

MUSC earns 2019 Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award; Named Diversity Champion for second consecutive year

CHARLESTON, S.C. (Oct. 16, 2019) – Recently, the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) was recognized with two prestigious, national diversity honors. MUSC was one of only 43 institutions across the United States to be named as a 2019 Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award recipient by *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine, the oldest and largest diversity publication in higher education. The HEED Award committee then selected MUSC as one of the few recipients of an additional designation -- as a 2019 Diversity Champion. Only those institutions that register the highest scores for their accomplishments in diversity and inclusion earn the designation of Diversity Champion.

The Health Professions HEED Award is the only national honor recognizing U.S. medical, dental, pharmacy, osteopathic, nursing, veterinary, allied health, and other health schools and centers that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion across their campuses. This is the third consecutive year that MUSC earned a place among the HEED honorees and the second consecutive year that MUSC earned the added distinction as a Diversity Champion.

“The more we are able to create an environment that is diverse, the stronger we are,” said MUSC President David J. Cole, M.D., FACS. “It is a concept that we don’t talk about enough. It’s through diversity of thought, expertise, education, culture, background, process and interaction, that’s where innovation occurs. Simply put, that’s how we, as MUSC, achieve our best for those we serve.”

“The Health Professions HEED Award process consists of a comprehensive and rigorous application that includes questions relating to the recruitment and retention of students and employees, and best practices for both; continued leadership support for diversity; and other aspects of campus diversity and inclusion,” said Lenore Pearlstein, co-publisher of *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine. “As we continue to see a record number of Health Professions HEED

Award applicants each year, nearly every school tells us they use the application itself as a tool to create new programs and to benchmark their accomplishments across campus. The process allows them to reflect on their successes and also determine where more work needs to be done. We also continue to raise the standards in selecting Health Professions HEED institutions.”

Among its broad range of diversity and inclusion initiatives, MUSC has a robust supplier diversity program that is projected to spend more than \$73 million with small, women- and minority-owned business enterprises on its newest facility, the MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children’s Hospital and Pearl Tourville Women’s Pavilion. Set to open in the fall, the \$385 million structure will be the most technologically advanced facility of its kind in the nation. The diversity spend for its construction includes some \$12.6 million with African American businesses, \$26.2 million with small businesses (non-minority, non-female), and \$32.1 million with women-owned businesses (all ethnicities). The diversity spend will also include disadvantaged business enterprises (\$1.8 million), veteran-owned businesses (\$746,848) and Hispanic business enterprises (\$7,651).

Another intensive MUSC Diversity and Inclusion initiative is the David J. and Kathryn Cole BRIHTE Leadership Academy, a two year program designed to identify and prepare high potential, diverse talent among the current workforce. Named for the MUSC President and his wife, who sponsored the initiative, BRIHTE stands for Building and Retaining Inclusive High-Potential Talent and Excellence. MUSC is taking a “grow your own” approach to filling its pipeline to excellence and inclusion.

At a recent dinner to celebrate the inaugural BRIHTE Scholars completing the program, Dr. Cole told the gathering, “Leadership and diversity are central themes in terms of answering the why. Why are we here? What are we trying to accomplish? I’ve always thought about leadership as something that is grounded, accessible and personal. Leadership is a choice that we consciously pursue. Everyone has the ability to lead from where they are.”