



A MESSAGE *from the Provost*

April 9, 2021

Dear Members of the USF Community:

Last year, amid the historic reckoning on issues of racial justice and equity, the University of South Florida took pride in launching a first-of-its-kind effort to support faculty research in the areas of systemic racism and bias in awarding competitive research grants focused on *Understanding Blackness and Addressing Anti-Black Racism in our Local, National, and International Communities*. This \$500,000 initiative was established jointly by the Office of the Provost and USF Research & Innovation and is led by a diverse task force of USF faculty and staff. Funding was awarded for 23 multidisciplinary research proposals that span all three campuses, multiple colleges, and require partnership with community organizations in addressing these important and long-standing issues.

Recognizing the widespread interest in this effort, as well as the need to keep both dialogue and action on these crucial issues at the forefront of our work, the university has launched a [website](#) dedicated to this initiative that will serve as an easy access point to learn more about the individual projects and the talented research teams that have embarked on this year-long initiative. As a community of scholars, we celebrate these efforts knowing that universities are at their best when they can inform, inspire, and empower others through knowledge and create a deeper understanding of, and innovative solutions to, such pervasive yet complex issues.

We encourage you to visit www.usf.edu/provost/anti-racism/index.aspx where you can learn more about the projects; read stories from local media that have covered these efforts extensively; listen to podcasts and watch videos featuring this important work; and learn directly from the researchers about their latest findings, publications, and presentations. Each research team brings with it a wealth of expertise and scholarship on topics of equality, equity, and inclusion, and the website also features a “spotlight” on select foundational works that now inform the new projects.

The website will also serve as a resource to stay up-to-date with related events at USF and with our community partners, such as the recent [USF Institute on Black Life Annual Conference](#), which featured presentations from the research teams. We will be promoting this resource throughout USF's web presence and on social media so that our students, neighbors, community partners, and the larger national audience will see the depth and breadth of the USF's commitment to fostering an actively anti-racist culture and developing meaningful and sustained solutions to systemic social, environmental, and economic issues affecting Black communities. We invite you to share these links far and wide.

Thank you for your support in this ongoing commitment and for your efforts to advance USF's [Principles of Community](#), affirming our value of inclusivity, individual dignity, equity, and our shared humanity.

Sincerely,

Ralph C. Wilcox

Provost & Executive Vice President
University of South Florida

Keith Anderson

Interim Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Knowledge Enterprise
USF Research & Innovation

