Dear Einstein Community:

June is Pride Month, a time for all of us to recognize the struggles and triumphs of those in the LGBTQIA+ community. Pride means not hiding one’s true self in order to be accepted. It means advocating for and enjoying equal rights as human beings. And it also celebrates all who choose to be their authentic selves. At Einstein, we continue to seek ways to support all who identify as LGBQTIA+. We promote pride and offer allyship to assure those in our community that Einstein is a safe haven. With current legal considerations coming before the Supreme Court, that’s never been more important.

The case on “religious freedom” that the justices will hear represents a serious threat to the equality that the LGBTQIA+ community has fought for and earned since the Stonewall uprising in June 1969. These include the 2015 Marriage Equality Act and the ruling by the Supreme Court last June 15 that the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act also protects gay and transgender workers against discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. While we’ve come a long way in our nation—before 1962, all 50 states criminalized same-sex activities—there is genuine concern that the current court case could reverse many of the important gains that have been made in recent years.

During June, Montefiore and Einstein will mark Pride Month with the following events:

- **On Friday, June 18**, tune into this month’s “Ask the Dean” chat when I, along with Dr. Nerys Benfield, senior associate dean for diversity and inclusion, will talk with members of the Einstein community representing both Pride Month and Juneteenth (separate letter forthcoming), to discuss the historic importance of these events and what they mean for our community today.
- **On Friday, June 25**, you can show your pride or allyship by wearing rainbow colors.
• On Sunday, June 27, you can also take part in the New York City virtual Pride March along with our Montefiore/Einstein colleagues. While only participating virtually this year, Montefiore was the first health system to have a float in the NYC Pride March, in 2016.

As this video from Dr. Ozuah’s recent JAM highlights, the rainbow is a symbol of pride that reminds us of hope and suggests that better times lie ahead. It also can be a symbol of solidarity. So, let’s embrace pride and hope in solidarity with our LGBTQIA+ community members this month and throughout the year.

Finally, and on a personal note, Pride Month is meaningful to me because of the work I was fortunate to do as a medical resident in San Francisco during the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. We must never forget the lessons learned from that traumatic period—including how prejudice can have a detrimental effect on the health of already marginalized groups and that scientific breakthroughs, combined with the right medical care, can improve public health and, most important, save lives.

Sincerely,

Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D.
The Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean
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