



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

May 2016

Dear Health and Society Scholars:

I want to thank you again for inviting me to be part of your celebration of the Health and Society Scholars program. I was inspired by the energy, brilliance and passion each of you bring individually, and by what you all have accomplished—and continue to accomplish—collectively.

As I said during the reception, you have been pioneers in understanding that the health of Americans is impacted by complex systems and structures inside *and* outside of our healthcare system. Most notably, you have zeroed in on the racism and poverty that make it unjustly harder for some people to live healthy lives. You have demonstrated that we will improve population health only if we collaborate with and across the many sectors and professions that shape the health of our neighborhoods and communities. And you have proven that great change is possible when diverse and visionary leaders like yourselves break down silos to apply research that influences policies and alters the status quo.

You think differently and are teaching future generations to do the same. Your work has illuminated where the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the nation need to go if we are going to truly improve the lives of Americans. I am forever grateful for your important contribution to the vision of a Culture of Health, and excited about the impact your work and leadership will continue to have in your communities and institutions.

I hope that we will remain closely connected. I invite and encourage you to:

- Continue to look to one another and the Foundation for advice, support, networking, mentorship and guidance as you continue to advance the movement. The [RWJF Leadership Network](#) on LinkedIn is a great place to start.
- Act as a mentor to the many new up-and-coming leaders that will be coming through RWJF's [four new leadership programs](#)—as well as the undergraduate students who are part of our [Summer Medical and Dental Education Program](#) and the diverse cohorts in our [New Connections](#) program.
- Continue to share your experiences with other rising leaders from this program and others who are now at institutions across the country) and encourage them to apply for relevant RWJF funding opportunities, such as our [new research programs](#).
- Keep talking about the importance of working across sectors, and keep pushing for bold solutions for health equity, collaborating with unexpected partners and challenging the status quo.

I look forward to our continued collaboration to make health a shared value in America so all have the chance to lead a healthy, fulfilled life regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, or income.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Risa", is positioned above the typed name.

Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD, MBA  
President and CEO