

# Beacon of Hope lights the way for a more equitable future

Sharing Key Insights and Lessons to Accelerate Progress.

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Examining the systemic nature of the disparities that exist in healthcare today reminds us they are a product of history. These disparities developed over generations, and it will require a long-term effort to create a more equitable future.

Beacon of Hope was established to do just that. The innovative healthcare collaboration, launched by Novartis and the Novartis US Foundation with many historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and other industry peers and collaborators, has a visionary goal: to address long-standing health and education inequities and create greater diversity, equity, inclusion and trust across the healthcare ecosystem.

The ambitious US program stands apart from past gestures toward health equity because it pairs long-term commitment with open-minded collaboration and co-creation – the ‘beating heart’ of Beacon of Hope. Rather than offering an isolated, prescriptive push, it promotes partnership and supplies resources that make a difference.

## Striving to be a Catalyst for Change

In October, Beacon of Hope marked a milestone with the first annual Convening Event in Washington DC, bringing together representatives from industry collaborators (including Alnylam, Amgen, Merck, Sanofi, Advarra and BeeKeeperAI), students, leaders from the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, the Global Black Economic Forum, Morehouse School of Medicine, and the HBCUs pivotal to the program’s success.



With Beacon of Hope in the early stages of the journey, the Convening Event celebrated our progress – such as the Centers of Excellence now in place at four HBCU medical schools – while focusing on the significant work that still lies ahead.

“This is going to be a long road, there’s no question. And that’s why we’re committed,” said Vas Narasimhan, Novartis CEO. “Fundamentally for Novartis, if we want to reimagine medicine, we have to address these issues systematically.”

Although the mission of Beacon of Hope is bold, our partners expressed an unwavering belief that we can achieve our goals through consistent action, dedication and focus.

## Supporting Shared Aspirations

Through various panel discussions and breakout-sessions, attendees at the Convening Event shared insights and observations that illustrated the important work already being done. These discussions brought to life the synergistic relationships and mutual support that Beacon of Hope champions, covering topics including:

- The value of co-creation in advancing clinical trial diversity
- How Beacon of Hope investments are supporting new roles and infrastructure at the Centers of Excellence
- The root causes of health disparities and how equitable representation, combined with the development and application of unbiased technology tools like AI and machine learning, could combat the systemic racism that compromises health outcomes
- Partnership between students and mentors who have participated in Novartis mentoring programs

## Daring to Build a More Equitable Future Together

Dr. Linda Armstrong, Head of US Corporate Responsibility and President of the Novartis US Foundation, closed the Convening Event by emphasizing that the most critical work for Beacon of Hope is out in front of us, as we incorporate what we are learning in real time to create a brighter future.

Now three years into its journey, Beacon of Hope has already amassed knowledge, forged connections, and gathered insights. By continuing to harness the power of diverse perspectives, disciplines and experiences, we will unlock new solutions, accelerate progress and reimagine medicine – together.

[Learn more about our US Beacon of Hope program](#)

### Beacon of Hope: Our focus

The goal of Beacon of Hope is to co-create effective, measurable solutions for health equity focusing in three key areas:

- **Enabling the next generation of leaders:** Grants, scholarships, fellowship and mentorship programs to nurture future healthcare leaders from underrepresented communities
- **Clinical Trial Centers Of Excellence:** Establishing the resources to conduct clinical trials at four HBCU medical schools to bring diverse perspectives into the drug development process
- **Research Centers Of Excellence:** Supporting advanced research into race-based health algorithms and environmental impacts on health

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Click below to watch a special video feature from the first annual Beacon of Hope convening event in

Washington, DC.

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