



# Society of University Surgeons

## SUS Statement on Racism and Recent Deaths

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. The infection has led to devastating consequences, with over 100,000 deaths in the US alone, disproportionately impacting African Americans and Hispanics. But the communities of color, especially the African American community in the United States, have been dealing with another pandemic for far too long - the pandemic of racism and discrimination. The horrific deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor are the latest examples in a lengthy timeline of atrocities.

The Society of University Surgeons (SUS) condemns racism and discrimination in all its forms.

The mission of the SUS is supporting and advancing leaders in academic surgery. In 2017, SUS partnered with the Society of Black Academic Surgeons (SBAS) to launch the Promising Leaders Program with the explicit goal of increasing underrepresented minority academic surgeons in leadership positions. This collaboration now includes the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES) and the Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma (EAST). In early 2020, the SUS formalized the creation of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee with goals of increasing diversification of its membership, and incorporating equity, diversity and inclusion into all organization operations. Recent events have highlighted the need for another leadership skill for our members – advocacy for social justice.

When powerful voices are organized, empowered and heard, they will change the world. The SUS stands in solidarity against racism and for a commitment towards equity in health care. We look forward to active learning, collaboration, research and advocacy efforts towards improving the health and well-being of the diverse populations we serve. We are committed to the work ahead.

Handwritten signature of Sandra L. Wong in black ink.

Sandra L. Wong, MD, MS  
President

Handwritten signature of Cristina Ferrone in black ink.

Cristina Ferrone, MD  
Secretary

Handwritten signature of Kasper Wang in purple ink.

Kasper Wang, MD  
President-Elect

Handwritten signature of Danny Chu in black ink.

Danny Chu, MD  
Secretary-Elect

Handwritten signature of Gregory Kennedy in black ink.

Gregory Kennedy, MD, PhD  
Immediate Past-President

Handwritten signature of Timothy Donahue in black ink.

Timothy Donahue, MD  
Treasurer

Handwritten signature of Thomas K. Varghese Jr. in blue ink.

Thomas K. Varghese Jr., MD, MS  
Chair, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee