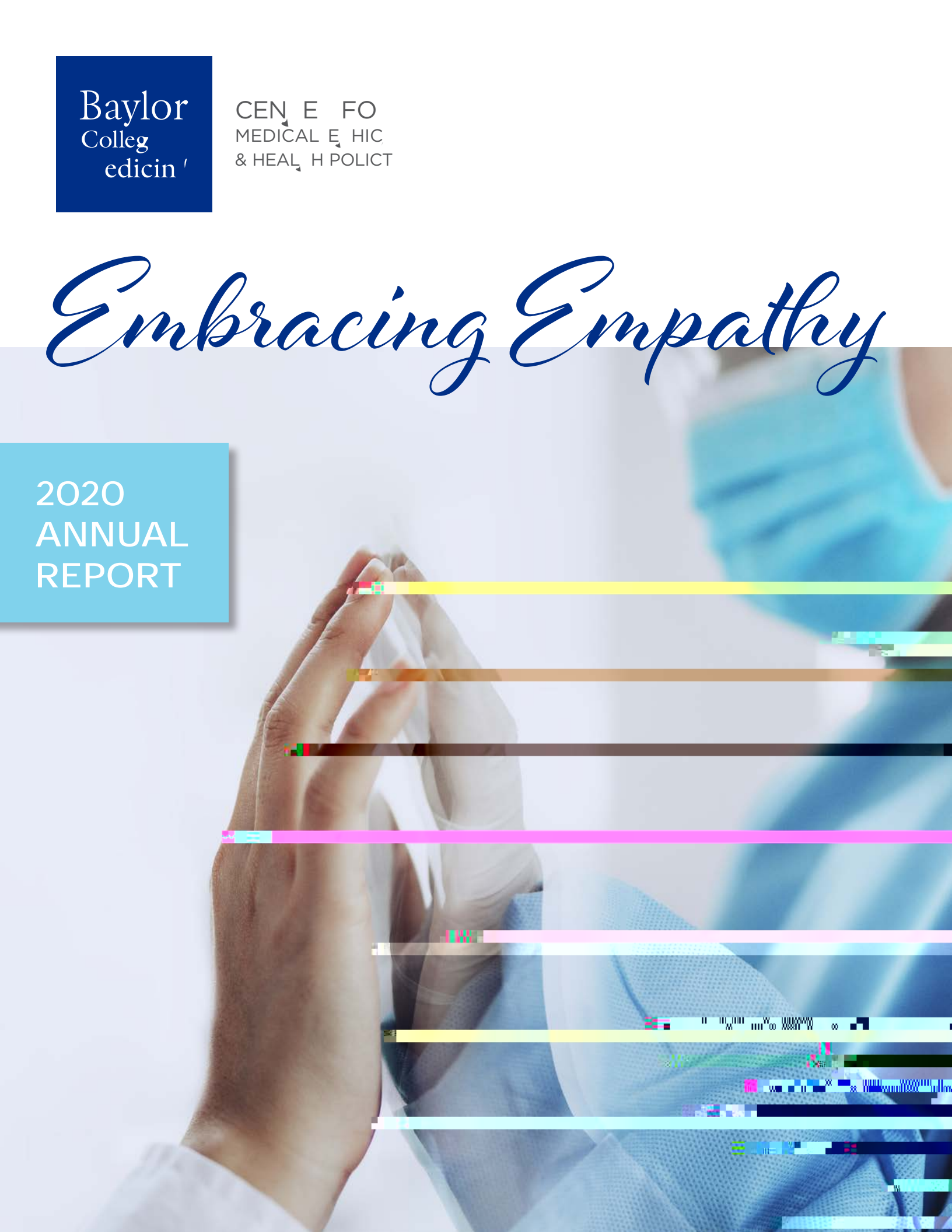


Baylor
College
Medicine

CENTER FOR
MEDICAL ETHICS
& HEALTH POLICY

Embracing Empathy

2020
ANNUAL
REPORT





Director's Corner

We are living in an era of crisis and transformation. I can confidently say that 2020 has not been what I (or anyone else) expected. And yet, while we are all more physically distant than ever before, this harrowing time is igniting some powerful conversations, connections and changes within our society and our Center. Empathy is a central theme in this dialogue.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the senseless killing of Black men and women while in police custody have sparked despair and outrage across the country. Events like these have polarized us as a nation, and fundamental ethical issues like promoting public health and advocating for social justice have become a catalyst to fuel public discord and entrench political partisanship.

These circumstances have challenged us to truly reflect on our commitments, our purpose and our passions. And we are doing it with intense empathy — focusing on better understanding others' choices, decisions, life circumstances and points of view. We are committed to being there for one another and have done even more to encourage an environment and workplace that is open, honest and fair. I deeply believe that embracing empathy as a core value is the only way to foster stronger relationships, build connections and drive meaningful behavior change.

Empathy stands out in this annual report, where we share both our accomplishments and our ambitions. It is built into what we do every day, what we have learned and where we hope to go.

Over the last year, we have mobilized to help address COVID-19, contributed and celebrated novel research, grown our clinical partnerships, expanded our education efforts and deepened our relationships with the community. We have continued to prove the power of bringing people together (albeit virtually these days) to stimulate innovation, unleash fresh ideas and drive growth.

As a Center, we are eager to lean into the uneasy and uncomfortable path ahead. We embrace the uncertainty as our new normal and stand ready to continue to uncover and explore the most pressing policy and ethical issues impacting us all, while remembering that it is our humanity that ties us together. Just as we are researchers, educators and ethicists, we are also parents, siblings, relatives and friends, as are the people we work with, teach, study and care for.

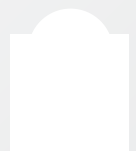
We truly believe in our collective ability to make progress and improve our society. Thank you for joining us as, together, we prepare for the work that lies ahead.

Take care and stay safe!

Amy Lynn McGuire, J.D., Ph.D.

SERVING AS A TRUSTED
PARTNER TO HOSPITALS:

Supported hospitals through our **ethics
consultation programs** and events, creating
lasting value and significant medical benefit
for patients and the health care team.




A CLOSER LOOK AT THE STATEWIDE CONSORTIUM

When the pandemic hit, Houston doubled down, and we jumped in to develop protocols and processes for what seemed to be the inevitable. And then as spring became summer, our city and hospitals were deluged with COVID-19. As a Center focused on the hardest ethical and policy problems, change is always constant.

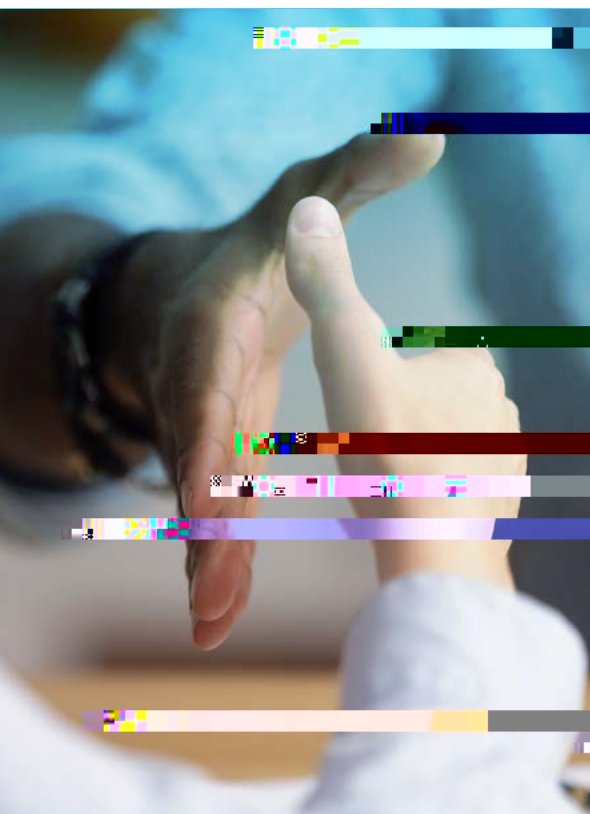
The pandemic is exacerbating existing economic and healthcare disparities, which impacts hospitals in a multitude of ways. We were prepared for this in every sense of the word and yet were extremely relieved and appreciative when colleagues across the country reached out offering help, support and learning.

Specifically, over the last few months we have shared resources and knowledge about how to implement scarce medical resource policies in a way that's not discriminatory and in accordance

It was from these conversations that the **TEXAS ETHICS CONSORTIUM** was borne with a specific goal of addressing statewide and federal laws and mandates.



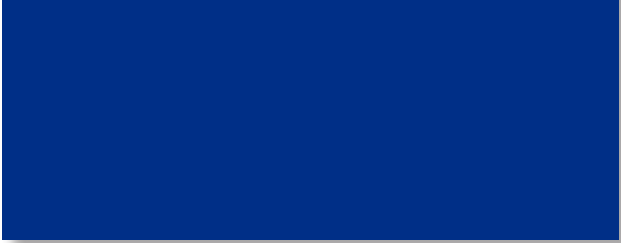




A large part of our work is supporting hospitals through **clinical ethics consultations**. Our goal is to be there for the healthcare team, patients and families before, during and after key moments in their journey. We serve as a mediator working across disciplines and departments. Through these efforts, we've continued to build our robust clinical ethics consultation program at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center and Houston Methodist Hospital.

We also provide numerous education sessions to both hospitals, including **Ethics Grand Rounds** on topics such as ethical considerations in caring for patients with COVID-19. We have been working closely with leadership at both hospitals to develop triage policies and manage allocation of scarce resources and other ethical controversies raised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In February 2020, we showcased our know-how and brought leaders in the field together when we hosted a national conference entitled "**Evolving Clinical Ethics: A Working UnConference.**" This provided an opportunity for clinical ethicists to collaboratively explore new and unresolved issues using an innovative meeting format. Over 90 people attended the three-day conference here in Houston and discussed topics such as pitching an ethics service to an administrator, culturally competent ethics consultation and

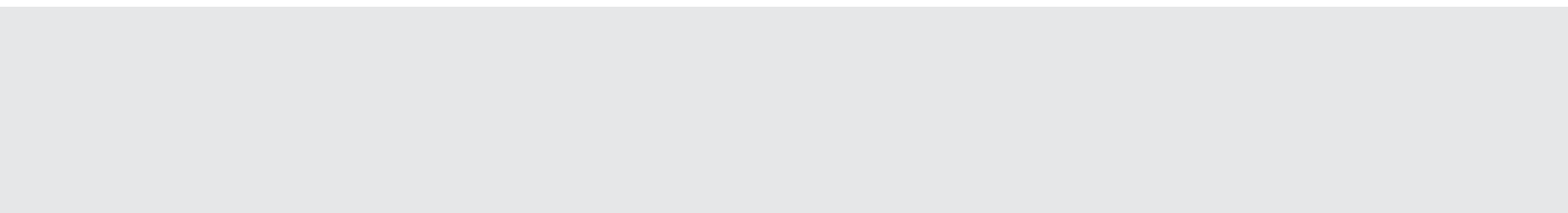


*Focusing on **education** is
foundational to our Center.*

*It's at the core of why we
exist, and it's the reason we
are here.*

It's what we do.

*For the past 100 years, we have been
committed to providing a high-quality
education for all.*







Baylor College of Medicine Position Statements: We developed three position statements and a legislative briefing on important health policy topics as requested by College leadership and the Board of Trustees. We take great pride in leading these efforts — identifying thought-leaders throughout the college who are working on these issues and crafting language that is understandable and useful for a broad audience.



- Strengthening Our Commitment to Racial Justice to Improve Public Health
-



- Baylor College of Medicine Calls for More Accountability & New Strategies to Improve Organ Donation Policy
-

- Baylor College of Medicine Supports Comprehensive Research, Training, and Advocacy to Address Firearm Safety
-

- Making Healthcare More Accessible & Affordable in the U.S.
-

Anti-Racism RFA and Journal Club: We helped develop and oversee the recent request for applications for seed funding through the Office of the President to support research on health disparities and health equity. We also launched a journal club that critically reviews academic and multimedia materials that address the impact of social determinants of health (SDOH) on medical outcomes and quality of life.

- This summer, Amy McGuire, J.D., Ph.D., participated in **The Wall Street Journal's Tech Health**, a virtual interactive conference of executives and experts about technologies fueling the response to the coronavirus pandemic, as well as future challenges and opportunities as companies large and small push for solutions.
- We were **accepted to host a**

JOIN US!

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Help support our mission of conducting innovative multidisciplinary research on ethical issues arising in clinical practice and biomedical research. This research informs the education of trainees at all levels and contributes to the development of health policy at the local, national, and international levels. If you're interested in learning more, [click here](#) or please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement and Alumni Relations at 713.798.4714.

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