



PTLI response to recent SCOTUS decision that undermines efforts of health care professionals to reduce inequities in our US Universities and health systems.

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The Physical Therapy Learning Institute (PTLI) strongly believes that the June 29, 2023, United States Supreme Court decision on race-conscious college admission undermines progress to achieve student equity and inclusivity in higher education and, ultimately, to improve the health of our nation. The Court's decision in the *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina* and *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* reversed past decisions that allowed Universities to consider race in admission. There is overwhelming evidence supporting the value and outcomes of increased racial and ethnic diversity on college campuses and this decision is likely to reduce that diversity. Furthermore, there is long-standing evidence that a more racially and ethnically diverse health care workforce is necessary to achieve health equity and reduce health disparities. This decision introduces new challenges to creating a more racially and ethnically diverse health care workforce. Physical therapy has struggled throughout its 100-year history to recruit students into academic programs from historically marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds. Admission practices that support racism and white privilege resulting in limited racial and ethnic diversity, equity, and a sense of belonging in the physical therapy profession must stop. These practices limit the capacity of physical therapists to assume our responsibility to improve access and equity of physical therapy services and create a workforce that better represents the population we serve.

PTLI joins colleagues and organizations from other health professions who embrace the benefits of racial and ethnic diversity in classrooms, research centers and health care settings. PTLI strongly supports holistic admissions and equitable practices and policies in physical therapy education. As an organization, PTLI has instituted initiatives to support researchers and leaders in physical therapy education who are from historically marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds, particularly Black researchers and leaders to commemorate one of our founders, Dr. Lynda Woodruff.

The Supreme Court decision reminds us of the continued work that is needed to promote racial and ethnic diversity and inclusivity. It is our profession's social and ethical responsibility to optimize movement that improves health across all cultures and ethnicities. Our profession must not sit back, and watch health inequities further widen in the United States. We welcome all to join PTLI to insist on inclusiveness in the health professions. Physical therapy professionals must continue to lead in ways to ignite innovation and collaborative advancement that will transform the health of society.

PTLI Board of Directors

The Physical Therapy Learning Institute envisions the igniting of collaborative advancement to transform the health of society. We are committed to provide leadership and advocacy to challenge the societal status quo. We strongly believe that a lack of change will stifle innovation in physical therapy education, research, and practice. We support the ACAPT Statement on Racism and Systemic Inequality supporting Black Lives in Physical Therapy Education without hesitation and look forward to partnering to create a more humane and inclusive future. We invite everyone in the physical therapy community to support this effort to change this societal challenge.