A UMass Campus Conversation about Health Care Disparities: What can we do better?

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THURSDAY, OCT. 22, 2020
Finding Answers is now Advancing Health Equity
Learn about our new program

www.solvingdisparities.org
Such problems require far more profound commitments—in time, in redirection of resources and in reallocation of power—than is possible for individuals.
The CARES Act kept many families financially afloat. Now millions are falling into poverty without additional aid
Health inequities are signs of society gone wrong.

- **Leaves** = the disease, e.g., diabetes
- **Trunk** = behavior, e.g., diet, exercise, medication management
- **Roots** = social and economic conditions
- **Soil** = policy, power

Heidi Klein
Director of Planning and Healthcare Quality at Vermont Department of Health
The first documented Africans in Virginia arrived here in Aug. 1619 on the White Lion, an English privateer based in the Netherlands. Colonial officials traded food for these "20 and odd" Africans, who had been captured from a Portuguese slave ship. Among present-day Hampton's earliest African residents were Antony and Isabella. Their son, William, was the first child of African ancestry known to have been born in Virginia (ca. 1624). Many of the earliest Africans were held as slaves, but some individuals became free. A legal framework for hereditary, lifelong slavery in Virginia evolved during the 1600s. The United States abolished slavery in 1865.
The Royall House was owned by the largest slave holding family in Massachusetts and bequeathed to establish the Harvard Law School in 1817.

"We can’t dismantle what we do not understand, and we can’t understand contemporary injustice unless we reckon honestly with our history.”

RADCLIFFE DEAN TOMIKO BROWN-NAGIN
“Denial is the heartbeat of racism, beating across ideologies, races and nations. It is beating within us.”

IBRAM X. KENDI
• Anti-racism is not a state of mind but an action.
• Anti-racism cannot be accomplished when one is “color blind.”
You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'you are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe that you have been completely fair.

Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.”

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON
HOWARD UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS (1965)
What can you do immediately to begin the process of change at the individual, institutional, and community level to eliminate health disparities?

- Intellectual discourse
- Behavior change