

UC Davis Environmental Health Sciences Center Ally Statement

The UC Davis Environmental Health Sciences Center (EHSC) lends its voice to the beautiful chorus of organizations supporting the anti-racism movement at this historic moment. This movement stands in sharp contrast to the ugly actions of police brutality that have targeted George Floyd and thousands of Black people over centuries, unabated. Equally ugly is the context, in which structural biases perpetuate unequal opportunities and resources for people in education, housing, health care, social services, and criminal justice. Racism is devastating to the direct victims even as it erodes the social fabric of all of our lives. The EHSC seeks to uncover the impacts on health from environmental chemicals—such as lead, pesticides, pollution and endocrine disrupting chemicals in our air, water, housing and consumer products—as well as environmental processes and events such as climate change and ensuing wildfires, drought, heat waves, flooding, and sea level rise. It is a well-documented fact that environmental exposures are, on average, far higher in communities of color, while increasing evidence on disasters suggests that communities of color are often the hardest hit, and have the most difficulty in recovering. We therefore commit to working at the intersection of public health and environmental justice through three avenues: research, community engagement with a focus on at-risk populations, and the translation of scientific evidence into policy aimed at achieving full access to clean and healthy places for all. Our Center and our resources are open to all schools and colleges at UC Davis, and we extend a special invitation to BIPOC members of the campus community with interests in achieving justice and equity in environmental health.