

Remarks by EVC Elizabeth H. Simmons
2nd Annual UC San Diego Health Sciences Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Summit
July 22, 2019

Good morning – it is so wonderful to be with you today. I'm glad to see such a large group from so many parts of campus attending in person, and to know that others are with us through the ether and the magic of live streaming.

I'd like to give special thanks to Vice Chancellor of Health Sciences David Brenner, Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Becky Petitt, and UC San Diego Health CEO Patty Maysent for organizing this summit – and for supporting equity, diversity, and inclusion across our entire university. We can only achieve true inclusive excellence by working together, so I really appreciate your leadership in fostering cross-campus collaboration at this scale.

Today's summit will focus specifically on issues related to gender and also on the experiences of individuals who come from racial or ethnic populations that are traditionally underrepresented in the health sciences and health systems.

In recent years, UC San Diego has been making some important progress in related areas. For instance, since 2012, the presence of individuals from historically underrepresented groups has grown across the board: by a factor of two among first-year undergraduates, by more than 40% among graduate students, by almost 30% among ladder-rank faculty, and by over 30% among career staff.

There has also been a steady increase in the number and size of research grants led by women researchers both on general campus and in the health sciences. In 2017, women researchers earned 14 of the top 20 research awards... totaling over \$73 million. This is truly remarkable.

However, we still have a long way to go. We have not yet achieved the level of equity or inclusion we are striving for, either in UC San Diego Health and Health Sciences or in other parts of the institution. We still do not reflect the composition of the communities we serve, including our students and patients. And our faculty, students, residents, and staff continue to encounter complex, systemic challenges in their work with the university.

In order to continue making progress, we must first take care to fully understand where we are right now. Today's summit gives us an opportunity to pause for a closer look at our status and to reflect on what kind of change is needed. Then, we have to remind ourselves that this work will not be finished quickly. It will take sustained effort, hard effort, over a long period of time. Committing ourselves to that work, to the creation of lasting change, is an important investment to our future as a university.

In grappling with the multi-faceted challenges before us at today's summit, I hope that you will frame them around the core tenants of the university's strategic plan for inclusive excellence. First, access and success. We must attract, retain, support, and promote a diverse cohort of students, faculty, residents, and staff in order to better reflect the communities we serve. Second, climate. It is important that we foster a positive and welcoming environment, one where everyone can flourish. Third: accountability. We have to build institutional structures that will reinforce and sustain our commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion, structures that will help us do better over time.

Again, thank you for being here together this morning to rededicate the community to these efforts and build a bright future for UC San Diego.