March 7, 2014

Dear MUSC family,

The Medical University and its component organizations affirm diversity and inclusion as cornerstones of excellence in all of our missions. During the past two decades, we have fostered a range of successful initiatives to enhance diversity and inclusion, within and across all sectors of our institution. For example, MUSC Physicians has incorporated diversity and inclusion education in its orientation of all new employees. The Division of Finance and Administration has provided employee forums focused on respect in the workplace and offered opportunities for education and training of staff. An MUHA Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion submitted recommendations to the Medical Center CEO, which resulted in a national search for a Chief Diversity Officer for MUHA, and recruitment is currently underway. The University is transforming its curriculum that now affords an education and training in diversity, inclusion, and interprofessional collaboration to every first year student in all colleges. Our College of Medicine has earned national recognition as one of the top ten medical colleges in the nation for the enrollment and graduation of Black males.

We have an opportunity to build on this momentum through greater coordination and planning within MUSC. I am pleased to announce that we will develop a comprehensive, enterprise-wide strategic plan to enhance diversity and engage everyone in the MUSC family. This will be the first time that we have undertaken such a comprehensive strategic plan for this purpose. In my expanded role as interim president, I am committed to this significant work. I will chair this planning process, as did Dr. Greenberg, relying heavily upon two co-chairs, Dr. Willette Burnham, representing the University, and Ms. Joan Herbert, representing MUHA.

In May 2013, MUSC launched an inaugural strategic planning effort to promote diversity and inclusion. A Diversity and Inclusion Steering Team approved interprofessional working groups to develop plans for addressing five areas for improvement that have application in our three core missions of education, research, and service. These working groups, which include broad representation across the organization, will develop plans for:

- Recruitment and Pipeline Development
- Education and Training
- Metrics and Outcomes
- Engagement and Inclusion
- Communications/Community Outreach

"An equal opportunity employer, promoting workplace diversity."
These groups will begin orientation and work assignments at a retreat scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, 2014 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Moving forward, I am confident that with a shared vision and commitment to diversity and inclusion, our collective outcomes will be as impressive as our efforts have been individually.

I look forward to providing updates on the progress of each group as the work moves forward. As always, thank you for the work that you do to change what is possible!

Sincerely,

Mark Sothmann, PhD
Interim President
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost