Structural and institutional racism in the production of the workforce

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Overview

- Brief historical review
- Contemporary systems
- Institutional racism: Admissions Processes
- Institutional racism: Organizations
- Structural racism: Multiple intersecting systems
- Conclusion

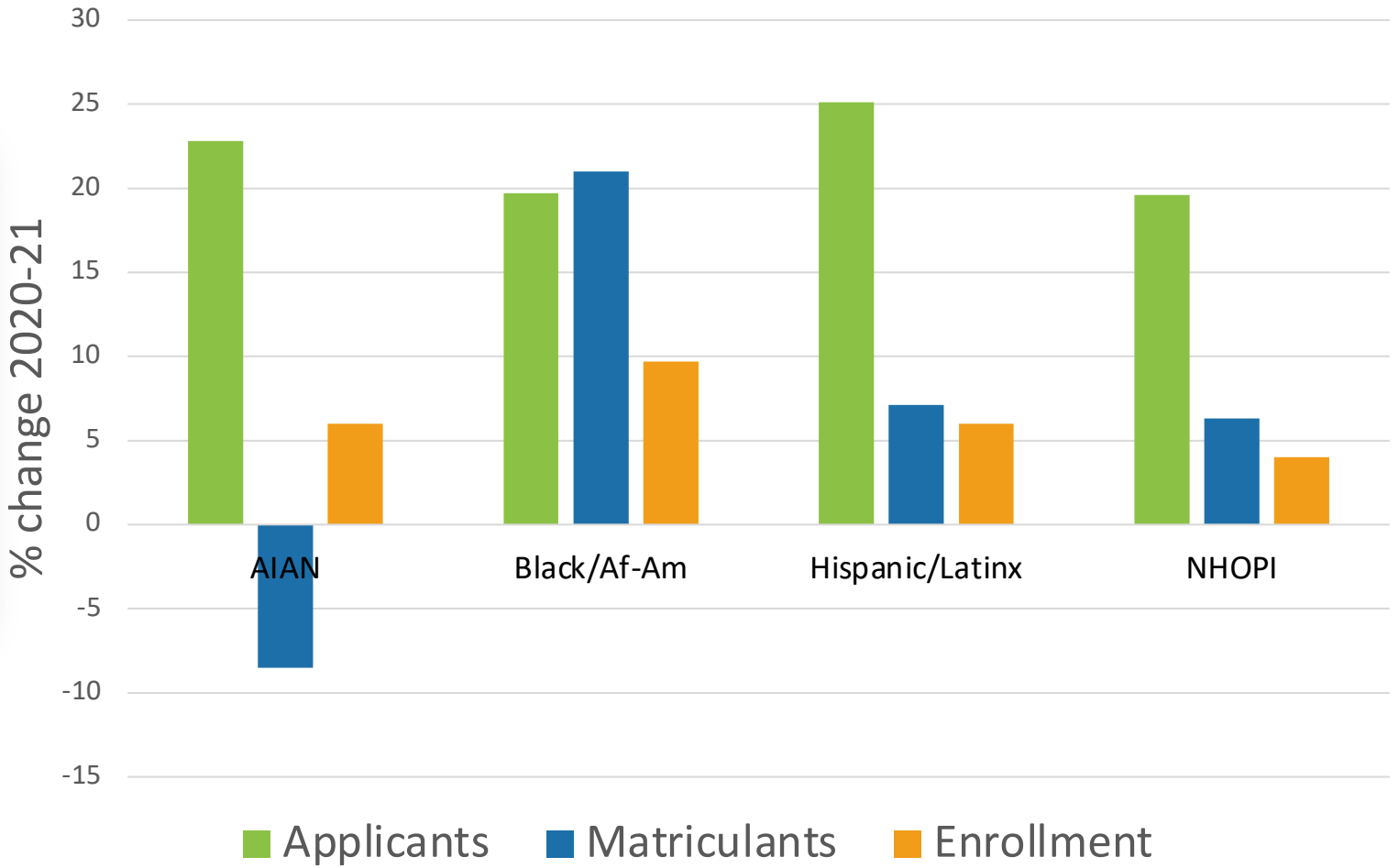
Medical school admissions: Advancing diversity or reproducing racism?

Michelle Ko, Mark Henderson, Maya London, Mark Simon, Tonya Fancher, Rachel Hardeman

MEDICAL EDUCATION | NEWS

Medical school applicants and enrollments hit record highs; underrepresented minorities lead the surge

Patrick Boyle, Senior Staff Writer



2021 Fall applicant, matriculant, and enrollment data tables. Association of American Medical Colleges. December 2021.

White supremacy is embedded in contemporary higher education policies and processes

Medical school admissions leaders, 2019-2020

Lack of leadership commitment

- *Year in, year out,* ***it's always something else, always given priority. Research, building new buildings****.*

Overemphasis on academic metrics

- *"The thing we dare not speak out is, how do you accomplish taking students who [have had] economic disadvantage, and* ***balance that with the U.S. News & World Report and the reputation of the school****?"*

Influence of political and social connections

- *"'After our white coat ceremony, [my dean] received a lot of questions [from alumni and faculty], "****Whatever happened to the six-foot-two blonde, white boys we used to*** *have in our medical school, where did they all go?'"*

The promise and limitations of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in US medical schools and academic medical centers

Caitlin Esparza, Mark Simon, Eraka Bath, Michelle Ko

Time for Action

HMS task force evaluating how to combat racism in MD program

By M.R.F. BUCKLEY | December 16, 2020 | Education, HMS Community

"The theory of racialized organizations argues that structural racism is often enacted through formal and informal organizational processes that privilege certain racial groups at the expense of others."

Nguemeni Tiako, M.J., South, E.C. and Ray, V., 2021. Medical schools as racialized organizations: a primer. *Annals of internal medicine*, *174*(8), pp.1143-1144.

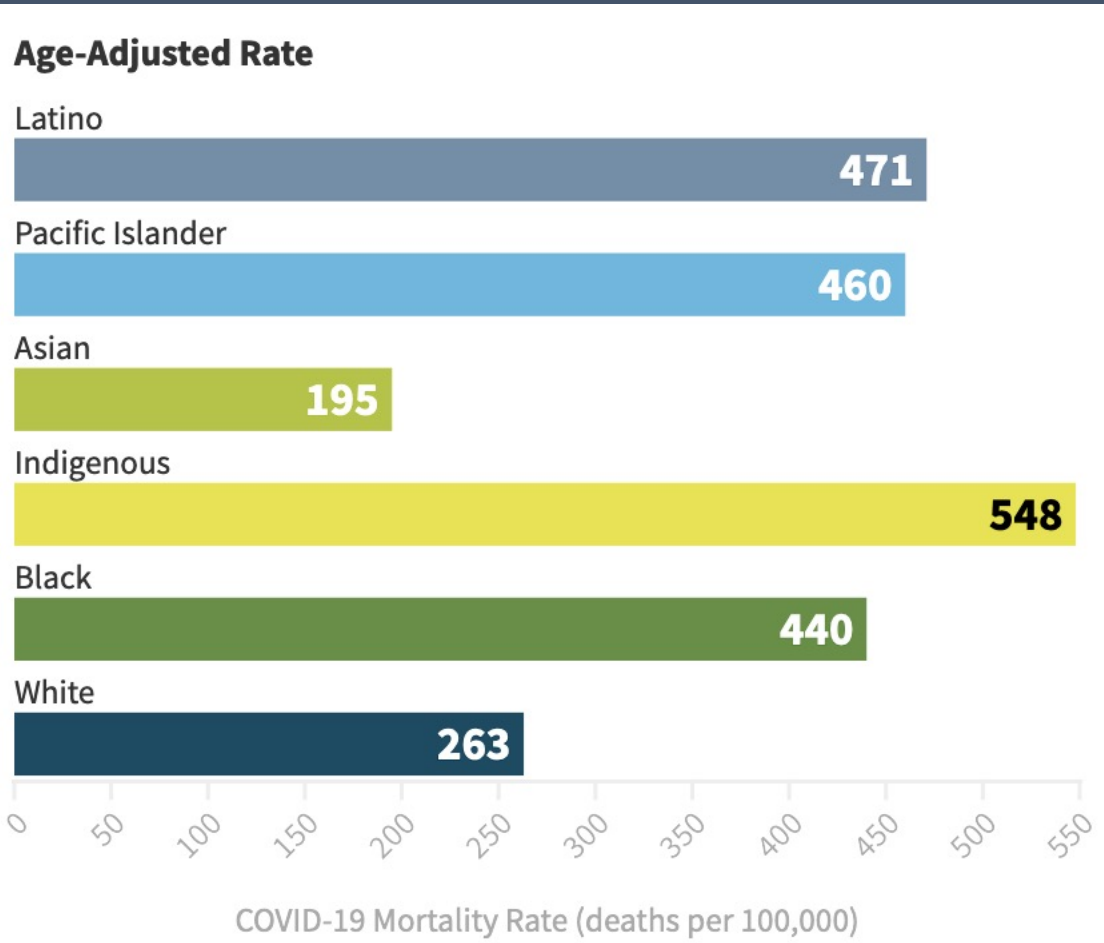
“Diversity, equity and inclusion” cannot be accomplished unless we change the foundation of schools as racialized organizations.

We do not have true power- our ***power is by proxy.***

Collecting data, making recommendations, mandates... But there's no resources for that to happen. The dean’s office … says how come you didn't do it? ***Because we have nobody dedicated to make that happen.***

- Wide variability in roles, support
- Mismatch between investment and expectations
- Lack of direct authority
- Limited reference to existing scholarship

Structural racism in public health, health systems, and policy have ensured disproportionate COVID-19 impacts on groups historically excluded from the health and research workforce



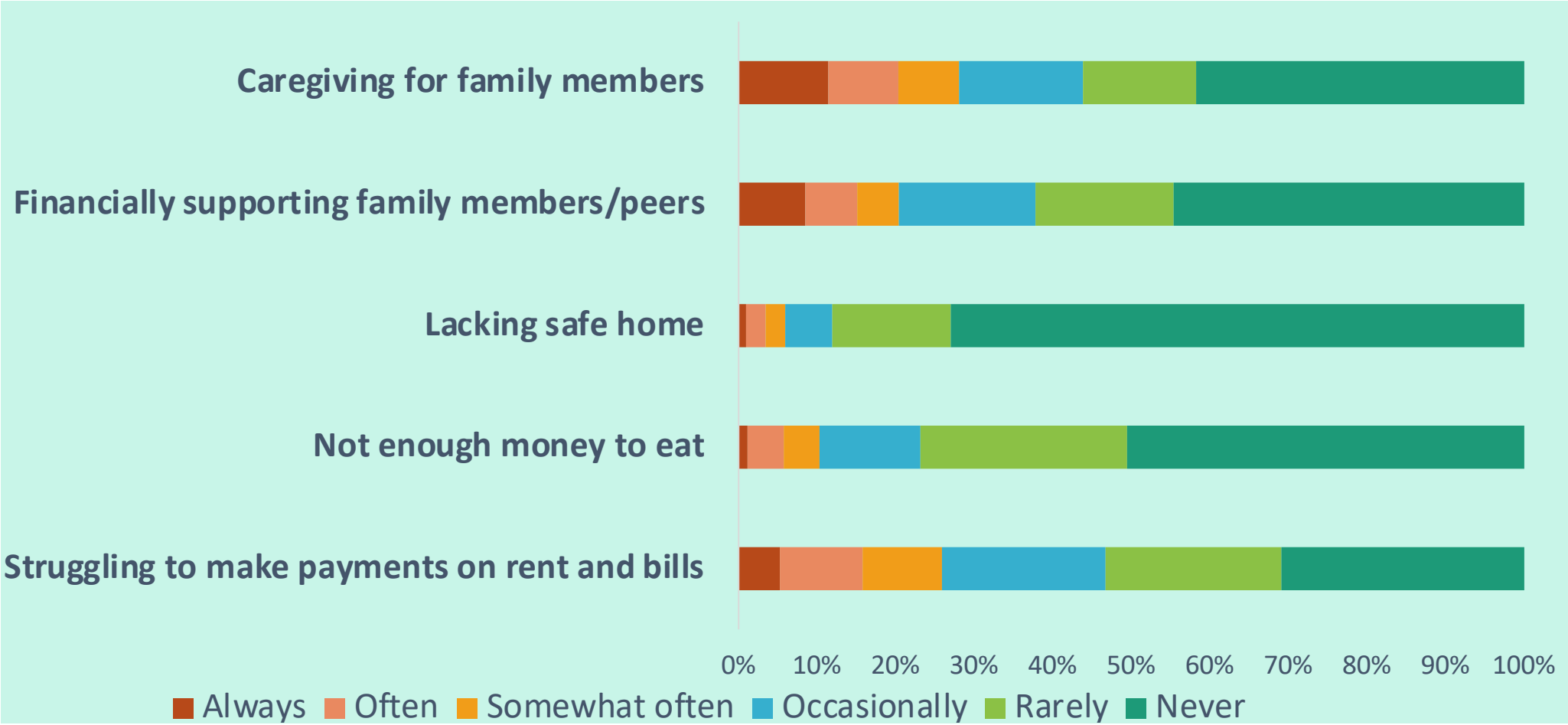
Covid funding inaction threatens fragile progress on racial, economic disparities

The congressional stalemate on additional Covid funding threatens to upend the fragile progress that has been made since the early days of the pandemic.

APM Research Lab analysis of CDC data by race and ethnicity. April 12, 2022.

…Resulting in disproportionate impacts on pre-health students' basic needs

Michelle Ko, Maribel Ortega, Bozhidar Chakalov, Efrain Talamantes



N=545; online national sample of aspiring pre-health professional students, from historically marginalized populations, Fall 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the number of challenges to pre-health students' academic success

*I feel **I have to choose between my safety and paying to liv**e every day.*

*Neither of my parents speak English, so they turn to me to assist with my brothers' needs. This made studying significantly more difficult, with a crowded house and my parents' financial hardship. It felt like **I was not doing enough for my family**.*

- Family responsibilities
- Job insecurity
- Food insecurity
- COVID-19 infection and transmission

Our COVID-19 pandemic policy response serves up a textbook case of how structural racism operates on workforce pathways.

Mental health declines

Rapid losses in meeting basic needs

Failure of advising, assessment and admissions processes to interrogate and adapt

COVID-19 infection, Long COVID

Additional labor for DEI/anti-racism work, community outreach

Declines in college enrollment

Loss of family, caregivers

Rise in dis-enrollment

Institutional structures and incentives to maintain white supremacy in evaluation, promotion

Teacher and counseling shortages

Institutional environments:
pre-pandemic already not designed for historically excluded learners
Intra-pandemic: lack of extended support

External systems: grants, publication, leadership that also exert racism in workforce recruitment and retention

School closures, lack of mitigation measures

We cannot change the system without changing the people

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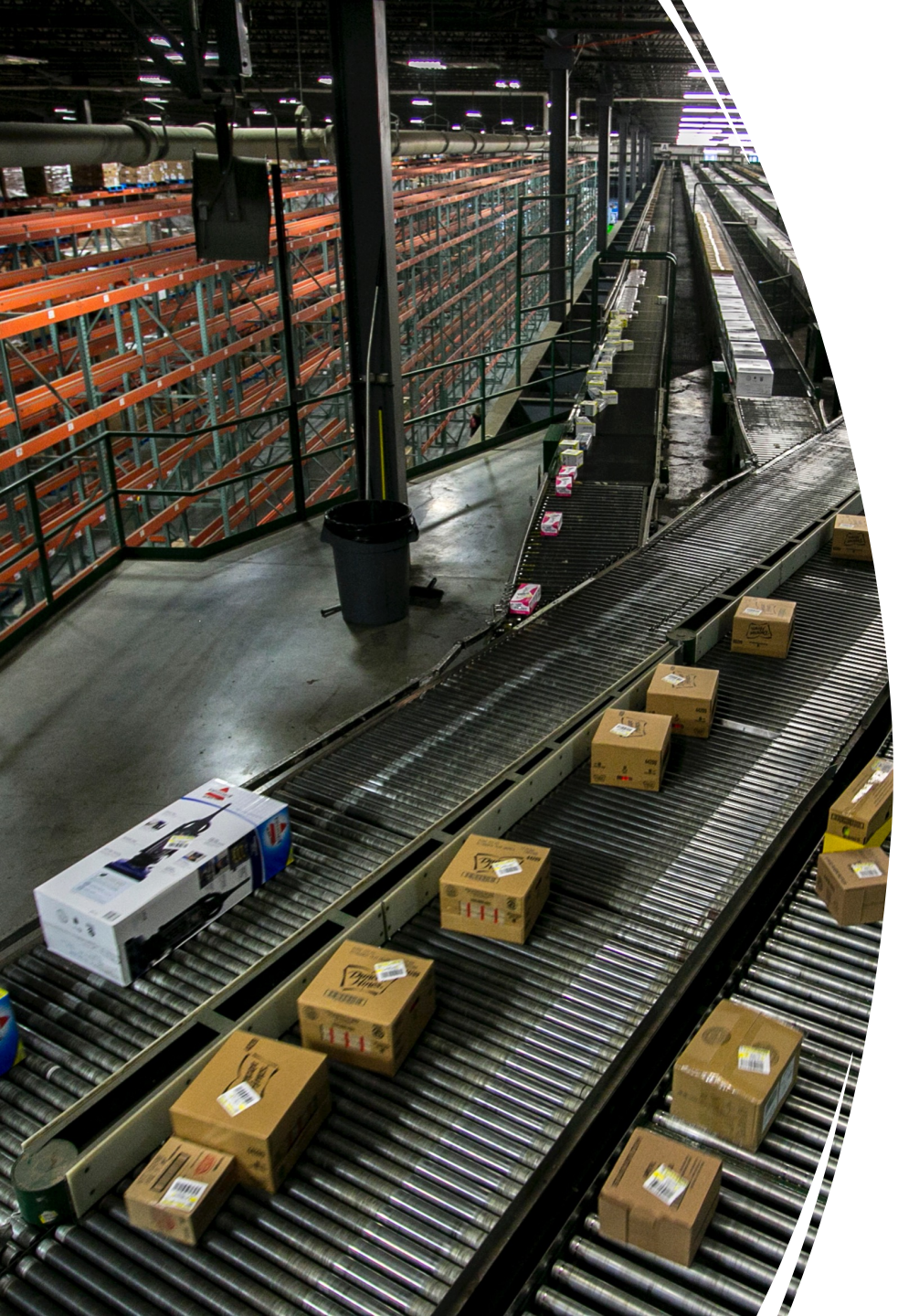

Conclusion

- **Internal opportunities**
  - Close examination of policies and processes that create the infrastructure for racist workforce development
- **External opportunities**
  - Collaboration with policymakers and funders to change the incentives and regulations
- **COVID-19 policy (or lack thereof) *IS* workforce policy**
  - Those we hope to recruit, support and retain are those most impacted

Acknowledgements

Co-authors

UC Davis Center for a Diverse Health Workforce

HRSA

AltaMed Foundation

Study participants