

**Year 3 Public Description of Work for
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

Columbia University/Columbia University Irving Medical Center

**Highlighting Varied Interventions to Effect Organizational Climate
Change: “Bold Conversations for Healing and Reshaping our Medical
Center Community”**

Relevant Rubric Area(s): Other Remediation, Diverse Stakeholder Partnerships

The problem:

The co-chairs of the Columbia University and Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) Action Collaborative engaged the full NASEM Faculty Liaison Network in university-wide discussions on ways to address organizational climate. In the 2021-2022 academic year, the co-chairs invited groups from four different schools to share their climate change efforts. Activities varied by strategy and format but all provided rich insights into the diversity of approaches to address organizational climate change. The approaches featured included departmental climate surveys, efforts to celebrate and recognize diverse faculty, and facilitated discussions of racial stress and resilience. “Bold Conversations for Healing and Reshaping our Medical Center Community”, is an ongoing collaborative program led by the Department of Psychiatry and in partnership with [CUIMC Human Resources](#) and the [CUIMC Office of Faculty Professional Development, Diversity and Inclusion](#), featuring facilitated open conversations.

Background:

In response to the substantive impact of COVID-19 on healthcare providers, faculty, trainees, and staff wellbeing, faculty from the Department of Psychiatry at the Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) launched [CopeColumbia](#) in 2020 to support the emotional well-being and provide tools to enhance the professional resilience ([Mellins, Mayer, Glasofer, et al., 2020](#)). The COVID-19 pandemic and the health disparities associated with it as well as the murder of George Floyd, resulted in increased experiences around racial stress and bias within and outside of the workplace. CopeColumbia realized that a broader approach to support CUIMC community around racial stress and wellbeing was needed. Thus, the first installment of “Bold Conversations for Healing and Reshaping Our Medical Center Community” was launched in the spring of 2021.

Program Description:

The “Bold Conversations for Healing and Reshaping our Medical Center Community” is a broadly collaborative initiative available to faculty, researchers, and staff at the four health

Year 3 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

science schools at CUIMC. It was supported by the [Office of the Provost's Anti-Racism Seed Grants](#) and philanthropic donations to the Department of Psychiatry.

The first Bold Conversations event was a panel discussion including faculty and trainees who shared their experiences of racial bias in the workplace as well as their strategies of resilience and coping. It was a powerful session, full of reflections of the gains our medical center has made around systemic racism, the work that remains, and the toll imposed on people of historically minoritized groups. Three subsequent sessions were offered in the 2021-2022 academic year. Two included additional discussions by faculty of color and leadership. A third included a discussion amongst the four health science school deans. Over 300 faculty and staff registered for the first session, with representation from all four-health science schools at CUIMC, with over 500 attendees for all sessions combined.

While formats have varied slightly from session to session, all were virtual and have been facilitated by CopeColumbia faculty; all have focused on open discussions of racial stress, resilience, and healing. Due to the sensitive nature of the discussions, the program is recorded but only accessible to the CUIMC community. Post-event feedback from the sessions has been very positive.

Next steps:

Evaluation of the sessions offered to date is underway and includes review of the themes that arose during the panel discussions across all sessions and the analysis of participant feedback solicited via post-event online surveys. Some key themes from the panel discussions included: the impact of racial stress; the burden of tokenism; developing and modeling coping strategies such as practicing self-care and problem-solving; navigating the impact of intersectional identities; the importance of tools and resources for the community for anti-bias training; and identifying mentors, sponsors, and allies. In addition, post-event survey evaluations including Likert scale measures and open-ended questions sent to participants at the end of each program are under review. The review of key themes and post-event evaluations will be used in the designing of future programming and initiatives.

Website for further information (if applicable): <https://www.cuimc.columbia.edu/covid-19-resources-cuimc/copecolumbia>

Point of Contact Name: Clara Lapiner

Email Address for Point of Contact: cl2779@cumc.columbia.edu