



July 5, 2020

Dear Lupus LA community and friends,

Lupus LA continues to address the devastating effects of the current global pandemic and is working to serve the lupus community with the same dedication we have always shown. We are reminded that the world does not stop when one critical issue arises. To that end, we want to address the other world-changing events that have taken place in recent weeks and months.

Black Lives Matter. Lupus LA stands with the people on the front lines of this incredibly just and long needed movement, and we support the ongoing effort to combat the institutional racism that the BLM movement puts front and center.

Lupus is a disease that discriminates and at Lupus LA's core we have always been and will always be dedicated to addressing the health disparities that our patients face. Lupus affects approximately 1.5 million Americans, 90% of whom are women between the ages of 15 and 44. Most of these patients are women of color. The mortality rate for black female lupus patients is three times that of white women. Lupus is also prevalent among women of Latina, Asian and Native American backgrounds. Researchers who conducted The LUMINA Study also found that Black and Latinx lupus patients have more pronounced disease activity and organ system involvement at the time of diagnosis.

These facts, along with what we know about the racial inequities in the healthcare system, drive Lupus LA to consistently serve as a valued resource for lupus patients and their families. Whether it is through our Emergency Grant Program, our one-on-one patient support, or the geographically and ethnically diverse support groups that we run monthly and now virtually, we are and will be a part of the solution for lupus patients of every background.

But that's not enough. Lupus LA is committed to diversity in its leadership and its messaging. We will continue to serve as a support system to minority communities and we will amplify their voices to bring attention to the fight for equality in healthcare and beyond. We will invest time and resources to better understand how we can help and how we can be a vessel for change for the lupus community.

Through the dedicated work of our Board of Directors, Medical Advisory Board, Celebrity Ambassadors and staff, Lupus LA has driven unprecedented awareness to the lupus cause and we commit to shining our powerful spotlight on the racial inequities facing lupus patients, their families and their communities.

Please know that as we continue to evolve, we are always open to hearing from and working with our community and we welcome everyone to participate in the conversation. We look forward to continuing to educate ourselves and the lupus community and to being a part of this fight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam Selkowitz".

Adam Selkowitz  
Chairman of the Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Bazarsky".

Susan Bazarsky  
Executive Director