

MedStaff Update

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MEDSTAFF SPOTLIGHT

Iris C. Gibbs, MD, FACR, FASTRO

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courtesy, of Neurosurgery*

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As a founding director of Stanford's CyberKnife Stereotactic Radiosurgery program, Associate Dean of MD Admissions, and Chair of the Diversity Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate, Dr. Iris Gibbs is passionate about fostering an environment at Stanford Medicine that is focused on equity, innovation, inclusion and excellence. A member of the Board of Directors for the Stanford Medicine Abilities Coalition (SMAC), Dr. Gibbs has also been a strong ally for the disability community at Stanford. We caught up with her during Disability in Medicine Month to learn more about her efforts.

Q: Please tell us a little bit about your clinical work at Stanford Medicine.

As a radiation oncologist I specialize in treatment of cancer and non-cancerous conditions using innovative technology. I am the founding director of the Stanford CyberKnife Stereotactic Radiosurgery program, which was invented here at Stanford. It has been very exciting to work with such a wonderful team to bring novel treatment options to patients. I've also enjoyed being involved with the medical education of pre-med students, medical students, and residents.

Q: What are you most passionate about?

I'm very passionate about fostering an environment at Stanford Medicine that is focused on equity, innovation, inclusion and excellence. I'm excited about helping make Stanford more accessible to a wider audience. When we think about our organization it's important to look for opportunities to ensure the tent is widened so we can benefit from the talent and bright ideas of a wider swath of our human population. I want to push the envelope on what talent means and push the envelope on where we get talent. During the last several years we've been able to show that we can maintain our excellence while diversifying our student body. The next frontier is about inclusion. How can we ensure students with a range of gender orientations, sexual orientations, and abilities are welcomed on our campus?

Q: How did you get involved with the Stanford Medicine Abilities Coalition, and how has your engagement impacted your work at Stanford?

The seed idea for the Stanford Medicine Abilities Coalition (SMAC) was formed during a discussion within the diversity sub-committee at the Faculty Senate in 2018. Dr. Peter Poulos sparked a conversation about access and discrimination that struck a chord for the group and for me. With Pete's leadership, SMAC has blossomed into an amazing organization. The disability in medicine conference that he started has the best and most educational sessions I've experienced anywhere in the last several years. My engagement with SMAC has given me new perspective, awareness and courage as both a physician and the Associate Dean of MD Admissions. In my work, I want to send a message to all prospective students, faculty, staff, and patients that not only are you welcome here, but you are invited. We still have much more work to do, but we're committed to continuing to build the plane while it's flying.

Q: Why do you work at Stanford Medicine?

I never knew that I could be so welcomed into a place, and it could be so aligned with my values. It hasn't always been easy, and there have been ups and downs along the way, but by and large Stanford has worked hard to be inclusive and put in the work to create an environment where talented students and medical staff can thrive. As part of our admissions team, I want to offer a welcoming and inclusive environment to all students who enter our campus. Although there is still much more work to do, I am pleased by the leadership of the Chief of Staff Office in bringing diverse leadership perspective to the table and spotlighting equity and inclusion. I look forward to working together to continue to draw strength from our diverse talent. It will take a diverse team to solve the challenges of the future, and I'm proud to play a role in creating opportunities for our future medical leaders.