June 20, 2016

Subject: Diversity and Inclusion planning update at the School of Public Health

Dear Colleagues,

I write today to update you on Diversity and Inclusion planning at the School of Public Health. Since the initial February announcement, the SPH Diversity Planning Advisory Committee was formed and proceeded to work on developing a five-year diversity and inclusion action plan (DIAP) led by Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Don Operario. The Committee was comprised of 26 members, including students, faculty and staff, who met weekly for three months engaging in discussion, information gathering, and consultation with outside diversity experts. A DIAP has been developed, informed by the work of the committee and the plans submitted by the Departments, Centers and Institutes in the School. The DIAP was submitted to the University’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion on June 1. The plan in its entirety can be found on the School of Public Health web site. I wish to thank each person involved with the important work that was accomplished, with special gratitude to Don Operario for his expert leadership.

I am pleased to announce that the School is moving forward with the major recommendations of the plan and will prioritize and operationalize these efforts over the next five years. These recommendations include:

- Create a leadership position within SPH to coordinate and oversee the prioritization and implementation of the recommendations articulated in the plan, including activity at School-wide and Departmental/Center/Institute levels.
- Appoint and provide resources to a standing SPH Diversity and Inclusion Committee comprising faculty, students, staff, and administration to plan and advise on initiatives to support diversity and inclusion in the School;
- Convene a SPH Diversity and Inclusion Board comprising local and national expert professionals who are external to SPH to review trends and emerging opportunities and to provide advice related to diversity and inclusion in public health and relevant professional sectors.

As a “living document,” this DIAP will undergo regular review, discussion, and updating in order to address the continually changing needs and circumstances of SPH. Leadership within SPH will work in partnership with all Departments and Centers/Institutes of the School, and in collaboration with the University’s efforts, in the implementation and coordination of our systematic efforts to transform the culture of diversity and inclusion in SPH.

To celebrate the plan and to provide thanks, I invite all Public Health students, faculty and staff to a reception/presentation on the first day of classes, September 7, 2016 in room 375 at 4:00pm.

I am very proud of the dedication and community spirit displayed by our students, staff and faculty in working together towards this significant milestone in the School’s history.

Sincerely,

Terrie Fox Wetle, MS, PhD
Dean, School of Public Health