



Do You See Me?

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Do you see me?
You may not notice the small child
color etched on beautiful
dark skin
hair falling in braids
surrounding eyes
that witness the pain
of fairness absent
in education or health.
She hopes to grow up
to care for her mother
to understand the disease
that robs her mother's strength and vigor
But who will help?

Do you see me?
You may not notice the moody teen
with failing grades
hungry
like a quarter of kids in this country
eyes defiant
nails torn and dirty
from work with his father
needed for food
But who will help?

Do you see me?
The medical student burning
the midnight oil but
burning out, longing
to snuff out her life
or maybe not, to
just survive
this rotation.

But someone notices.
Someone sees them.
A friend, or
teacher, maybe
a family physician
who noticed the weary
the isolated
apathetic or cynical reply
who saw the hunger
behind the eyes of the
teen, or the
child, absent laughter,
and supported their dreams
of health
for all,
advocacy
for all.
We can do better
in our quest
to heal our world.
The day is now.
The time is now.

AUTHORS' NOTE: The shared work of the Family Medicine for America's Health Workforce Diversity project team, comprised of medical students, residents, and practicing physicians, led to the writing of this poem. We believe increasing workforce diversity across all fields of medicine is crucial to achieving health equity. While diversity and inclusion work sometimes feels like an academic exercise, for us, it is deeply personal. We have experienced tokenization. We have witnessed culturally insensitive care. As underrepresented minorities in medicine, we must confront implicit biases and their impact on both workforce diversity and health equity on a daily basis. As a reflection of the personal nature of our work, we offer this poem that highlights the importance of the role of family physicians in workforce diversity.

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