

**POLICY STATEMENT ON**  
**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, NON-DISCRIMINATION, AND EQUAL**  
**OPPORTUNITY**

The University of Connecticut Health Center reaffirms its commitment to ensuring Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity in all conditions of employment, as well as in its educational programs and patient services. Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, ethnicity, religious creed, age, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, national origin, ancestry, mental retardation, physical disability, including blindness, past or present history of mental disability, learning disability, criminal record, or genetic information is prohibited. Factors, which cannot lawfully be the basis for employment and academic decisions, or administering health care, are strictly prohibited. In accordance with all applicable state and federal laws, the Health Center also develops and implements Affirmative Action programs which are undertaken with conviction and effort. The Health Center has established Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action as immediate and necessary agency objectives because the institution is committed to their concepts, principles and goals. In addition, the Health Center is strongly committed to the effective, productive management of diversity within the institution. This policy applies to all employees, students, volunteers, patients, as well as, outside vendors and contractors.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

This policy ensures that individuals are not excluded from participation, advancement, or other privileges of employment due to race, color, ethnicity, religious creed, age, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, national origin, ancestry, mental retardation, physical disability, including blindness, past or present history of mental disability, learning disability, criminal record, genetic information or other factors which cannot lawfully be the basis for employment actions, unless otherwise proposed by law. Equal Employment Opportunity is the purpose and goal of Affirmative Action under Sections 46a-68-31 through 46a-68-74 of the Connecticut Statutes, and of applicable federal legislation. Equal Employment Opportunity also provides for an employment system in which neither intentional nor unintentional discrimination is present. These non-discrimination laws also prohibit any workplace harassment on the basis of protected group identity.

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY**

Affirmative Action is an institutional plan requiring positive action, undertaken with conviction and effort to correct, where necessary, the present effects of past practices, policies, or barriers to Equal Employment Opportunity. It also seeks to achieve the full and fair participation of protected groups underutilized in the workforce or affected by policies or practices having an adverse impact upon their ability to participate fully in all activities connected to employment, promotion, training, transfer and career advancement or other privileges of employment. In addition, the University of Connecticut Health Center recognizes the hiring difficulties experienced by persons with disabilities and by many older persons, and will take appropriate action to provide equal employment opportunity.

At the Health Center, Affirmative Action plays a crucial role at all stages of the employment process, including, but not limited to: recruitment, interviewing, hiring, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff and termination. Our commitment to Affirmative Action requires that we make the good faith efforts that may be necessary in all aspects of human resources administration to ensure that the recruitment and hiring of underrepresented individuals reflect their availability in the job market; that the causes of underutilization are identified and eliminated; that alternative approaches are explored; and that the terms, conditions, and privileges of employment are equitably administered.

## **DIVERSITY**

Diversity is a concept by which value is placed on the differences of the people who make up our workforce. These differences include both primary dimensions (e.g. race, gender, age, religious creed, national origin, etc.), and secondary dimensions (e.g. geographic location, marital status, work background, etc.) characteristics of groups of people within an organization.

As our workforce becomes more diverse, we are challenged with the opportunity to find ways of enabling people of many different backgrounds to provide valuable contributions to the Health Center. It is not enough to simply increase diversity in the workplace and in the classroom, we must learn to respect and appreciate people from diverse backgrounds. When individuals communicate and work effectively with each other, affirmative action and the diversity within our workforce will mutually support an equal opportunity environment.

## **PROCEDURES**

The Health Center's affirmative action and equal opportunity processes, as well as efforts to enhance and manage a diverse workforce, are administered by the Office of Diversity and Equity, 263 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, Connecticut 06030-5310, telephone number (860) 679-3563, Attention: Carolyn Lyle, Executive Director. Staff is available to counsel and assist employees, students and patients with concerns related to non-discrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action. The Office of Diversity and Equity will keep me apprised of the status of these procedures at the Health Center.

The University of Connecticut Health Center has developed Affirmative Action Plans that outline procedures the institution will implement to combat discrimination, to correct any under representation of affected group members, and to promote a diverse workplace which provides access to equal opportunity for all employees. Each employee has a right to review and comment on the Affirmative Action Plans or related issues at any time. Comments or questions should be directed to Carolyn Lyle, Executive Director of the Office of Diversity and Equity. A listing of Federal and State laws, executive orders and regulations mandating Non-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action is included as an attachment to this policy statement. This policy statement is posted and in all work locations and is available on the Health Center's policy web page.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

As Vice President for Health Affairs, I pledge my personal support and commitment to the attainment and retention of a diverse workforce and a work environment free from discrimination on the basis of factors which cannot lawfully be the grounds for employment actions and free from harassment on the basis of group identification, racial intolerance or gender. I am committed to making every good faith effort to meet the hiring, promotion, upward mobility and program goals established within the timetables set forth in the Affirmative Action Plan. I fully expect my managerial and supervisory staff to treat compliance with Federal and State of Connecticut affirmative action statutes as a top priority. I hold all managers and supervisors accountable for the successful implementation of the policies, procedures and objectives of affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the enhancement of diversity in the University of Connecticut Health Center. This policy also mandates that employees at every level comply with Health Center directives prohibiting harassment on any basis. The Health Center pledges to administer services to employees, students and patients in a fair and impartial manner. Our programs and facilities shall not be used in the tolerance or furtherance of any discriminatory practice, nor shall the Health Center become party to any agreement, arrangement, contract or plan which has the effect of sanctioning discriminatory practices.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, written warning, demotion, transfer, suspension, expulsion, or dismissal.

10/20/08

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Date

Dr. Cato T. Laurencin (signed)

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Cato T. Laurencin, M.D., Ph.D.  
Vice President for Health Affairs and  
Dean, School of Medicine