

## Anti-Racism Commitment for the Emory HERCULES Community Engagement Core (CEC)

The HERCULES CEC collaborates with community partners using an exposome approach to seek environmental justice and improve health in the metro Atlanta area.

The purpose of this anti-racism commitment is to guide the HERCULES CEC and Stakeholder Advisory Board in its mission, as environmental injustices are almost always manifestations of racial injustice.

### **To begin the journey towards becoming an anti-racist multi-cultural program, we start by acknowledging that:**

Race is a concept invented by humans with real, ongoing, harmful consequences.

Racism is a system and tool of privilege, inequality, inequity, and oppression.

Racism can function as a pattern of norms, micro-inequities and aggressions, and/or policies that inflict harm.

Individual identities are multi-faceted and never static. There is diversity and differing viewpoints within cultures and groups.

Anti-racism work is psychologically hard. All who are engaged will need support and space for self-care.

It is not the role of people of color to educate their white colleagues, who must do their own anti-racism work.

Racism and white supremacist culture remain manifested politically, economically, and culturally at Emory and within HERCULES.

Issues of race, color, and class have a harmful impact on our center, its systems, and its people.

Anti-racism work will require change in HERCULES' culture and practices.

Addressing racism encompasses other forms of oppression and social injustices.

Communities of color and other oppressed groups have had negative experiences that have caused a valid distrust of research and science.

### **Anti-Racism Commitment:**

The HERCULES CEC is against racism and all forms of oppression and injustice. We commit to challenging the political, systemic, and cultural racism at our institution, within our center, and in our communities. We commit to critically analyzing all current and future activities and programs to ensure we are addressing biases, norms, or policies that may cause harm to people of color. We strive to demonstrate this commitment by building equity into all procedures, programs, and activities, such as our purchasing/procurement practices, publications and publishing practices, funding criteria, and evaluation activities. We expect HERCULES scientists to critically analyze their research activities and assumptions with humility and an anti-racist lens - specifically embracing the influence of the community on science and considering the potential impact of the science on a community.

### **To uphold this commitment, we believe and will be guided by the following principles:**

- Seeking, respecting, listening to, and integrating diverse perspectives is crucial for clarity and more complete understanding.
- Lived experience is valid knowledge that contributes to science, understanding, and wisdom.
- We do not know what is best for local communities and have much to learn from these partners. Humility will guide our interactions and scholarship.
- Discomfort is necessary for growth and learning.
- Addressing challenges related to racism and oppression requires trust, transparency, dialogue, reflection, and feedback.
- Collaboration, co-creation, and shared power are essential to our mission and take time and intentional action.

The HERCULES CEC and Stakeholder Advisory Board commit to this journey and will share this Anti-Racism Commitment with all community partners in the spirit of understanding each other.

*“True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice.”*

— Martin Luther King Jr.