

# HIDDEN NARRATIVES



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## Perspectives of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Pharmacy

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## DEDICATION

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This book is dedicated to all the authors who shared their stories. These hidden narratives are captivating, heartbreaking, and inspiring. We will be forever grateful for your contributions to making healthcare better.

—Carla Y. White, Paula K. Davis, Vibhuti Arya, Amanda L. Storyward, Kevin A. Wiltz II



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When I met Carla White, she was already a renowned pharmacy leader and I was just starting my academic career. She was passionate about innovating her field, and I was eager to learn from her. Through our work together, I have witnessed firsthand her tireless efforts and transformative influence on promoting quality and equity in healthcare and health professions education. This book is a testament to Carla's and the co-editors' unwavering dedication to diversity and inclusion—exemplifying creativity, collaboration, and compassion.

*Hidden Narratives* is a captivating anthology of diverse and resonant pharmacist voices. Within these pages, you'll embark on an insightful journey through a collection of narratives, each a vibrant and authentic reflection that sheds light on deeply personal and professional moments. These narratives portray various lived experiences, perspectives, and challenges encountered by pharmacists from multifaceted backgrounds, illuminating the profound impact of diversity and inclusion within the profession.

To those seeking insights into the experiences that shape pharmacy practice, this book serves as a chronicle of voices. It celebrates the resilience, adaptability, and empathy of pharmacists as they navigate the challenges and pinnacles of healthcare. Each story contributes to a collective understanding that propels us toward a more authentic and effective future in pharmacy practice.

To pharmacists, leaders, educators, students, and advocates committed to the profession of pharmacy, this anthology is a testament to the commitment, determination, and courage of those whose stories often go untold. It's an invitation to confront the silences, challenge the status quo, dismantle isolating systems, and rewrite the narratives that perpetuate inequity.

I hope these narratives initiate dialogue, inspire change, and compel us toward a profession that embraces, celebrates, and uplifts our differences in all their forms. Thank you to the pharmacists who shared their experiences in this book. Thank you to the editors, who have committed their careers to helping us be better. And thank you—reader—for embarking on this vital journey.

—*Jacqueline E. McLaughlin, PhD*



A commitment to humanity motivated this group of dynamic Cultural Intelligence experts and authors to create a resource that could serve as a catalyst for meaningful conversation to accelerate strategy and investment in cultural intelligence. This prepares individuals to effectively work and relate across cultures. We must ask better questions, think beyond the status quo, and explore untapped possibilities. Without this intellectual power, we cannot innovate and provide care at the level needed to address our nation's healthcare needs. Cultural intelligence is facilitated by greater access to a range of ideas and perspectives.

We intend for this book to bring light to the lived consequences of unequal treatment in healthcare and health sciences education and to enhance awareness and knowledge of behaviors that can limit cultural intelligence and produce the action that is needed to achieve it. The commentary within is intended to make real the need for organizational investment and commitment to reduce fear and build trust for this work. By discussing these *hidden narratives* and the difficulties they present, the reader is invited to understand the present state and take critical actions toward a more aspirational approach that acknowledges our shared humanity.

If you identify with any of the groups of individuals listed below, then this book was written for you.

- Leaders and administrators wanting to build and sustain infrastructures that will support equity,
- Students who aspire to develop skill sets to be able to communicate and provide care for all,
- Educators who are committed to inclusive teaching and learning,
- Researchers working to increase diverse representation in clinical trials to improve science and its outputs,
- Allies, ally-adjacent, and curious hoping to gain insight into the real-world impact of how diversity affects our collective healthcare infrastructure, and/or
- Unexposed or in denial, needing concrete examples to move beyond stagnation and toward action.





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The persistent inequalities caused by racism, bias, and discrimination are some of the most concerning trends and challenges to providing equitable healthcare. This complex issue is deeply rooted in our societal infrastructure and is further compounded by politics that perpetuate the lack of cultural intelligence leading to disparate healthcare. This growing concern has been highlighted on a grand scale in the United States and is influencing the ability to recruit and retain diverse talent and have access to a range of ideas and perspectives to provide healthcare at the level needed. These challenges can lead to inequality of opportunity based upon a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, age, class, gender, disability, race/ethnicity, religion, social economic status, and sexual orientation.

The consequences of not addressing inequity include perpetuating a workforce with confined innovation and a narrow lens as well as marginalized and minoritized groups bearing a heavier burden of health disparities. Health science professionals across the globe are well positioned to help reduce these internal and external gaps in social equity and drive the change that is needed by producing a culturally intelligent workforce. Understanding the lived experiences—the *Hidden Narratives*—of those around you will bring further insight to the work to be done to ensure that the workforce of the future has the knowledge, capacity, and skill to go beyond and engage all talent and impact human health.

The stories in this book are the lived experiences of individuals within the pharmacy community. We were entrusted with these narratives, and we honor the courage of those individuals who have shared their stories with us. This book is intended to be used in spaces where diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) conversations are happening. We hope learners, educators, and individuals in positions of leadership and influence will use these stories to deepen their awareness and learning. Experiences with bias, discrimination, and racism are far too common across the profession and beyond. These narratives represent patterns of behavior across systems that we all interact and participate in and, to some extent, perpetuate both knowingly and unknowingly. Please note the editors don't speak for anyone, and we have maintained the original form of these submissions.

We recognize that the narratives highlighted will largely represent the American healthcare system. Application to healthcare systems in other cultures may vary in reliability of accuracy and nuance for those cultures and even at times across the U.S. healthcare system. However, there is relevance, given how much the U.S. medical system and industries impact global healthcare provision, and we expect that there are lessons to be learned about differences in any place where humans find themselves giving care to each other.

As editors, we advocate for a call to action for the readers to reflect on their own commitment to their learning journey. To this, we offer the following considerations as you read these narratives:

Observe the questions that may come up for you.

Resist the urge to get defensive if that reaction comes up at any point during the story.

Keep in mind that each narrative is one experience and not the experience of everyone; treat it as such.

Sit back and enjoy; we wish you a meaningful journey.

