



Greetings to our entire Southcoast family!

This June marks the first anniversary of the Southcoast Health Diversity and Inclusion Council's launch, and we are proud to share that our members from across the organization have been very productive during the past year.

Some of the Diversity and Inclusion Council's accomplishments include establishing a mission statement and goals; developing a digital presence for employees, patients, recruits and the community; and recognizing African American History Month, Portugal Freedom Day and Pride Month.

During our celebration of African American History Month in February, the Diversity and Inclusion Council welcomed executive, author and activist Steve Pemberton back to Southcoast Health (he was born at St. Luke's) as a keynote speaker to share his life's journey.

As we once again recognize Pride Month and the LGBTQ+ community throughout June, more than 50 years after the Stonewall Riots, we have invited Tony Ferraiolo, transgender youth advocate and certified life coach, to be the keynote speaker for a virtual event coming June 23 (stay tuned for details ... and rainbow cupcakes).

While the Diversity and Inclusion Council enters its second year, current events throughout the country demand greater action by each of us. We must decidedly be aware and ensure that we are doing our part to end racism, homophobia and all forms of bigotry and intolerance locally, nationally and globally.

Southcoast's goal is to always provide equitable care and respect for all our patients, their families, our community and each other. Giving small smiles and gentle answers, showing respect in place of judgment and providing random acts of kindness – even when we don't fully understand or agree – are powerful ways to foster diversity and inclusion at Southcoast Health and everywhere.

Currently, the Diversity and Inclusion Council includes four work groups focused on outreach: Mission and Education, Internet Presence, Diversity Recognition Opportunities and the “3Ps” (Preferred names, Pronouns and Policies).

If you are interested in being involved in this important cause, we would be thrilled to welcome you. Please reach out to Diversity and Inclusion Council Chair Barbara Schmidt, Director of Organizational Culture and Engagement, at schmidt@southcoast.org for details.

In 2020-21, the Diversity and Inclusion Council looks forward to recognizing Spanish-American Heritage Month and Global Diversity Awareness Month, as well as furthering the established goals and objectives of the Council. We will continue our involvement with the Sex, Gender & Names Epic project after we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure patients are treated with the utmost respect and understanding when it comes to their electronic health records.

Please [visit our Diversity and Inclusion Council page](#) to learn more, and to read messages from President and CEO Keith Hovan and other leaders.

Wishing you and those in your lives strength and wellbeing during this trying time, and with the greatest respect for our more than 7,500 amazing Southcoast colleagues,



Lauren De Simon Johnson
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Executive Sponsor, Diversity and Inclusion Council



Barbara Schmidt
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Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Council