Recognizing Black History Month

Since its initial introduction by Carter G. Woodson in 1926 through today, Black History Month has provided one portal to recognize and celebrate the tremendous historical and contemporaneous contributions of the Black community to all facets of our human existence. From the days of Imhotep through present time, the record of this historical contribution to medicine and science has been as broad as it has been deep, replete with sung and unsung heroes alike who have advanced our biomedical enterprise in remarkable ways in service to our full humanity – driving critically new discoveries and providing essential services - broad shoulders on which we all stand. Black History Month also provides a time for contemplation as a community on where we have been, where we are, and where we strive to be. Such introspection includes reflection on our commitments to inclusive excellence and equity, with honest appraisal of the struggles of the past and striving with continued aspiration to a brighter future, recognizing that it is only through maximal capture and leverage of human talent in all its forms that we can fully advance the health of individuals and societies across our national and global space. This Black History Month additionally brings sober reflection on the immeasurable human toll inflicted by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, with particularly devastating loss in the Black community and other communities of color. In honoring all those lost, it is imperative to appreciate that we all are inextricably intertwined and that lifting all boats in common purpose to rise together will redound to the benefit of us all. As we celebrate this year's Black History Month and celebrate the diversity across our community, we must keep close that we are stronger and better together!

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