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Pride Month is an essential time for both celebration and reflection within our diverse community, and the University of Medicine and Health Sciences (UMHS) is stepping up to contribute meaningfully to this period of recognition. The small, mission-driven Caribbean medical school announced it will host a riveting live stream event titled "UMHS Celebrates Pride: Insights and Advice from LGBTQ+ Physicians" on Monday, June 17, at 7 pm EDT. The event will be broadcast on UMHS’s social media platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram Live, and LinkedIn.

The panel for the event boasts a diverse set of medical professionals who are UMHS alumni, sharing their invaluable insights and personal experiences as LGBTQ+ physicians. The scheduled speakers include Dr. Soren Estvold, a Sports Medicine Fellow at Travis Air Force Base in California, Dr. Jasmine Rivas, a Family Medicine Physician and Hospitalist at Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare & Medi-Call Direct in Florida, and Dr. Tess McClenahan, an Anesthesiology Resident at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts.

In an environment that still often struggles with biases and inequities, this event promises to be a significant resource, offering a deep dive into real-life experiences and expert advice. Topics will include important aspects of LGBTQ+ healthcare data, the critical importance of mentorship in the medical field, networking strategies, and resource utilisation for LGBTQ+ medical professionals and their allies.

UMHS President Warren Ross underscored the institution's commitment to inclusivity and support for its LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and alumni. "Our mission is not just to educate, but to foster an environment where every individual feels valued and empowered," Ross said. The event is part of a broader series of discussions aimed at tackling key issues that face today’s medical professionals.

Past events have also painted a comprehensive picture of the healthcare landscape for LGBTQ+ individuals. Programs such as "LGBTQ+ Medicine: Full Spectrum Care," "LGBTQ+ Medicine: Providing Compassionate Care," and "LGBTQ+ Medicine and Theory" have been instrumental in educating attendees on the nuances and complexities of effective, empathetic care.

These discussions are not just academic; they offer practical tools and advice to current and prospective medical students, who gain not only through the shared experiences of panelists but also through a community that understands their unique challenges and triumphs. For LGBTQ+ individuals in the healthcare field, the importance of finding a mentor and establishing a network cannot be overstated. It is within these bonds that queer practitioners can find solidarity, advice, and assurance, which bolster their professional and personal lives.

While the focus is on LGBTQ+ physicians, the event is also a beacon for allies within and beyond the medical field. Learning and unlearning practices, extending support, and recognising the diverse needs of patients and colleagues alike is an ongoing journey. Events like these ensure that the dialogue continues, fostering a progressive and inclusive culture in what can often be traditional and rigid structures.

As Pride Month continues to illuminate the progress and ongoing struggles within our community, educational institutions like UMHS play a crucial role in driving forward the narrative of inclusivity and support. This event is a timely reminder that while significant strides have been made, the journey for equality, representation, and understanding is ongoing.

So, make a date this June 17 at 7 pm EDT to join the live stream and be part of an essential conversation that promises not just insights but a vision of healthcare where everyone is seen, heard, and cared for. Visit the UMHS live events and meetings page to participate.