



Family Medicine-Urban Track Residents participate in Royal Oak protest representing White Coats for Black Lives

Among the stream of people in street clothes walking by, it was hard to miss the 20 doctors and medical students marching in their scrubs and white coats holding signs that said “White Coats for Black Lives.” Many of them were from the Family Medicine (FM) unit at the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. Those interviewed said they wanted to stand with and show their support for the community that they serve, one that is largely Black.

Dr. Alicia Garcia Steele is a member of the inaugural class of the Wayne State University FM-Urban Track residency, and she is working to address health inequities and lack of access to health care for Detroit’s underresourced communities. She said every institution can have systemic racism and violence, specifically pointing to the disproportionate burden of COVID-19 on Michigan’s Black community.

Despite fears that public protests might aid in spreading the virus, Dr. Steele said now is the time everyone has to speak because she believes racism is also a public health crisis. “Yes, coronavirus is awful and it’s taking people’s lives, many of our loved ones,” Steele said. “But racism has been doing that as well. For many of us who come from communities of color, we see how damaging to our lives racism has been and continues to be ... Of course it’s not ideal, but there’s certain circumstances that

draw you and you have to, especially as a doctor, you have to use your privilege and use your voice to speak out.”

Attendees also included Dr. Danny Garcia (FM-UT) and Dr. Frances Osaigbovo (FM-UT). Like Dr. Steele, Dr. Osaigbovo studied medicine at the Latin American School of Medicine in Cuba, where their training mandate was to be “médicos de ciencia y consciencia,” doctors of science and conscience.

WSUGME FM-Urban Track residents Dr. Frances Osaigbovo (front at left), Dr. Alicia Garcia Steele (middle), Dr. Danny J. Garcia (front at right)

