

# Paving the way for a brighter, more equitable future

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Linda Armstrong, US Novartis Foundation President & Lead, US Corporate Responsibility

Today, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment in the pursuit of health equity. The need to tackle the underlying causes of deeply rooted healthcare disparities and break down economic and education barriers is as urgent as ever. It is a complex issue that requires more than just well-intentioned words: it will take urgent action and the shared commitment of diverse stakeholders across both the public and private sectors. Together, we can build enduring solutions for some of the most pressing challenges we face in the US.

Since we launched Beacon of Hope, we have made significant progress and established a solid foundation to bring us closer to our vision of a more equitable future. However, we must acknowledge that our journey is far from complete. In the past year, we have undertaken a comprehensive assessment to further identify gaps and untapped opportunities – as well as gather fresh perspectives – to ground us on what still needs to be done. These invaluable insights will empower us to embark on the next chapter of Beacon of Hope.

Collaboration and co-creation remain at the heart of Beacon of Hope. We believe that by harnessing the power of diverse perspectives, disciplines and experiences, we can unlock new solutions and accelerate progress. Through these efforts, we will forge partnerships that focus on mutual learning, shared objectives, and tailored support for our HBCU clinical trial Centers of Excellence. Our goal is not just to ensure the Centers' effectiveness in the short-term, but to build a dynamic 'ecosystem' that will lead to sustainable success for many years to come.

Our mission also encompasses a desire to keep removing economic and education barriers that often stand in the way of promising careers for students of color. To empower the next generation of diverse healthcare leaders, Beacon of Hope provides a multi-faceted and growing series of programs – research grants, scholarships, mentorships and educational training – designed to drive generational change.

For me, Beacon of Hope is a testament to our pledge to create a world where everyone has equal opportunities for health and well-being. We move forward with optimism, knowing that our collective efforts will pave the way for a brighter and more equitable future.

With gratitude and optimism,

*Linda Armstrong*

*US Novartis Foundation President & Lead, US Corporate Responsibility*

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