



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Division of Epidemiology
School of Public Health
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August 11, 1989

8/14/89

Dolores E. Cross ✓
Associate Vice President for
Academic Affairs
Associate Chancellor
200 Morrill Hall

Dean Richard Skok ✓
Forestry Administration
235 Natural Resources Administration

Dear Ms. Cross and Dean Skok:

The academic fields of epidemiology and public health have a great potential for recruiting and training minority students and faculty. For example, we currently have two superb, young, black post-docs taking Master of Public Health degrees. In both cases, as in our recruiting nationally for minority candidates, the chances are small of having a regular faculty position available at a given moment when such candidates are at an appropriate level of training and experience to compete for a tenured position.

When on occasion a regular faculty position is opened, it is for only a period of a few months. During such a short search period, again the likelihood is rather small of matching the job requirements with the availability of a strong minority candidate.

It would be marvelous if we could find a University mechanism whereby individual units could recruit "on call"; in other words, "striking when the iron is hot", at the moment of availability of exceptional candidates identified by our contacts or recruitment. It seems to me that a relatively small reserve fund of recurrent, or even nonrecurrent funds,

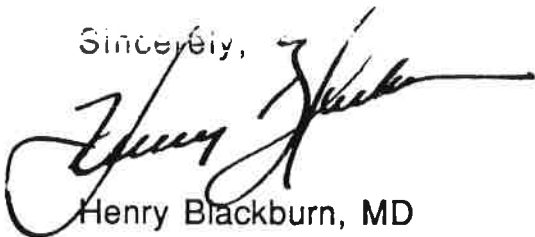
might allow a unit to take initiative, or to respond quickly at the critical time when a minority candidate becomes ready to seek a position actively.

In the particular example of our two post-docs now on board, it is most uncomfortable for us in this unit to find them getting offers from other institutions for now, or for whenever they are "ready", while our own institution is training them. We are unable to make or even project a faculty offer under such conditions.

Clearly, such potential candidates recruited here or elsewhere would have to compete with the market available during the period of the formal search. But our ability to recruit minorities, with reasonable assurance of being able to post a position and initiate a search on command, would make good job matches much more likely. It would also greatly reduce our chances of missing out on exceptional candidates and might enhance our rather poor overall University record of engaging minority faculty.

I have recommended that the School of Public Health consider providing an identified minority student fellowship fund and, at least, making available a minority faculty "slot", even if new state funds are unavailable. It seems unlikely that this can happen, however, without some administrative approval or support from the University.

Sincerely,



Henry Blackburn, MD
Professor and Director

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