Dear Einstein Community:

It is with mixed feelings that I share with you that our colleague, Dr. Nerys Benfield, senior associate dean for diversity and inclusion, will be leaving Einstein to join the University of California, San Francisco at the end of March to assume a system-wide leadership role as the chief medical officer for women’s health at UCSF Health. She will also serve as vice chair for quality and safety in the department of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences. We heartily congratulate Nerys on her new positions, although she will be sorely missed by our community.

In the time since Nerys was tapped to lead our diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts in August 2019, she has helped Einstein make substantial strides in advancing our Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan for Excellence. She expanded the D&I office infrastructure across campus, including the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) committee of the faculty senate and the institution-wide D&I Champions group. Nerys also developed institutional resources, such as the department guide for DEI, the anti-racism tool kit in collaboration with the Einstein library, and mentor and mentee education and training programs in collaboration with research leadership. Additionally, she supported the implementation of the revised faculty and leadership search process, offering guidance and education on equity-centered processes to search committees and leaders across the institution.

Most important, Nerys helped shepherd the institution through the spring and summer of 2020, when protests in response to George Floyd’s murder and the racial disparities of the COVID-19 pandemic took place around the country. These activities included a demonstration that was held on the Einstein campus where participants made urgent demands for structural changes. I know I speak for all of us when I thank Nerys for her strong commitment to equity and the deep dedication she brought to her role.

In addition to her D&I role, Nerys also holds critical clinical and education positions in the department of obstetrics & gynecology and women’s health at Einstein and Montefiore. She is currently the director of the division of family planning and of the fellowship in complex family planning. Additionally, she directs the department’s social obstetrics and gynecology and diversity mentoring programs.

Although Nerys is leaving Einstein, we remain deeply committed to continuing our work to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion at the College of Medicine. A search committee will soon be announced to assist us in filling the senior associate dean of diversity and inclusion
Please join me in congratulating Nerys and wishing her success in her new endeavor.

Sincerely,

Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D.
The Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean
Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer
Montefiore Medicine