Equity, inclusion, and diversity provide the foundation for all of us to thrive. For the sake of our discussion we are focusing on racial diversity because that is an area where we see a significant gap in veterinary medicine. Nearly 90% of veterinarians identify as white, making ours one of the least diverse healthcare professions in the U.S. This lack of diversity is preventing our profession from thriving.

Students of color change their minds about becoming veterinarians early, peaking around 7-9th grade, often because they are persuaded to choose a different career. With our low rates of diversity, students of color lack role models. This makes it difficult for minority students to see a future in our industry.

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**THERE ARE MANY ROOT CAUSES. HERE ARE A FEW.**

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**WHAT YOU CAN DO AS AN INDIVIDUAL**

- Learn as much as you can about equity, inclusion, and diversity, including unconscious bias and how to address issues as an individual and within your practice.
- Get involved with organizations that support your racial equity ambitions.
- Look at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), associations, and equality advocates for opportunities.
- Actively expand your professional networks to Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) organizations and leaders.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO INSIDE YOUR VETERINARY PRACTICE**

- Talk to your colleagues and leaders about how your practice can get involved.
- Provide equity, inclusion, and diversity training.
- Actively look for diverse talent.
- Examine your own practice including diversity on your team and in your communications and marketing materials.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO INSIDE YOUR ORGANIZATION AND THE WIDER PROFESSION**

- Get involved with youth and encourage them to pursue a career in veterinary medicine.
- Use your voice to promote racial equity within peer groups and professional associations.
- Be vigilant to ensure communications and programs open doors and do not reinforce racial stereotypes.

**TAKING THE FIRST STEP. HOW DO YOU PERSONALLY WANT TO MAKE AN IMPACT?**

Write your commitment in the blank space above and keep this as a reminder to continue your journey. Also, share your commitment by posting on social. Be sure to use the hashtag #DiversifyVetMed