



25 Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10004
Phone: 212-315-8600 Fax: 212-315-6498
thoracic.org

ATS Health Equity and Diversity Committee Statement on Juneteenth 2023

The American Thoracic Society's Health Equity and Diversity Committee stands united with the ATS in our commitment to advancing equity in the pulmonary community and broader society. Juneteenth commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the U.S., marking the day that the Emancipation Proclamation finally reached Texas in 1865 – two and a half years after it was issued. It serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for freedom, justice, and equity for all.

We honor this day by reaffirming our dedication to the pursuit of health equity and inclusivity.

The American Thoracic Society (ATS) has long recognized the critical importance of equity in respiratory health. As a diverse and inclusive professional association, we strive to eliminate disparities in health care access, treatment, and outcomes, toward the attainment of the highest level of respiratory health for all people. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally, implementing and maintaining focused societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities and historical and contemporary injustices, and eliminating health care disparities.

Our commitment extends to promoting diversity within our membership, leadership, education, clinical care, and research endeavors. The Health Equity and Diversity committee is charged directly with creating a plan to address health equity issues through cross-committee collaboration.

Achieving health equity is not only a moral imperative but also essential for scientific advancement and optimal patient care. By addressing the social determinants of health, we aim to reduce the burden of respiratory diseases and improve outcomes for marginalized populations.

As leaders within the pulmonary community, we call upon our colleagues, partners, and stakeholders to join us in this collective endeavor. Let us actively engage in initiatives that dismantle systemic barriers, promote diversity in research, mentorship, and leadership, and advocate for policies that ensure equitable access to respiratory care for all individuals.

Furthermore, we encourage all members of the ATS and the pulmonary community to educate themselves on the historical significance of Juneteenth, recognize its importance in the fight against racial injustice, and actively engage in conversations and actions that contribute to respiratory health equity.

The journey towards health equity is ongoing, but together, we can create a future where every individual can breathe freely – unencumbered by the burden of disparities.

As we commemorate Juneteenth, let us renew our commitment to equity, justice, and the pursuit of a healthier, more inclusive world.



25 Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10004
Phone: 212-315-8600 Fax: 212-315-6498
thoracic.org

Sincerely,

Juan P. Wisnivesky, MD, DrPH
Chair, Health Equity and Diversity Committee
American Thoracic Society

Stephanie Lovinsky-Desir, MD, MS
Vice-Chair, Health Equity and Diversity Committee
American Thoracic Society