and chief physician executive; and John Porter, MD, head, trauma surgery; director, Center for Trauma Services, and assistant dean for clinical affairs*

**Two more programs of the *We Are Not Ok: Injustice, Action, and Healing* series will be held TODAY and Monday:**

### **Friday, June 12, 3 p.m.**

*“White People, Do Something: A Dialogue on Whiteness and Allyship”*

This session will examine the ways in which white people continue to benefit from systemic oppression. Participants will explore strategies for abandoning white guilt in order to re-center the needs of people of color. Everyone will develop a toolkit of anti-racist resources and action items to effect social change.

WebEx link:

<https://rowan.webex.com/rowan/onstage/g.php?>

[MTID=e1122fee78f2afa572a29680](https://rowan.webex.com/rowan/onstage/g.php?MTID=e1122fee78f2afa572a29680)

brief remarks, then led hundreds of people – CMSRU students, doctors, nurses and employees from the health system – in taking a knee in silence for 8 minutes and 46 seconds. The CMSRU/Cooper event was one of hundreds such events held across the nation.

In addition, Rowan University's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion launched an ongoing series, **We Are Not OK: Injustice, Action, and Healing**. The first program in the series, "[The Match that Lit the Flame: Unpacking Systemic Racism, Policing, and Resistance.](#)" was held June 4 and can be viewed [here](#). CMSRU student **Marie-Ange Munyemana** was a panelist for the second program, "[I Can't Breathe: Discussion of Racial Battle Fatigue, Trauma, and Self-Care.](#)" which was held this past Monday and can be viewed [here](#). And yesterday, "[Speaking Truth to Power through Pedagogy: Anti-Racist Teaching in Higher Education.](#)" was presented. [The link to yesterday's meeting will be available soon on Rowan's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion website.](#)

"The events of the past couple of weeks have brought to the forefront many critical issues about racism that we must address and that have been festering for centuries we must address," explains **Annette C. Reboli, MD**, dean of CMSRU. "In the coming weeks and months, we will be heeding the call to action and taking concrete steps to build a more inclusive and anti-racist culture. Not only is it a moral imperative that resonates with our mission, but also a public health emergency. Watch for future announcements from CMSRU's Office of Diversity and Community Affairs for opportunities to get involved."

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**Monday, June 15, 3 p.m.**

*"Where Do We Go From Here? Navigating Campus and Community"*

This session completes series and will provide participants with an opportunity to engage in problem-solving strategies in collaboration with key community constituents. Participants will be provided with a tool to facilitate their action planning.

WebEx link:

<https://rowan.webex.com/rowan/onsstage/g.php?MTID=ea0dd25612d224ba5b2156897146863c6>

## CMSRU employees participate in virtual Town Hall

This week, CMSRU employees logged on to WebEx for a virtual Town Hall meeting. Two big topics of conversation were racism, and employees' re-entry into the building.

Dean Reboli opened the meeting with a moment of silence to recognize George Floyd and other Black victims of violence at the hands of law enforcement officers. She reiterated CMSRU's position that racism and discrimination will not be tolerated, and outlined steps CMSRU is planning to take to build a more inclusive and anti-racist culture at CMSRU.



The conversation then moved to employees' current work situation. Dean Reboli acknowledged the diligence and hard work of CMSRU employees, who adapted quickly during the pandemic and stay-at-home orders to ensure continuity in CMSRU's medical education program and other school activities.

Dean Reboli noted that although the Governor of New Jersey has lifted stay-at-home orders, there are still a number of restrictions in place. CMSRU, she said, would follow Rowan University's guidance on re-entry into the building. Many modifications will be made, including both the physical space and with scheduling, to ensure the health and safety of all – students and employees, alike. CMSRU's physical work and learning spaces are now being evaluated for modifications, and each department has been tasked with creating a phased-in return-to-work plan.

Employees had the opportunity to submit questions and feedback during the Town Hall. Another meeting will be scheduled soon. Watch your email for details.

## News and Announcements



The CMSRU Office of Diversity and Community Affairs, in collaboration with the Center for Humanism,

Professionalism, Medical Ethics, and Law, is soliciting stories from providers, nurses, staff, and students about racism in health care and our fight to create an anti-racist culture at Cooper and in our communities. These will be shared in a special issue of the Center for Humanism's newsletter to be published in the coming weeks.



June is Pride Month, a month to celebrate LGBTQ members of our community!

At CMSRU, the LGBTQ + Ally student group has an active membership committed to fostering an environment in which diversity is celebrated and addressing the need for allies of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) community among medical professionals. The group facilitates opportunities for students and clinicians to learn how to better care and advocate for the needs of

Please submit reflections about your experiences advocating for health equity and racial justice, or experiences witnessing or experiencing racism and how it affected you. We welcome submissions both from our colleagues of color and allies. They can be about moments of sadness and hurt, or moments of joy and optimism. All reflections should be 300-500 words and must be in compliance with patient privacy laws. Please send submissions or questions by 7/17/20 to Dr. Mara Gordon at [gordon-mara@cooperhealth.edu](mailto:gordon-mara@cooperhealth.edu).

the LGBTQ patient community. For the past 4-5 years, LGBTQ + Ally has led [Haven, a program with LUCY Outreach](#), to provide outreach and social opportunities for LGBTQ youth in East Camden.

[Click here for more information on CMSRU's LGBTQ + Ally student group.](#)

## In case you missed it

### Rowan announces resumption of research

The Division of University Research announced the completion of a plan for safe resumption of research at Rowan. The timeline for implementing the phased resumption of on-campus and field research will be determined by the University's leadership, taking into account the health and safety of faculty, students, and staff, and all relevant local, State, and National Public Health directives.

The plans were developed by a committee of Rowan leaders and researchers, including CMSRU's own **Dr. Darren Boehning, PhD**, Head and Assistant Dean for Research.



[Complete information about Rowan's plan to restart research can be found here.](#)

