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Dear Reader:

More than merely a trend, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) initiatives in the workplace have become a strategy for success. Executives are recognizing the need and advantages of implementing policies to drive change and help workers feel accepted and valued.

In our latest L.A. Times B2B Publishing event, we hosted diverse business leaders from a variety of backgrounds and industries to share their perspectives. The keynote speaker, a diversity advocate and entrepreneur, espoused the importance of mentorship, which serves as a bridge between access and opportunity.

The event also featured a couple of enlightening panels, one featuring experts and advocates on visibility and inclusion in the workplace, the other on inclusive leadership and belonging. Both can be viewed in their entirety online at latimes.com/diversity. This event was a great success, and we could not have done it without the support of our Diamond sponsors, GHJ and California State University, Northridge, and our Platinum sponsor, HUB International.

This issue further explores the value of DEIA policies as they relate to the California business community as well as how they impact society as a whole. In addition, our readers were invited to nominate DEI professionals and experts, and we present the profiles of select visionaries here to highlight some of the most prominent game-changers and their achievements within their respective businesses.

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MAJORITY OF U.S. EMPLOYERS HAVE IMPLEMENTED DEI INITIATIVES IN 2021

More than eight in 10 (83%) U.S. organizations are currently implementing diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in 2021, according to a new survey by WorldatWork.

Among the eighty-three percent, almost a third (29%) said they took their first action on DEI initiatives during the past 12 months. Nearly all (97%) of those DEI-active organizations have either established a DEI strategy (56%) or are actively working on one (41%).

More than half (57%) of these organizations indicated they have metrics in place to measure DEI results, with another 36% considering or evaluating implementing these measures. Of these respondents, 91% said they're using DEI metrics to track workforce representation and almost as many (89%) are using metrics to track DEI recruiting efforts.

Additionally, at the organizations polled, human resources policies were the most prevalent (74%)

DEI activity in the past 12 months, followed by development/performance management (62%), compensation (45%), recognition (33%), benefits (29%) and recruiting (6%).

"We are seeing organizations take action in [a] variety of areas to address workplace equity — policies toward inclusion, [putting] training programs in place, equitable career advancement and development opportunities, expanding benefits offerings for a diverse workforce and performance management with metrics for managers tied to DEI initiatives," said Deirdre Macbeth, WorldatWork's content director, in a press release.

Meanwhile, a separate survey of employees conducted by the Schlesinger Group on behalf of Worl-

datWork found 85% of respondents believe their employer prioritizes DEI a good or great deal in the workplace, while 74% said they feel their employer is putting the right amount of effort into these initiatives.

"Such an endorsement by employees is very positive," said Macbeth. "It shows organizations are not just saying the right thing but actually doing the right thing."

Two-thirds (64%) of employees surveyed said they believe DEI is very or extremely important. Indeed, 83% said they agree or strongly agree with the statement, 'I feel comfortable talking about my background and cultural experiences with my colleagues,' and 85% said they also either agree or strongly agree with the statement, 'I feel included and respected at my organization.'



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CENSUS BUREAU RELEASES NEW DATA ON MINORITY-OWNED, VETERAN-OWNED AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

The U.S. Census Bureau last month released new estimates on the characteristics of employer businesses in their 2020 Annual Business Survey (ABS), which covers reference year 2019.

Approximately 18.7% (1.1 million) of U.S. employer businesses were minority-owned. Veteran-owned businesses made up about 5.7% (331,151) of all businesses, and about 20.9% (1.2 million) of businesses were owned by women.

Additional highlights:

- The number of Hispanic-owned businesses had a growth of about 4.6% from 2018. In 2019, Hispanic-owned businesses made up about 6.0% (346,836) of all businesses, with an estimated \$463.3 billion in annual receipts, 2.9 million employees and about \$108.4 billion in annual payroll.
- There were an estimated 581,200 Asian-owned businesses with about 23.8% (138,043) in the Accommodation and Food Services sector.

Asian-owned businesses had the largest estimated receipts (\$874.6 billion) among minority race groups across all sectors.

- There were an estimated 134,567 Black- or African American-owned businesses with \$133.7 billion in annual receipts, 1.3 million employees and about \$40.5 billion in annual payroll. About 29.5% (39,705) of these businesses were in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector.
- There were an estimated 26,064 American Indian and Alaska Native-owned businesses with \$35.8 billion in receipts, 215,049 employees and about \$8.7 billion in annual payroll.
- There were an estimated 7,331 Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander-owned businesses with approximately \$8.5 billion in receipts,

51,869 employees and about \$1.9 billion in annual payroll.

- Veteran-owned businesses had an estimated \$963.4 billion in receipts, 4.0 million employees and about \$191.6 billion in annual payroll.

The ABS is sponsored by the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) within the National Science Foundation and conducted jointly with the U.S. Census Bureau. The ABS measures research and development for microbusinesses, innovation, and technology and provides annual data on select economic and demographic characteristics for businesses and business owners by sex, ethnicity, race and veteran status. Additional data on research and development and innovation will be released by NCSES in the coming months.

THE MISSING PIECE TO YOUR DEI STRATEGY

Recently, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) has taken center stage in public discussions. Examples of this can be seen in popular culture where the importance of including creators, characters and viewpoints from a diverse range of backgrounds has been recognized.

As stated in a recent article in the Los Angeles Times, “Eternals” has the MCU’s first Deaf superhero. Her Deafness is one of her super-powers: “In the comics, Makkari is known primarily for her superhuman speed, which allows her to spin cyclones, run on water and defy gravity. In Marvel Studios’ forthcoming adaptation, Makkari is also Deaf — a key asset that distinguishes her from her fellow celestial protectors.”

This is an important example of how the world is recognizing that DEI is not complete without embracing disabilities and addressing accessibility.

This superpower is one that I share. Having a hearing impairment my entire life has led me to develop coping mechanisms, such as reading lips, but it has also turned me into a great listener — a quality all good leaders should have.

Over the years, I have learned not only the strength that comes from my disability but also how sharing my story empowers others to do the same, especially in the workplace.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 61 million adults (or one in four people) in the U.S. has a disability. It can, therefore, be deduced there are disabled individuals in most organizations. However, talking openly about disability is still taboo.

While companies are reevaluating DEI efforts, people with disabilities are often left out of these conversations and likely missing from these strategies. Disabled people are talented, innovative, adaptable and resourceful — their limitations often require this. By recognizing the disabilities employees have, understanding why it is important to include them in a diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) strategy and learning how to implement an inclusive plan, companies can better set themselves and their employees up for success.

WHAT IS THE SPECTRUM OF DISABILITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (passed in 1990 and amended in 2008) prohibits the discrimination of disabled people in the workplace, among other places. It also defines a disabled person as one “who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment.”

While ADA provides protections, many individuals do not identify as having a disability out of fear of being marginalized. Disability is often framed by physical limitations, such as using a wheelchair; however, the spectrum of disability is vast and includes both visible and invisible limitations.

Invisible disabilities include cognitive disorders, mental health diagnoses or chronic health issues, such as autism, arthritis or dyslexia. Oftentimes, individuals adopt coping mechanisms to mask invisible disabilities due to fear, shame or embarrassment. It is important for organizations to recognize that even if employees do not talk about it, these disabilities are quite common.

WHY INCLUSIVE MEANS ALL

The path to access is different for each person and dependent on how barriers present to them. An equitable workplace is inclusive of individual needs and determines what is required for each person to be successful.

These employees are the experts, and it is important to provide safe spaces where they can express their needs and concerns. Employee Resource Groups are a great place for individuals to exchange ideas and enact change.

It is also important to be aware that unconscious bias can lead disabled people to be overlooked for projects and promotions. According to the Center for Talent Innovation’s “Disabilities and Inclusion” study, only 39 percent of employees report their disability to their manager and 21 percent disclose to HR. Similar to other DEIA topics, normalizing conversations around disability help to destigmatize these issues. These conversations will not be easy, but the more these important matters are discussed, the less individuals will feel the need to hide.

HOW TO BEGIN AND BUILD

DEIA issues have been in the spotlight recently. Whether about social, health or political issues, there has been increased dialogue and more empathy for one another’s struggles. As a result, individuals with underlying conditions have felt more empowered to request accommodations.

However, not everyone feels ready to discuss the topic. Companies must acknowledge that they have employees with disabilities *without* requiring those people to disclose their limitations. Organizations can support disabled talent by:

- 1. Update hiring practices.** Evaluate and remove language from job descriptions that is not relevant to the role’s primary function. Additionally, provide easy-to-access accommodation information on hiring pages. This will help alleviate the stress of making accessibility requests.

During the interview process, ensure hiring managers are educated about equitable practices around disability. Unconscious bias train-

Mari-Anne Kehler

Partner and Chief Strategy Officer

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ing can help remove stereotypes that disabled people cannot work long hours or perform the job functions.

- 2. Be accommodating.** Title I of the ADA requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for disabilities applications and employees, including restructuring jobs, making worksites/workstations accessible and modifying schedules, equipment and policies.

Companies need to leverage technology to provide accommodations for disabled employees. Adjustable desks and monitors, color-coded keyboards, screen reader software and sign language apps are a few examples. Microsoft has developed additional tools and solutions that can be easily adopted.

- 3. Be curious, not judgmental.** Disability training should be incorporated as part of the onboarding process. Leaders and employees alike must learn to look at the whole individual, not a person’s disability. Be curious. Ask questions. Solicit feedback. Listen. But above all, foster relationships with these employees.

DOING WELL BY DOING GOOD

Good talent is hard to find. In the midst of what is known as “The Great Resignation,” that phrase has taken on a new meaning. Disabled populations are often overlooked in the workforce. There are many talented people looking for the right workplace to call home. By recognizing disabilities, utilizing inclusive policies and building out DEIA strategies that incorporate disabilities, companies will be able to better help disabled individuals thrive to the benefit and advantage of the organization.

ABOUT MARI-ANNE KEHLER

Mari-Anne, CDP, is Partner and Chief Strategy Officer at GHJ, a Los Angeles-based accounting and advisory firm. She is also Strategist for GHJ Foundation, GHJ’s vehicle for purposeful and proactive giving to the community.

Mari-Anne is active in the community in the areas of disability activism and awareness and has mentored families and professionals for over two decades. She currently serves on the Board of the Autism Society of Los Angeles and a frequent speaker on disabilities awareness, transition to adulthood and impact on families.



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EMBRACING THE LANGUAGE OF DIVERSITY

The Institute for Public Relations, the Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and The Wakeman Agency launched a report on the current state of diversity-related language in the public relations industry, “The Language of Diversity.” The first-of-its-kind report examines how nearly 400 communications professionals perceive the current language of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) being used in their organizations and its impact on workplace ecosystems. It also delves into ways the power dynamics in language can reinforce, advance, or impede creating authentic, DEI-infused professional cultures. Based on feedback from industry experts, the report offers suggested standard definitions for commonly-used DEI terms.

“Our industry has a responsibility to take a leadership role in reflecting the importance of language as it relates to the creation of ecosystems that hold DEI principles and practices at their core,” said Vanessa Wakeman, CEO of The Wakeman Agency. “As gatekeepers, we should be pushing for evolution in how we communicate with colleagues and external stakeholders. But before we can lead that charge, we need to gain insight into the current perceptions and

use of language. We hope this survey will enhance clarity and impact as we strive to shape language that propels the DEI mission.”

An analysis of the survey results in the report finds:

- Ninety-seven percent of communicators agreed that language or words could influence or reinforce power dynamics in the workplace.

- A significant majority (87%) said it is important for workplace discussions to focus on how language can evolve to be more equitable or inclusive. However, one-third of respondents said they thought the terms “diversity,” “equity,” and “inclusion” were overused.
- Two-thirds of communicators agreed that the public relations industry needs to develop standard definitions relating to DEI, and only 13% disagreed. Less than half of the respondents felt that organizations were adequately explaining why DEI language was important.

Report Reveals Inaccurate & Inconsistent DEI Definitions Among Communications Professionals

The survey asked respondents to provide defini-

tions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Across the board, these definitions were inaccurate, inconsistent, and incomplete compared to the body of knowledge and literature on this topic:

- Twenty percent reported they did not recognize the difference between the terms “diversity” and “inclusion.”
- A quarter of respondents failed to recognize “equity” and “equality” as distinct terms.
- Only 23% saw “inclusion” and “belonging” as separate terms.

Few organizations had codified DEI definitions and most were not publicly available. Only 31% of communicators reported their organizations had formal definitions of DEI terms in a handbook or guide.

“Having clear and consistent language is critical for DEI communication to be successful,” said Dr. Tina McCorkindale, President and CEO at the Institute for Public Relations. “The survey results indicate a wide use and codification of language by communicators. Companies need to ensure their employees understand the terminology and are all on the same page, especially with the fluidity of language.”

Significantly, respondents also reported a distinct “say-do” gap between expressing commitment to DEI and engaging in meaningful action. Communicators noted that their organizations were more likely to publicly express a commitment to DEI (76%) than to take action, either internally (70%) or in society (59%).

Key Definitions of DEI

In addition to the comprehensive survey on the state of DEI language, the report also features definitions of DEI words/terms. The definitions were developed by analyzing the broad range of survey responses along with patterns in how people articulated terms and high-frequency words. Nine academic and industry leaders were consulted to review and provide feedback on the definitions.

Diversity-related definitions are provided for diversity, equality, equity, inclusion, and social justice. The report emphasizes that these are not universally accepted definitions; rather they illuminate the need for refinement and ongoing updates to DEI language. The definitions were created to generate meaningful discussions and exploration, leading to lasting positive change.



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VISIBLE SUPPORT FROM THE C-SUITE IS KEY TO INCREASING DE&I

Research reveals trends differentiating “leader” and “laggard” organizations.

Growing social and political pressure, expanding pay data laws, and a global pandemic that is inflicting disproportionate economic damage on women and people of color are compelling organizations to confront workplace disparity; though new research indicates progress around this complex issue is largely inconsistent and insufficient.

A new study from Harvard Business Review Analytic Services and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), in association with Trusaic, examines the actions businesses are taking to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); how successful they are and where critical gaps stand in the way of meaningful change. Research suggests two key factors are driving forward progress: commitment from the executive ranks and a commitment to better data.

The numbers underscore that good intentions are not enough. While a majority of survey respondents (65%) say DEI is a high strategic priority, two-thirds (67%) admit their organization is, at best, only somewhat successful in creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace. Even among leader organizations, almost half acknowledge they are behind where they should be in improving DEI.

Most laggard organizations report DEI initiatives are more “style over substance.”

The findings reveal that momentum for change must begin in the C-suite:

- Half of laggard organizations say they are frustrated by a lack of commitment from leadership, and 72% say they are held back by a lack of diversity at senior levels of the organization.
- Seventy-seven percent of leader organizations have visible executive support compared to just 34% of laggards.
- When the CEO sets the strategy and frequently communicates progress, the company is 6.3 times more likely to have a diverse leadership team and be a leader in its industry segment.

- DEI leaders are significantly more likely than followers or laggards to set goals for levels of diversity among senior executives and board members.

Measuring and tracking DEI metrics are essential to accelerating DEI progress. Leader organizations regularly monitor DEI metrics, communicate progress to key stakeholders, and use data to identify interventions and course-correct:

- Leaders (70%) are more than twice as likely as laggards (30%) to track all three aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Leaders also measure progress across a wider range of metrics.
- Recruiting and hiring are the most tracked diversity metrics. Leaders track both areas much more than laggards.
- Leaders work far harder to determine whether their staff are treated equitably and are significantly more likely to track equity in compensation, performance development and feedback, promotions, and access to growth opportunities.
- A third of laggard companies that track diversity do not track equity.
- Ninety-five percent of DEI leaders measure inclusion goal progress at least annually; 51% track inclusion goal progress at least quarterly – more than twice as often as laggards.
- More than twice as many leaders have seen inclusion sentiment improvement in the past two years.

“Organizations that commit to correcting imbalances in the workplace are often met with significant challenges. What’s missing is the critical connection point between monitoring DEI metrics and using that data to improve the effectiveness of DEI programs to create lasting, meaningful change,” said Robert Sheen, CEO of Trusaic. “Data supports firms in holding themselves to account. Access to timely and reliable data is key to DEI success.”

As a direct result of their DEI efforts, surveyed leaders reported greater improvements in team diversity, employee engagement, collaboration, pay equity, and the ability to recruit top talent.

A total of 1,115 respondents drawn from SHRM membership and the Harvard Business Review audience completed the survey.

ESSENTIAL CAREER STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN OF COLOR IN THE WORKPLACE

As so many of us are painfully aware, women of color remain the most underrepresented group in the corporate pipeline. We are hired at lower rates. We are promoted at lower rates. We are retained at lower rates. We are paid at lower rates.

I made a commitment to help underrepresented professionals accelerate their careers. As a Black woman in corporate America and the founder of a career coaching company, I know that building your career is the most valuable and the most personal investment you'll ever make. As a coach, my advice to underrepresented women who are looking to advance their careers is three-fold:

1. Aggregate Your Accomplishments

Keep track of your accomplishments, even if they are small wins. Don't wait until your performance review rolls around to do this. Track your wins at the end of every month and document them. This is crucial because it's easy to forget our accomplishments, even if we don't intend to. If you haven't reviewed your accomplishments in a while, I'd like you to pause and answer this question:

What are the 12 most important things that you achieved in the last year?

Write that list, keep it, and keep adding to it.

2. Be Visible

Visibility at work matters because underrepresented professionals are often overlooked. According to a recent study by Working Mother Media, multicultural women are 25% more likely to aspire to senior roles than white women. However, our aspirations can fall by the wayside fast. Working Mother Media's research found only 46% of multicultural women had attended a meeting with senior executives within a two-year period, compared to 63% of white men.

Reflect on what you want to be known for within your company and align your actions based on your intentions. In addition to your

manager, make a list of the decision-makers and networks that could be pivotal to your advancement. Who are the people at your company that can open doors for you or advocate for you? Are there groups, programs, or committees at your company that you could join to broaden your internal networks?

If you are clear on your intentions, you will be open to opportunities as and when they appear. Actions speak louder than words. Do what you can to consistently demonstrate your ability and expertise.

3. Align With Advocates

If you want to advance, cultivating relationships with people in leadership roles is crucial. Gaining advocates at work will help accelerate opportunities and connections. If you don't know where to start, dedicate time to think, reflect and plan your career goals. Create a list of people who could be an advocate for you. Then, identify opportunities to start to share your accomplishments and demonstrate your leadership skills to individuals you have earmarked on your wish list.

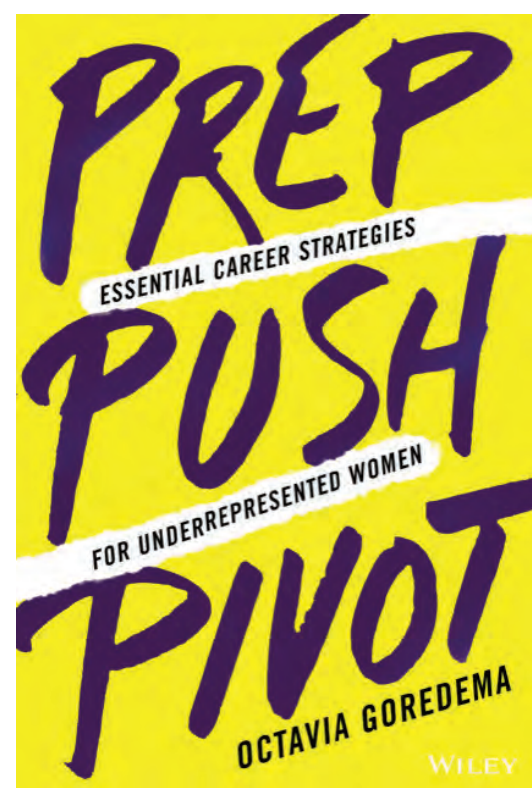
You should consider this a longer-term investment. Relationships don't happen overnight; they take time to develop. Be intentional with a commitment to cultivating your networks, slowly but surely, and continuing to find avenues to shine. As you navigate this, remember that it's important to always be an advocate for yourself. Maintain your accomplishments list and be ready to talk about your skills and achievements with confidence.

As women of color navigating the workplace, we see and feel barriers to advancing that are invisible to others. During my career, there were periods of time when I was the only Black woman in a meeting, the only Black woman on my team, and the only Black woman in the building. As a

Octavia Goredema

Founder

Twenty Ten Agency



coach, my work centers on helping others overcome challenges in the workplace.

Knowing your worth underpins everything. Your worth will be tested by the systemic inequities that women of color face every single day. That is why knowing your worth matters more than ever before. Aggregate your accomplishments, identify opportunities to align with advocates and commit to making sure your skills and expertise remain as visible as possible.

Octavia Goredema is the founder of Twenty Ten Agency, a career coaching company and the author of PREP, PUSH, PIVOT: Essential Career Strategies for Underrepresented Women.



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NEW REPORT EXAMINES HISPANIC WEALTH AND WORKPLACE DISPARITIES

Last month, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), led by Congressman Raul Ruiz, M.D. (D-CA), and the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee (JEC), led by Congressman Don Beyer (D-VA), released a new report that examines the wealth disparities that threaten the economic security and opportunities of Hispanic Americans and their families.

Despite representing 19 percent of the U.S. population, Hispanic families hold just two percent of the nation's total wealth. The median net worth of white families is more than five times greater than Hispanic families, and the increasing concentration of wealth at the top has widened the wealth gap between the average Hispanic and white households.

Across traditional metrics of wealth – like retirement savings, student debt and homeownership – Hispanic Americans continue to face barriers to economic security. Only about one in four have a retirement account, which contributes to Hispanics being less financially prepared for retirement on average than any other racial or ethnic group. Hispanic families are also overburdened by student debt, such that more than a decade after college entry, the typical Hispanic borrower with a four-year

degree still owes nearly 80 percent of what they originally borrowed. And even as homeownership among Hispanic households has increased, it still lags behind that of white households; less than half of Hispanic families own homes compared to nearly three-quarters of white families.

This economic insecurity has left Hispanic Americans much more vulnerable to the adverse effects of economic shocks. In the aftermath of the Great Recession, the median Hispanic family lost nearly half of their net wealth. Since then, subsequent gains have failed to mitigate increasing wealth inequality between the average white and Hispanic family.

This is the second issue brief co-released by the CHC and the JEC for Hispanic Heritage Month, which started on September 15 to October 15. The first examined the contributions of Hispanic work-

ers to the U.S. economy. Despite being among those most affected by the health and economic effects of the coronavirus and pervasive structural barriers to full economic participation, Hispanic workers are helping to drive the ongoing economic recovery and are poised to serve as catalysts of future economic growth.

“The report by the Joint Economic Committee (JEC) under Chair Don Beyer’s leadership sheds light on the wealth disparities that Hispanic Americans face when it comes to several key metrics of financial security, from access to homeownership to saving for retirement,” said Congressman Dr. Ruiz, CHC Chair. “Throughout the pandemic, Hispanic families have courageously stepped up and risked their lives as essential workers on the frontlines to keep us safe, healthy, and fed. Yet due to the disparities outlined in the JEC’s report, Hispanic Americans’ economic security continues to be at stake. As we continue our recovery from the pandemic and work to Build Back Better, we must strive to lessen these economic disparities and create opportunities that will benefit Hispanics and our nation for generations to come.”

“We continue to recognize and honor the vital contributions of Hispanic Americans to the U.S. economy,” said Congressman Beyer, JEC Chair. “This is also a time to recognize the barriers to financial security and economic opportunity that stand in the way for Hispanic families. The typical Hispanic family has only a fraction of the wealth of the typical white family, and because wealth serves as an enabler of opportunity, the persistence of this disparity limits the ability of Hispanic Americans to pursue higher education, buy a car or a home, or take a chance on an idea to start a business.”

“As the newest JEC report, co-released with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, makes clear, these barriers not only hold back our entire economy, they also rob our nation of the promising contributions of Hispanic Americans,” added Congressman Beyer. “With investments that bolster family economic security, like those in the Build Back Better Plan, we have a historic opportunity to address the structural barriers to wealth building for Hispanic Americans that constrict the pathways to economic growth that is stronger, stable, and more broadly shared.”

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), founded in December 1976, is organized as a Congressional Member organization, governed under the rules of the U.S. House of Representatives. The CHC is dedicated to voicing and advancing, through the legislative process, issues affecting Hispanics in the United States, Puerto Rico and U.S. territories.

CAN'T WE ALL GET TO BELONGING?

The pressure to perform and conform in business often leads to elevated levels of stress. Adding to the pressure are feelings of loneliness and disconnection. The 2019 EY Belonging Barometer study surveyed 1,000 employed American adults to better understand the emotional impact of belonging and the feeling of exclusion.

The results of the study found that more than 40% of those surveyed were feeling physically and emotionally isolated in the workplace. By creating workplace cultures that foster morale and camaraderie, we can impact lives outside of work as well. To build this kind of culture, companies need to focus on their values and their decision-making processes. The good news is that businesses can increase that sense of belonging for their employees by manifesting behaviors that foster intentional inclusion.

Belonging is defined as an affinity for a place or situation. Belonging provokes a sense of feeling like you are an essential member of a group. The subjective nature of the word "belonging" itself varies from individuals and environments. Belonging is in the eye of the beholder. In equity and inclusion efforts, belonging is the emotional state, which is the goal of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. In a perfect world, our organizations' inclusive processes welcome everyone. To feel truly welcome involves feeling accepted exactly as you are. Employees should not have to check a piece of themselves at the door.

Belonging was at the top of the 2021 Global Human Capital Trends survey as one of the most important human capital issues; 79% of survey respondents said that fostering a sense of belonging in the workforce was important to their organization's success in the next 12-18 months, and 93% agreed that a sense of belonging drives organizational performance. Seventy-eight years later, Abraham Maslow's 1943 hierarchy of human needs and his theories on the desires for esteem and belonging are still relevant today. The need for affiliation and belonging is still a legitimate and dependable predictor for success today. Belonging is a universal human need, ranked third on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In fact, research shows that when we experience feelings of acceptance it positively affects the prefrontal cortex of our brain.

During the recent *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility: Trends, Updates and the DEIA Leadership Forum*, DEI advocates and business leaders discussed the importance of belonging as it relates

to inclusion and belonging efforts. The panelists emphasized that to have innovative solutions in our business systems, it is time to embrace new thinking. However, creating an inclusive situation that allows for individualism can be challenging for organizations that default to operating through command and control. Intentional inclusion leads to improved belonging. Permeance and sustainability will occur when inclusion is baked into our policies and practices.

The objectives of DEI initiatives must go beyond meeting compliance goals to effectively drive a sense of belonging and positively impact the business. To build a culture that supports belonging, companies need to align DEI to their values and decision-making processes. Businesses can increase that sense of belonging for their employees by manifesting behaviors and participating in the following actions that foster inclusion:

- **Practicing Emotional & Cultural Intelligence** – It is important to listen, and it is crucial to listen while practicing emotional intelligence (EI) and cultural intelligence (CQ). Both EI and CQ involve active listening and being cognizant of bias. To deepen listening skills, it is important to acknowledge the feelings of others and commit to remaining educated on cultural concepts.
- **Develop Agents of Belonging** – Employee resource groups (ERGs) and DEI councils create platforms that ensure psychological safety and promote the feeling of inclusion. During these sessions, ensure that there are opportunities for storytelling that allow employees to feel seen and heard.
- **Redefine Success** – Business leaders should embrace a broader vision of success that encompasses learning, innovation, flexibility, equity, and human dignity.
- **Measure Engagement** – Benchmarking results through employee surveys allows the business to measure success or determine areas of improvement.



Dr. Thelá R.
Thatch

- **Celebrate** – Celebrating uniqueness and acts of inclusion by providing employee rewards and recognition for acts of inclusion creates a culture where leaders are encouraged to make inclusion and belonging a priority.

Creating a sense of belonging pays emotional and financial dividends. When belonging is fostered from within, it permeates to a business' client base, which can lead to increased revenue. For example, when employees understand how to effectively use culturally specific language, they can use that same language to drive customer loyalty.

Understanding that everyone has strengths and weaknesses, organizations will create an environment where everyone belongs. As businesses perfect behaviors needed to achieve organizational cultures rich in purpose and strong in mutual respect, those cultures will foster environments in which individuals and teams build and maintain strong relationships that allow employees to bring their best selves to work.

Dr. Thelá R. Thatch leads diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in corporations, boards, and communities. With more than two decades of experience in human resources, talent management and organizational development, she's passionate about building internal cultures and external communities where an authentic commitment to inclusion, equity, and diversity thrives. Thelá is a published author of a children's book titled "The Dog Chef" and has written shorter pieces for several publications. Her latest book, "Inclusionomics™," is dedicated to the study of inclusion and scheduled for release in 2022. She holds a Ph.D. in public policy and administration with a law specialization from Walden University, where she also serves as a contributing faculty member supporting Ph.D. students.



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RESEARCH EXAMINES HOW WORKPLACE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN MANAGERS AND COLLEAGUES CONTRIBUTE TO INEQUITIES AND UNFAIRNESS

In the summer of 2020, organizations made sweeping commitments to focus on equity as a company value and business imperative. But to create enduringly equitable workplaces, processes and the interactions between individuals need to change, and employees need to be inspired and invested. Coqual’s second report in a three-part series published this month, “Equity Calls on Everyone: Managers, Colleagues, and You,” puts the spotlight on individuals and their behavior at work.

New research from Coqual, a global, non-profit think tank, investigates the role managers and coworkers play in making equity a workplace reality. The study finds that many employees, especially members of marginalized groups, experience unfair treatment because of their identity. Work-

place relationships impact inclusion and contribute to inequities in access to career opportunities and resources for professionals of diverse backgrounds. “Our Equity research supports the critical role that institutions play in embedding and reinforcing

inclusive behaviors for everyone within the organization,” said Lanaya Irvin, Coqual’s Chief Executive Officer. “We hope this data and accompanying recommendations for colleagues and managers help disrupt inequities and serve as a roadmap for companies to create actionable change.”

“Equity is created at the organizational and the individual level, so we researched both,” said Julia Taylor Kennedy, Coqual’s Executive Vice President. “Individuals have the power to shape each other’s daily experiences at work. We often leave a leader or a team, not a company, based on unfair treatment.”

Coqual’s study finds nearly one in three Black professionals feel they’re treated unfairly because of their race, one in five women feel they’re treated unfairly based on gender, and more than one in six LGBTQ+ professionals feel they’re treated unfairly because of their sexual orientation. Looking at the intersection of race and sexual orientation, the study finds surprising data that Black LGBTQ+ professionals (51%) are nearly twice as likely as Black non-LGBTQ+ peers (26%) to describe their company’s culture as inclusive.

Both Black and Latinx professionals are aware of the negative stereotypes they face in the workplace, making mistakes that are even more of a concern. The study finds that 29% of Black and 22% of Latinx professionals worry about how their mistakes might reflect on others who look like them, compared to 13% of white professionals.

Managers influence individual career experiences and play a big role in work assignments, success, and career trajectories of their team members. The study finds inequity in work assignments, with white men most likely to feel their assignments are appropriate for their level, while less than half of non-white men and Black women say the same. When it comes to favoritism, the research finds there is a difference in the data along lines of race/ethnicity. According to the study, nearly four out of five white men (78%) say their manager advocates for top performers regardless of race or gender, but Black men are nearly 2.5 times as likely and Latinx men are twice as likely as white men to say that their manager treats employees differently based on how much they like them. Professionals with darker skin are twice as likely as their lighter-skinned peers to say the same.

Micromanagement is another challenge for Black professionals and Latinx men. Coqual finds that 32% of Black men, 28% of Black women and 26% of Latinx men, compared to 17% of white men, report that their manager manages with excessive control or attention to detail.

The study reveals a contradictory story for veterans who have a more complicated relationship with their managers; they get in-depth support yet face certain exclusions. Compared to 81% of civilians, only 69% of veterans say their manager respects them and are nearly twice as likely as civilians to say their manager treats employees differently based on how much they like them. Despite the stigma many veterans experience at work, they are more likely to say their managers ask about their career goals and give them opportunities to interact with senior leaders.

Parenthood impacts professionals’ work experience depending on gender. At work, fatherhood carries cache and benefits. Although research shows that 41% of women with children are the sole or primary earners for their families, Coqual heard in interviews that men with children are more often seen as leadership material and worthier of coveted assignments. Fathers are also more likely than mothers to say their managers listen to their ideas and give them opportunities to showcase their skills to senior leaders.

Coqual finds colleagues can promote perceptions of fairness for one another by engaging in inclusive behaviors of three types:

- **Collaborate** - Inclusive colleagues value your contributions, show respect, and support you through difficult work situations.

- **Advance** - Inclusive colleagues look for ways to help your career by sharing opportunities and connections.
- **Speak up** - Inclusive colleagues challenge an exclusive and inequitable status quo and need to disrupt bias.

Coqual’s research finds that inclusive manager behaviors are strongly and positively correlated with inclusive colleague behaviors. Inclusivity is contagious, spreading down from managers to peers. This research study finds that having a more inclusive manager is associated with an 18% increase in perceptions of fairness at work and having more inclusive colleagues is associated with a 21% increase in perceptions of fairness at work. Coqual’s first report in the Equity series finds that perceptions of fairness often affect important business outcomes, such as an employee’s trust in their company and their intent to stay.

Additionally, the report lays out the following institutional framework for companies to drive inclusion forward and advance equity and fairness:

- **Values** - Companies need to infuse inclusion into their mission, vision and values and determine what stands in the way of inclusion. When an employer values fairness, employees will feel empowered to disrupt bias and be more inclusive.
- **Accountability** - Inclusive behavior should be an expectation for every job. Companies must implement deliberate policy and processes to promote accountability for inclusivity. Employees who miss the mark should not be promoted to leadership roles.
- **Education** - Colleagues need to know what inclusion looks like for peers regardless of background. Inclusion training should be offered at all levels and managers need to know what is expected of them as leaders, be given proper resources to get it done and be held accountable for their inclusive or non-inclusive behaviors.

Coqual (formerly Center for Talent Innovation) is a global, non-profit think tank dedicated to helping leaders design diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces where every person belongs. Founded in 2004, Coqual provides in-depth research, thought leadership, and data-driven, actionable solutions for companies to address bias and barriers to inclusion for underrepresented populations in the workplace. For more information, visit coqual.org.



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OVER HALF OF SUPPLY CHAIN ORGANIZATIONS HAVE DEI INITIATIVES, BUT ONLY 23% COMMIT TO FORMAL TARGETS

Over half of supply chain organizations have improving diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) as an objective or goal, but only a quarter have formal targets according to the Supply Chain Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Survey by Gartner, Inc. and the Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM).

In a survey of 298 supply chain professionals from November through December 2020, 59% of surveyed supply chain organizations reported having some form of objective to improve any dimension of DEI – race/ethnicity, gender, LGBTQ+, physical and cognitive ability, veteran status or age – and 23% of those organizations have formal targets or goals included in management scorecards.

Consumer and retail organizations are more likely than other industry sectors to either have a general objective for DEI or formal targets or goals. Company size plays a role when it comes to the dedication of senior leadership to improve DEI. The largest supply

chain organizations are far more likely to have DEI objectives – particularly formal targets or goals – than their smaller peers. Only 24% of small business supply chains have improved DEI as an objective.

“This makes sense when you look at the social justice movements of 2020. The largest global companies have globally recognizable brands, so they were under a lot of pressure to take action,” said Dana Stiffler, vice president analyst with the Gartner Supply Chain Practice. “In a global organization, it’s more likely they’ll have a DEI officer or an HR leader that owns and cascades the DEI strategy. Where this is not happening fast enough, some chief supply chain

officers (CSCOs) have designed and launched their own initiatives.”

“Building a diverse workforce is essential, not aspirational,” said ASCM CEO Abe Eshkenazi, CSCP, CPA, CAE. “Diversity of thought, influence and input – particularly from women and people of color – is crucial to today’s global supply chains.”

Representation of People of Color Declines with Each Step Up the Corporate Ladder

While people of color (POC) make up 30% of the overall supply chain workforce, their representation declines dramatically on the upper parts of the corporate ladder. Only 9% of vice presidents in supply chain organizations in the U.S., Canada, and Europe are people of color.

“POC representation already starts to drop at the very first level of leadership,” Stiffler said. “Compared to the overall representation in the workforce, there’s

nearly a 50% drop once at the manager and supervisor positions. This trend then continues in the upper parts of the career ladder.”

“This is a systemic issue that goes back to the 1970s, ’80s and ’90s that unfortunately isn’t unique to supply chain. As supply chain emerged as a function, many of its management and employees migrated from other functions such as finance and engineering, which due to their own narrow talent pipelines were primarily staffed with white males,” said Eshkenazi. “As in many fields, more progress is needed. Supply chain organizations can lead the way by creating an environment where diverse talent is valued, included and developed.”

The biggest differences in POC representation are not between industries, but again between organization sizes. Large supply chains with an annual revenue of \$5 billion or more show greater representation of people of color than any of their smaller peers at all levels of the organization.

“In the largest global supply chain organizations, 13% of vice president positions are occupied by people of color, compared to 6% in small businesses,” Stiffler said. “While large, global organizations

clearly benefit from better access to diverse talent, they’re also putting in the work to practice inclusion in leadership development and succession planning.”

However, the coronavirus pandemic has prompted a change in workplace culture which might provide smaller businesses with the opportunity to catch up. “Due to the rise of remote and hybrid work, even smaller supply chain organizations will have the opportunity to hire diverse talent, simply because the available talent pool is bigger and more diverse,” Stiffler added.

Concrete Actions Lead to Progress

Once supply chain organizations have goals and objectives, those should translate into specific projects and initiatives. DEI is particularly vulnerable to statements and goals that are not always backed up by actions. Over one-third of respondents said the supply chain organization is leading initiatives, while 20% said their company has enterprise-wide initiatives. This leaves 44% who don’t have any kind of initiative or are still considering starting one.

“The most successful initiatives are those that are integrated into the recruiting and pipeline planning process. In recruiting, that means diverse interview

panels, diversity referral programs, summer internship programs for diverse students, blind resumé reviews and diverse campus recruiting. In integrated pipeline planning, it means re-designing recruiting, development, performance management, and succession planning to reduce bias,” Stiffler concluded.

“Prior to the pandemic, demand for supply chain professionals exceeded supply by a ratio of six to one,” added Eshkenazi. “This need will only continue to grow, which is why it’s critical that teens have access to education and mentorship about career opportunities in supply chain regardless of their gender or color.”

The Supply Chain Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Survey was conducted online from November 11 through December 14, 2020 among 298 respondents primarily in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. The Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM) partnered with Gartner to develop the survey and recruit participants. The survey posed broad questions about different DEI dimensions – race/ethnicity, gender, LGBTQ+, physical and cognitive ability, veteran status, age – and specific questions about representation and DEI practices specific to race and ethnicity.

UC SANTA CRUZ IS HONORED TO ANNOUNCE JOHN R. LEWIS COLLEGE

With a founding theme of Social Justice and Community, the living-and-learning community known as College Ten at UC Santa Cruz has long empowered students to become justice- and equity-minded change agents.



John Lewis (center left) speaks with members of the press alongside Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other leaders of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Photo: Library of Congress

Naming the community John R. Lewis College, in honor of the late civil rights activist and congressman, coupled with a generous programming endowment provided by a donor, the college and the university more broadly will expand programs and new initiatives that will embody the life, work, and legacy of Representative Lewis.

We know the work of social change—on our campus, in our nation, and in our world—may never be complete. But we humbly aspire to be worthy of being forever associated with John R. Lewis. We hope to share in and continue his incredible example, because we believe that’s part of the enduring work he called upon all of us to do.

UC SANTA CRUZ



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SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS SEEN IN ELEVATION OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AS A WORKPLACE PRIORITY

The largest CEO-driven coalition to advance diversity and inclusion (D&I) in the workplace included nearly 300 signatory organizations to address complex challenges, drive progress in key impact areas and plan for the coalition's initiatives.

Hosted by CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion (CEO Action), it was its first-ever combined gathering of CEOs, CHROs and CDOs.

"There's a very real expectation and need for chief executives to prioritize diversity and inclusion," said Tim Ryan, U.S. Chairman and Senior Partner of PwC and Chair of the CEO Action Steering Committee. "With CEOs and board chairs coming together to have the tough conversations, admit where we can do better and share where we've seen success, I hope this signals to stakeholders that business leaders are proactively tackling this incredibly challenging and critically important issue."

CEOs and their board members shared how they are working together to drive accountability on cultivating talent and inclusive work cultures. The new commitment is accelerating prioritization of D&I work through engagement of the board of directors to create and evaluate strategic D&I action plans.

"We believe our ability to cultivate a culture that delivers on our commitment, while aligning with our corporate strategy, requires visibility and dialogue at the highest levels of our leadership, including our board," said John Miller, President and CEO of Denny's. "By elevating the level of dialogue around diversity and inclusion, our leadership team has

gained invaluable insights that are translating to specific actions responsible for the progress of key areas, such as supplier and workforce diversity, as well as the diversity of our owners and operators."

In 2019, CEO Action polled signatory organizations and found that not only are they enacting the pledge commitments (93%) and reporting positive impact via their engagement (91%), but CEO Action is driving the evolution of organizational D&I strategies. More than 60 percent are "doing something new as a result of their involvement with CEO Action" and 91 percent are engaging their boards, driving

(Continued on page 48)

GIVING CREDIT TO THE AMERICAN DREAM: CLOSING THE RACIAL EQUITY GAP

Homeownership remains the key driver of generational wealth and the cornerstone of the American dream. This is why closing the gap between white and Black homeownership is the key economic and civil rights issue in America today.

There is a misconception among many Americans that while progress still needs to be made on issues of racial equity and wealth disparity, things are slowly getting better. This is simply not true when it comes to homeownership. The 30% gap between the percentage of white and Black Americans who own homes is larger than it was in 1960 when housing discrimination was legal.

As America's largest Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), it is our mission to empower all Americans to pursue their dreams by providing fair and equal access to the financial services they deserve. We provide access to affordable capital to the underbanked to ensure that they have the same opportunity to purchase a home, open a small business, attend school, or simply to have fair and equitable access to basic financial services.

Our impact is measurable. In 2020, we originated approximately 20,000 loans totaling more than \$7 billion, with more than 70% funded to Black, Latino, and underbanked borrowers. We are working to close the racial equity gap one household at a time.

The Change Company was certified by the United States Department of Treasury in 2018 to bank Black, Latino, and low-income borrowers and communities that the Treasury Department has determined to be systemically underserved by banks and traditional financial institutions. To pursue its mission of banking the unbanked, Change is a licensed residential mortgage lender and an approved seller-services with Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and Ginnie Mae (including FHA, VA, and USDA loans).

We serve prime borrowers who are denied credit by traditional banks and mortgage providers for non-economic reasons. We recognize that all borrowers are different. Therefore, we offer a

diverse set of prime loan programs that give borrowers from all backgrounds a real opportunity to become a homeowner and set out on a path to financial security and wealth generation.

For the most part, traditional financial institutions continue to utilize outdated risk-assessment policies that leave millions of borrowers out of the system, despite creditworthiness on par with banked customers. According to the National Association of Realtors, Black mortgage applicants are denied 2.5 times more often than white applicants. In 2020, \$361 billion in potential mortgages with loan-to-value ratios below 80% were denied, and \$125 billion includes loans that would have had an LTV below 60%. These are predominantly loans that should be approved if considered on economic factors alone.

In addition, Change is building the financial services infrastructure to ensure that our borrowers are treated fairly and responsibly in all aspects of homeownership. Through our appraisal management, escrow, and insurance brokerage companies, The Change Company provides fair and responsible access to these financial services essential to building generational wealth in underserved communities.

We are committed to diversity not just in our mission but in our leadership and executive team. Each of Change's businesses boasts an executive team and board of directors comprised of over 60% minority members, including the Chairman and either CEO, President or Executive Director of each business. Change's appraisal management company is run by a Black female executive – making it the only Black/female-run appraisal management company in the country. Change AMC is focused on fair, equitable appraisals for minority and urban homeowners. Similarly, Change's escrow and

insurance companies have female CEOs who are Asian and Black, respectively.

Change has formed meaningful partnerships with socially responsible banks, insurance companies, corporations, and asset managers intent on eliminating structural economic inequalities. This includes an innovative partnership with Netflix that was formed to expand Black homeownership across America by at least \$1 billion. Change has also partnered with banks to expand homeownership in low- to moderate-income communities by \$1 billion and committed to an additional \$1 billion of lending to Latino borrowers.

Change is not only improving the lives of individual borrowers but literally transforming communities. We launched a branch in El Paso, Texas in 2019 given the severe un-banking of the community comprised primarily of Latino, low-income, and those in the U.S. military. Since its launch, the company has grown its staff in El Paso to over 125 employees, now has two branches, and according to official data, Change is now one of the top three mortgage loan providers in the community.

There is much more work to be done. The Change Company is leading the way by increasing homeownership and lending to small businesses in the communities where underbanked Americans work and live. But we can't do it alone – we invite other financial service partners and socially responsible companies to join us in our effort to better serve the underbanked and address the key economic and civil rights issues in America today.

Martice Millis is Chief Strategy Officer at The Change Company LLC. and Reverend Everett Bell Jr. is the Chair of The Change Company Community Board and Senior Pastor at Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Monrovia, CA.



Courtesy of CSUN

BUILDING ON A DREAM

CSUN Launches Global Hispanic Serving Institution Equity Innovation Hub to increase student success and equip historically underserved students with skills for high-demand careers in STEM.

When California State University, Northridge begins construction on its new Global Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Equity Innovation Hub next year, university leaders hope to break ground not just literally, but metaphorically — and academically.

The ambitious project aims to provide opportunities and inspire Latinx and other underrepresented students to pursue degree pathways to STEM fields — and close the historic equity gaps that have persisted in those fields and careers. University leaders also want to foster pathways for preschool through high school students in the region and across the state to the California State University (CSU) system and

STEM education, as well as raise CSUN’s visibility as a regional force for science and engineering education.

“It would be difficult to overstate the significance of this project in advancing our collective commitment to eliminating equity gaps and facilitating a brighter and more equitable future for us all,” CSUN President Erika D. Beck said. “By embracing thought partners across the CSU and around the nation, the Global Hispanic Serving Institution Equity Innovation Hub will advance a data-practice-leadership framework to become a place that engages the richness of diversity of our communities, inspiring future and existing students, families, faculty, staff and

leaders to reimagine the future of STEM industries and beyond.

“Creating authentic and systemic change on our campus and well beyond our doors will require the partnership of every member of our academic community — students, faculty, staff, administrative leaders, alumni, donors and friends,” Beck said. “This is the first of many opportunities for our campus to lead with intentionality as we seek to eliminate equity gaps and elevate opportunities for all students.”

Scheduled to open in fall 2024, the nearly 32,000-square-foot HSI Equity Innovation Hub will include state-of-the-art research labs — including a design and digital capture lab, and a fabrication lab — plus a maker space for the campus and wider community, and what university leaders are calling a “next-generation student success center” to provide



Courtesy of CSUN

the company’s Racial Equity and Justice Initiative. The landmark gift is significantly expanding the programmatic scope and national potential of the HSI Equity Innovation Hub, which will partner with HSIs across the CSU and around the country to ensure that historically underserved students have the opportunity to explore careers in creation and innovation. In addition to its financial support, Apple also will provide technology, design support and thought partnership as the HSI Equity Innovation Hub expands.

“Our country’s future social and economic well-being will depend on the success of students who have historically been excluded from higher education earning a college degree,” said Amanda Quintero, special assistant to the president for inclusive excellence at CSUN. “Apple has made these bold partnerships with minority-serving institutions because they open the doors to educational opportunity for racially and ethnically diverse communities. Through the work of the Hub, we will activate the potential of the national network of HSIs, which is 569 strong, to reach across the CSU and nation to prepare the talent we will need to build an inclusive workforce of the future.”

With its support for this initiative, Apple is committed to an interdisciplinary approach and engaging students in creative and disruptive thinking, leveraging technology to solve real-world problems in service to their communities, Quintero added.

Opening Doors to STEM Early

University leaders envision the HSI Equity Innovation Hub as a door for students as young as preschool and their families — and with particular focus on mentoring middle school and high school

students — throughout the region. By making those connections and cultivating an interest in STEM early, educators hope to narrow and eventually eliminate equity gaps and college graduation rates for underserved students.

CSUN is among the nation’s leaders in awarding degrees to Latinx students, and more than 21,000 of the campus’ approximately 39,000 students enrolled in fall 2021 identified as Latinx. HSIs are defined under the Higher Education Act as colleges or universities where at least 25% of the undergraduate, full-time enrollment is Latinx; and at least half of the institution’s degree-seeking students must be low-income. Twenty-one of the CSU’s 23 campuses meet these criteria, allowing them to compete for federal funding to build institutional capacity that expands and enhances educational opportunities for their students, in particular Latinx and other students from historically underserved groups.

“The CSU, the nation’s largest four-year higher education system, has long been a leader in serving Latinx students,” said CSU Chancellor Joseph I. Castro. “The CSU takes great pride in the work we have undertaken to provide pathways to STEM education that result in the careers that power the world’s fifth-largest economy. Through bold vision from our state’s leaders in Governor Gavin Newsom, Senator Padilla, Congressman Tony Cárdenas and state Assemblywoman Luz Rivas, this is an exciting opportunity to collaborate with an outstanding partner in Apple — and to leverage their cutting-edge and creative technologies with the intellectual capacities of world-class faculty to combine that work to benefit thousands of talented students in California and beyond.”



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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ADDRESSES DEI ISSUES

Attorney General takes steps to help ensure the DOJ's work environment and hiring and retention policies can continue to be a model for elevating the voices of all Californians in the workforce.

Earlier this year, California Attorney General Rob Bonta announced the launch of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council within the California Department of Justice (DOJ). The new council will take steps to help ensure that the DOJ's work environment and hiring and retention policies can continue to be a model for elevating the voices of all Californians in the workforce. Today's announcement builds on the DOJ's commitment to fostering and maintaining an engaged and inclusive culture that celebrates shared values and diversity, which are integral to excellence.

"California is one of the most diverse states in the country," said Attorney General Bonta. "And it's critical that we work to ensure our institutions reflect that reality. The launch of this new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council is about helping fully realize that goal at the California Department of Justice. We recognize that our strength is our people — and the stronger we are, the better we can serve. To all those who want to help make California fairer and more just, come join us. We're always looking for the best talent to help us defend the people, values, and resources of California."

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council will help the DOJ set and implement strategies aimed at cultivating a work environment that respects the differences, talents, and abilities of all employees and fosters a culture where everyone has the opportunity to excel. As part of that, the council will work to strengthen the DOJ's recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts, recognizing that an agency that better reflects California will be better situated to serve the needs of all Californians. As an example, one challenge is that minority communities remain underrepresented among licensed attorneys in the state. As a state entity, the DOJ is committed to ensuring its workforce reflects the diversity of California. Improving recruitment and hiring efforts as well as helping build up the quality and diversity of candidate pools is a top priority. Ultimately, the DOJ is committed to hiring the best candidates for the job, based on merit, to help serve the people of California.

In order to help meet that challenge, the new council is designed to be a centralized cross-level, cross-functional, and active body responsible for coordinating and implementing the DOJ's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. Members of the council will begin to meet monthly and will be authorized to create subcommittees or task forces as needed. The council will include representatives from each of the DOJ's divisions and members of the DOJ's employee organizations, such as the Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, and LGBTQ+ Employee Advisory Committees. Some of the council's initial top-level goals will be to:

- Help the DOJ continue to evolve its organizational culture, potentially through the expansion of formal mentoring programs
- Enhance existing recruiting and hiring processes by, among other things, increasing communication between staff and prospective employees through effective outreach
- Build on ongoing efforts to reduce potential bias by encouraging, among other things, diverse interview panels

In order to continue to grow as an organization that reflects all of California, Attorney General Bonta urges people of all backgrounds to consider a career at the DOJ. For more than 150 years, the Office of the Attorney General has served as the people's lawyer and a leader in law enforcement and crime prevention. DOJ employees are committed to meeting the highest professional standards — in service of the people of California.



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RESEARCH UNCOVERS CRITICAL INSIGHTS ON DEI IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

A recent research report provides a comprehensive analysis of the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) landscape across the public sector workforce. The study includes historical and projected data for a wide variety of occupations and indicates areas where certain gender, racial, or ethnic groups are statistically under- or over-represented.

While employment trends vary regionally and by employer, the data provides critical insights into targeted recruitment strategies to help diversify the workforce. Knowing where over- or under-representation exists can help public service employers analyze the impacts of layoffs, retirements, staff development, training, and targeted recruitment efforts.

“Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Public Service Workforce” was prepared by the MissionSquare Research Institute (formerly the Center for State and Local Government Excellence at ICMA-RC).

“Diversity, equity, and inclusion are important considerations in providing services to the public, as well as in organizational management and staffing,” said Gerald Young, MissionSquare Research Institute Senior Research Analyst. “Staff diversity has a positive impact on productivity, quality deci-

sion making, and financial success, which are all important factors given the multitude of challenges facing state and local governments and other public service employers.”

“Ingraining DEI principles into workforce management programs can improve employee morale and retention, foster a reputation of the government as an employer of choice, and help build an organization that is representative of the community it serves,” Young said.

The report indicates there are various approaches to DEI in public service staffing that range from passive or compliance-focused to more purposeful analysis of policies and outcomes that look at:

- Recruitment practices and whether they result in diverse candidates and diverse hires, and how those practices can be fine-tuned as part of a larger continuous improvement effort

- Diversity in the national or local workforce and how it may or may not be reflected in the organization
- Onboarding programs and how organizational culture may welcome diverse staff or drive them to leave for more inclusive employment opportunities elsewhere

Topics covered in the report include diversity in age, veteran status, LGBTQ+ identification, disability, cognitive diversity, religion, language, national origin, educational attainment, criminal history, and intersectionality, or how belonging in two or more of those categories might result in disparate treatment.

MissionSquare Research Institute promotes excellence in state and local government and other public service organizations to attract and retain talented employees. The organization identifies leading practices and conducts research on retirement plans, health and wellness benefits, workforce demographics and skill set needs, labor force development, and topics facing the not-for-profit industry and education sector. MissionSquare Research Institute brings together leaders and respected researchers.

More information and access to research and publications are available at slge.org.



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WHY DIVERSITY – AND THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT EMBRACE IT – WINS

Last year, McKinsey & Company unveiled Diversity Wins, the third report in the management consulting firm’s series investigating the business case for diversity, following Why Diversity Matters (2015) and Delivering Through Diversity (2018).

McKinsey’s latest report shows not only that the business case for diversity remains robust but also the relationship between diversity on executive teams and the likelihood of financial outperformance has strengthened over time. These findings emerge from McKinsey’s largest data set so far, encompassing 15 countries and more than 1,000 large companies. By incorporating a ‘social listening’ analysis of employee sentiment in online reviews, the report also provides new insights into how inclusion matters.

The analysis shows that companies should pay much greater attention to inclusion, even when they are relatively diverse. Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on executive teams were 25% more likely to have above-average profitability than companies in the fourth quartile — up from 21% in 2017 and 15% in 2014. Furthermore, the data shows that the greater the representation, the higher the likelihood of outperformance.

By following the trajectories of hundreds of companies in its data set since 2014, McKinsey found that the overall slow growth in diversity often observed in fact masks a growing polarization among these organizations. While most have made little progress, are stalled or even slipping backward, some are making impressive gains in diversity, particularly in executive teams. It was discovered that the diversity winners are adopting systematic, business-led approaches to inclusion and diversity (I&D).

The research predates the outbreak of the global pandemic, but the study’s authors believe the findings remain highly relevant.

The latest analysis reaffirms the strong business case for both gender diversity and ethnic and cultural diversity in corporate leadership, which shows that this business case continues to strengthen. The most diverse companies are now

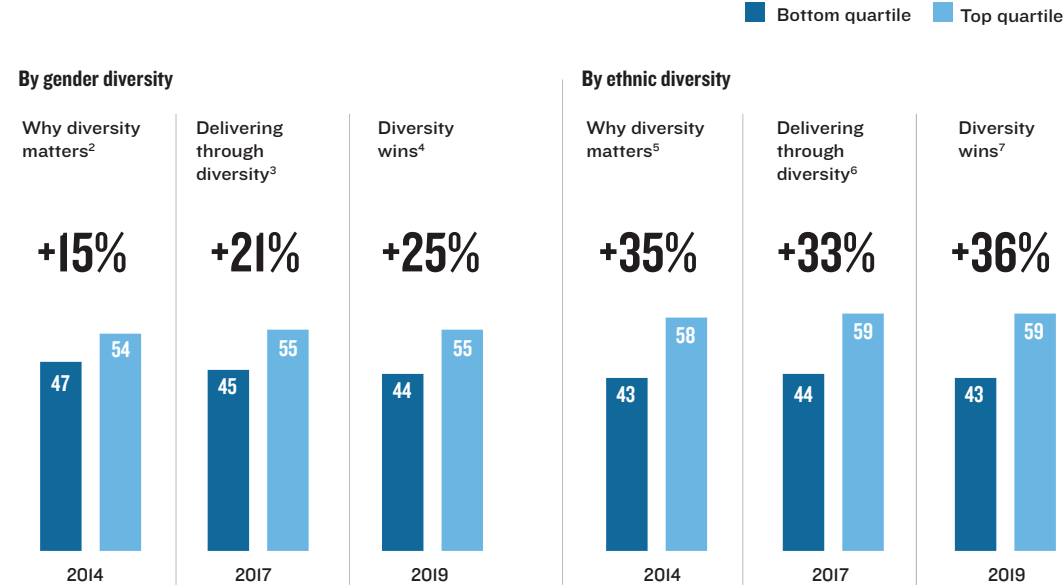
more likely than ever to outperform less diverse peers on profitability, finding that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on executive teams were 25% more likely to have above-average profitability than companies in the fourth quartile — up from 21% in 2017 and 15% in 2014.

Moreover, McKinsey found the greater the representation, the higher the likelihood of outperformance. Companies with more than 30% women executives were more likely to outperform companies where this percentage ranged from 10 to 30, and in turn these companies were more likely to outperform those with even fewer women executives or none at all. A substantial differential likelihood of outperformance – 48% – separates the most from the least gender-diverse companies.

In the case of ethnic and cultural diversity, business-case findings are equally compelling: In 2019, top-quartile companies outperformed those in the fourth one by 36% in profitability, slightly up from 33% in 2017 and 35% in 2014. Consistently, the likelihood of outperformance continues to be higher for diversity in ethnicity than for gender.

The business case for diversity in executive teams remains strong.

Likelihood of financial outperformance¹, %



¹Likelihood of financial outperformance vs national industry median; p-value <0.05, except 2014 data where p-value >0.1. ²n = 383; Latin America, UK, and US; earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) margin 2010-13. ³n = 991; Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, UK, and US; EBIT margin 2011-15. ⁴n = 1,039; 2017 companies for which gender data available in 2019, plus Denmark, Norway, and Sweden; EBIT margin 2014-18. ⁵n = 364; Latin America, UK, and US; EBIT margin 2010-13. ⁶n = 589; Brazil, Mexico, Singapore, South Africa, UK, and US; EBIT margin 2011-15. ⁷n = 533; Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, UK, and US, where ethnicity data available in 2019; EBIT margin-18. Source: Diversity Wins Data Set

Yet progress overall has been slow. In the companies from McKinsey’s original 2014 data set, based in the United States and the United Kingdom, female representation on executive teams rose from 15% in 2014 to 20% in 2019. Across the global data set, for which it starts in 2017, gender diversity moved up just one percentage point — to 15% from 14% — in 2019. More than a third of

companies in our data set still have no women at all on their executive teams. This lack of material progress is evident across all industries and in most countries. Similarly, the representation of ethnic minorities on U.K. and U.S. executive teams stood at only 13% in 2019, up from just 7% in 2014. For the global data set, this proportion was 14% in 2019, up from 12% in 2017.

Key findings include:

The most diverse companies are now more likely than ever to outperform less diverse peers on profitability.

- The relationship between diversity on executive teams and the likelihood of financial outperformance has strengthened over time.
- Top-quartile companies outperformed those in the fourth one by 36% in profitability.
- The likelihood of outperformance continues to be higher for diversity in ethnicity than for gender.

Best practices for diverse companies who are outperforming financially and taking a systematic approach and bold steps to strengthen inclusion:

- Ensure the representation of diverse talent.
- Strengthen leadership accountability and capabilities for I&D.
- Enable equality of opportunity through fairness and transparency.
- Promote openness and tackle microaggressions.
- Foster belonging through unequivocal support for multivariate diversity.

DIVERSITY BY THE NUMBERS

There are many ways to quantify the impact that a diverse workforce can have on a company's success. In fact, there is plentiful research to show that diverse and inclusive businesses outperform their more homogenous counterparts across the metrics that matter: employee engagement, recruitment, and retention; customer loyalty; brand reputation; innovation, profit, and more.

Workplace diversity statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and other sources help bring the issues into clear focus and indicate how companies that are doing better by prioritizing diversity hiring and building an inclusive culture are achieving better results. Conversely, there are specific statistics that reveal just how much further the business community needs to go. Here are some examples of that, clearly laying out the challenges that still need to be overcome.

Although most Americans support diverse workplaces, racial inequality continues to exist in hiring processes in the United States.

According to research, White employees represent the largest portion of corporate executives in the nation. Although 13.4% of the total U.S. population is Black, only 2% of executives are Black. Similarly, although 18.5% of the U.S. population is Latinx, only 3% of executives are Latinx. -Forbes

Diverse businesses are 70% more likely to capture new markets.

According to a report by the Harvard Business Review, diverse teams are also 45% more likely to grow their company's market share. - Harvard Business Review

Diverse companies are 36% more profitable than non-diverse companies.

In 2019, research showed that companies with diverse employees and leadership teams make 36% more money than companies without diversity. This number was up from 33% in 2017 and 35% in 2014. - McKinsey Company

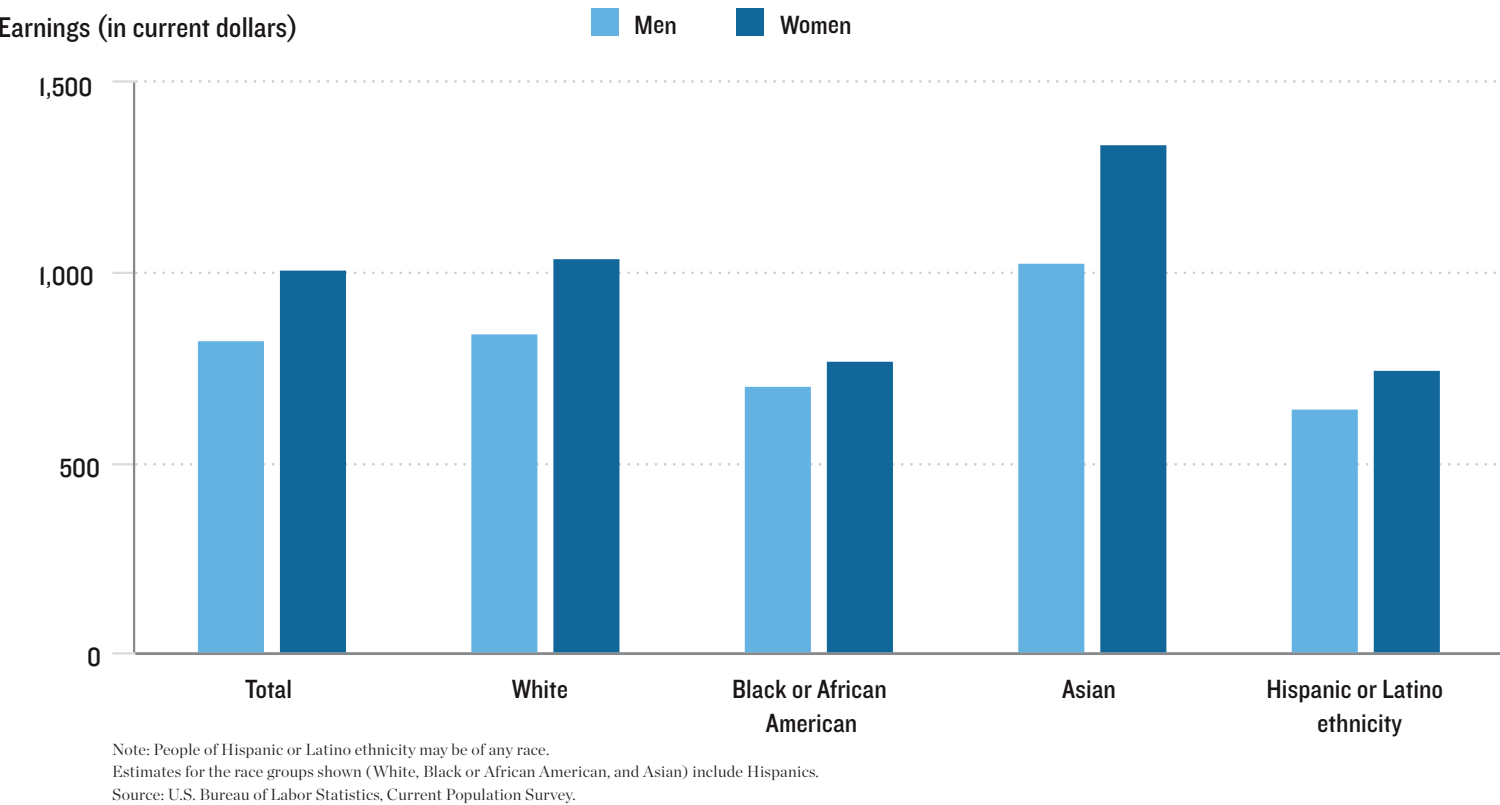
Companies in the United States with greater ethnic and racial diversity have higher performance rates.

According to data, businesses with more diversity among staff perform 35% better than companies whose staff demographics only match the national average. - Forbes

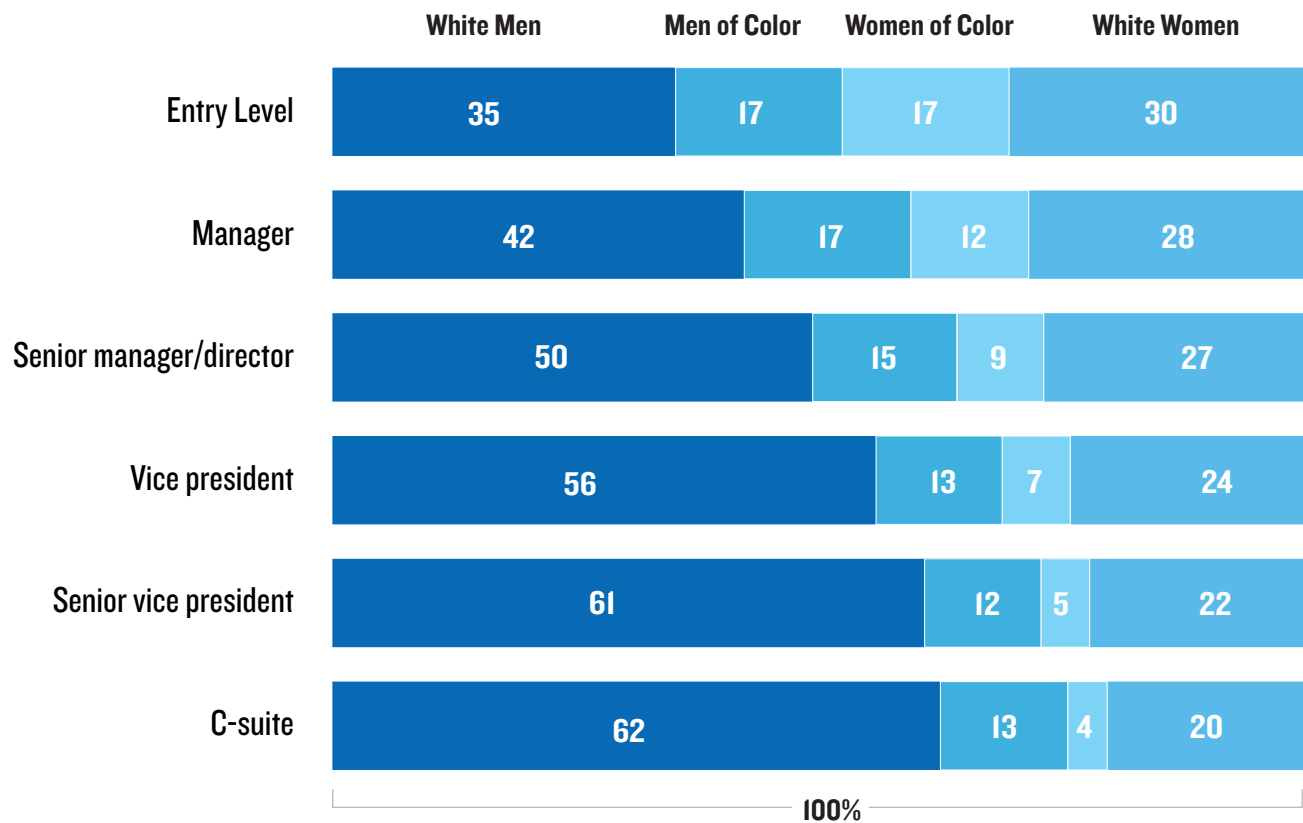
Diverse companies have more satisfied and happier employees than companies with low diversity levels.

According to survey research, American employees who think their employer is "not doing enough" to prioritize diversity have a Workforce Happiness Index score of 63, almost 10 points under the average score of 72. - CNBC

MEDIAN USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WOMEN AND MEN WHO ARE FULL-TIME WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS, BY RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, 2019 ANNUAL AVERAGES



REPRESENTATION BY CORPORATE ROLE, BY GENDER AND RACE, 2021, % OF EMPLOYEES



Note: Figures may not sum 100 , because of rounding
Source: Women in the Workplace 2021, LeanIn.org and McKinsey, 2020



NISO ANNOUNCES INVIGORATED COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Earlier this year, the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) announced two important actions to support increased diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in its work and its community. First, following board approval of the NISO DEI policy in January, a full DEI Committee has now been formed, led by NISO board member Maria Stanton, who is director of production at Atla. Second, later this year, NISO will be hosting a workshop on DEI and standards, organized by the Committee, to help identify and prioritize key areas of opportunity and development.

The DEI Committee comprises 15 members from four countries, spanning all areas of NISO's work — libraries, publishers, research infrastructure, services providers, and other representatives of the information community. They are charged with championing NISO's DEI policy to help achieve the organization's goal of social justice in all its activities, including establishing priorities,

identifying assessment criteria, and regularly monitoring and reporting on progress. The Committee will also serve as a resource to the NISO community, providing guidance on DEI issues and advocating for under-represented groups.

One of the Committee's first tasks is to plan and implement the workshop on DEI and standards — an

output of the recent NISO Plus 2021 conference. Several sessions at the conference focused specifically on DEI issues, and the topic was also raised in numerous other sessions, especially with regard to the need for improvements to metadata standards (for example, to meet indigenous knowledge requirements, make author diversity more discoverable, and address issues around bias in AI). The workshop will be held in at least two major time zones to ensure global participation, and the findings will be shared publicly for community feedback.

"There's no question that the language, metadata, and software we use create barriers, as does the fundamental issue of access to resources," said Stanton. "The Committee's job is to bring in the voice of the community, listen, and then help NISO establish priorities and best practices for standards-related work and activities that can help our community overcome systemic issues related to our industry's handling of underrepresented and marginalized groups and perspectives. This is a real opportunity for NISO to use its unique position as a standards organization that brings together organizations and individuals from across the information industry, to improve equity, diversity, inclusion, and access within our community."

"NISO has always strived to be a neutral and safe place for conversations around issues in our communities," said Todd Carpenter, NISO's Executive Director. "Fostering the development of activities around diversity and equity is a natural extension of our mission of inclusivity. Standards work is always improved by including the widest possible range of voices. By amplifying those voices and prioritizing the needs of previously marginalized communities, the outputs we produce will be enhanced. Ultimately, through this process, our work will better represent — and meet — the needs of our community."

NISO's mission is to build knowledge, foster discussion, and advance authoritative standards development through collaboration among the cultural, scholarly, scientific, and professional communities. To fulfill this mission, NISO engages with libraries, publishers, information aggregators, and other organizations that support learning, research, and scholarship through the creation, organization, management, and curation of knowledge. NISO works with intersecting communities of interest and across the entire lifecycle of information standards. NISO is a not-for-profit association accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

For more information about the NISO DEI Committee, including a list of members, please visit niso.org.



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STUDY HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR A MORE DIVERSE HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE IN CALIFORNIA

With California facing a serious shortage of health care workers as it copes with COVID-19, a recent report from The Greenlining Institute looks at the barriers that keep young people of color out of the health field and what can be done to overcome those barriers.

The report, *Opening Pathways for Youth of Color: The Future of California's Health Workforce*, notes that while Black, Latino and Native American communities make up 62% of California's people, less than six percent of California physicians are Latino and just five percent are Black. In partnership with the Alameda County Health Pathway Partnership program, The Greenlining Institute conducted surveys and a focus group with program alumni to get a picture of the challenges they face in pursuing health careers and what sorts of support would reduce those challenges.

"Young people of color want to work in the health care field, but too many obstacles get in their way," said report co-author Christian Beauvoir. "The starkly higher rate of COVID-19 deaths for Black and Latino Californians reminds us how important it is to have a diverse health workforce that can deliver culturally competent care."

Among the report's key findings:

Challenges young people of color faced include:

- **Finances**, including cost-prohibitive expenses associated with college applications and tuition
- **Transportation**, with lengthy commutes and lack of money forcing many to use riskier transportation alternatives to cut costs
- **Lack of support systems** to help them get into and navigate higher education

Key supportive factors participants cited include:

- **Exposure** to a variety of health careers and professionals
- **Social support and mentorship**, particularly for first-generation and low-income youth

- **Financial assistance** that eased the cost burden and reduced the need to choose between further education and holding a job to support themselves and their families

The report concludes with a series of policy recommendations designed to reduce the barriers cited and increase the availability of support, including the passage of Proposition 16 to allow the state to more effectively address racial disparities in education.

Ultimately, however, Proposition 16, which would have repealed California's law that prevents UCLA and other public universities from considering race in admissions, was defeated during the elections of November 3rd elections when more than 57% of Californians voted no on the measure.

To learn more about The Greenlining Institute, a multi-ethnic public policy, research and advocacy institute, visit greenlining.org.

Our first-ever *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility: Trends, Updates, and the DEIA Leadership Forum* was held virtually on November 16, 2021. Reflecting the increasing numbers of organizations that are implementing DEI&A initiatives in the workplace, we invited leading voices to provide invaluable insights on the matter. What follows on the next few pages are summaries from our esteemed keynote speaker and recaps of the two informative panel discussions. You can also watch the full event at latimes.com/diversity. All this would not have been possible without the generous support of our Diamond sponsors, GHJ and California State University, Northridge, and our Platinum sponsor, HUB International.



CALIFORNIA
STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTHRIDGE



KEYNOTE PRESENTER, CRYSTAL PEREZ

As part of this year's inaugural Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Leadership Forum, L.A. Times B2B Publishing invited Crystal Perez to share insights on diversity and inclusion. Her spirited and impactful presentation was a highlight of the event.

Perez is a diversity advocate and entrepreneur who has been both a student and champion for diversity and inclusion for more than a decade, from tech start-ups to the music business and television industry.

She began her career working as an intern at BET Networks and continued to work closely with executives in the industry throughout her career. Perez currently supports the executive vice president of enterprise inclusion & social responsibility at Endemol Shine North America. Previously, she supported the vice president of D&I creative programming at Sony Pictures Entertainment, helping to coordinate both the diverse writers and directors programs.

In the past year, she has been developing her own business, Vybes, an e-commerce clothing brand with

a primary focus to collaborate and highlight BIPOC individuals.

In her career, she has found that mentorship is among the great keys to success in diversity and inclusion. She believes strongly that people need to advocate for underrepresented individuals and to allow for access and opportunity – because “being in the room” holds a life-changing experience for individuals in all areas of the business.

As a Jersey City, NJ native and first-generation Latina, the concept of mentorship to help establish success in diversity and inclusion holds great significance in her own story, and she was pleased to share that with the audience at this special L.A. Times B2B Publishing event.





WE GOT THIS.

At GHJ, an innovative accounting and business advisory firm, we believe that diversity is our legacy and our future.

Together Mari-Anne Kehler, CDP disability rights activist and DEI strategy leader, and Derrick Coleman, GHJ's BIPOC Cohort Group Leader and women's empowerment and education advocate, ensure that GHJ's workplace reflects the rich diversity of the people in the communities GHJ serves.

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PANEL RECAP

ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

PANEL DISCUSSION

As part of this year's inaugural Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Leadership Forum, the L.A. Times B2B Publishing team staged a panel discussion exploring the trends, updates and issues pertaining to accessibility in today's workplaces.

The panel was moderated by Mari-Anne Kehler, CDP of GHJ, and featured expert commentary from Sue Chen of NOVA Medical Products; Katherine Pérez of The Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation; Elaine Hall of The Miracle Project; and Marlene Krpata of the U.S. Army, Retired.



MODERATOR

Mari-Anne Kehler, CDP

Partner and Chief Strategy Officer
GHJ

Mari-Anne Kehler, CDP, leads GHJ's growth strategy, especially in relation to business development and marketing. She is also a strategist for GHJ Foundation, GHJ's vehicle for purposeful and proactive giving to the community. She has more than 30 years of experience as a high-impact leader who successfully expands business. Passionate about diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), Kehler leads DEI strategy at GHJ and was credentialed by the National Diversity Council through Emory University as a Certified Diversity Professional (CDP) in 2020.



PANELIST

Sue Chen

Founder & CEO
NOVA MEDICAL PRODUCTS

As the CEO of NOVA Medical Products, Sue Chen is changing the way people embrace aging and tackle physical challenges with innovative and stylish products. In her book, "Confessions of a Walker Stalker," Chen chronicles her journey and mission to unleash and ignite human ability. Combining her passion for ocean conservation and human ability, Sue is the co-founder of Operation Blue Pride, an organization supporting veterans through scuba diving and ocean education.



PANELIST

Katherine Pérez

Director
THE COELHO CENTER FOR DISABILITY
LAW, POLICY AND INNOVATION

Katherine Pérez is the inaugural director of the Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation. She is a current doctoral candidate in disability studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she is writing a dissertation on the Burger Supreme Court cases in the criminal legal system and mental disability. Pérez focuses on disability and immigration law and policy. As a queer, disabled woman of color, and granddaughter of Mexican immigrants, her experiences inform her approach to intersectional justice.

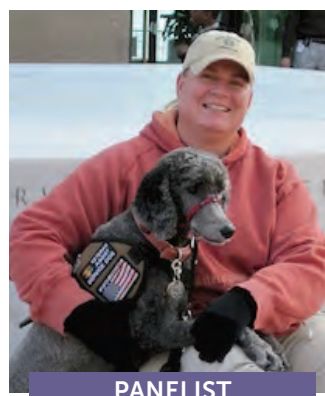


PANELIST

Elaine Hall

Founder
THE MIRACLE PROJECT

Elaine Hall is the founder and artistic director of The Miracle Project, a fully inclusive film and theater program, profiled in the two-time Emmy-winning HBO film, "Autism: the Musical." She is considered a pioneer in creating neurodiverse original content for film and theater. As a technical advisor, script consultant, accessibility coordinator and on-set advocate/coach, Hall has worked with TV and film writers, directors, actors, and production companies to help assure their content authentically portrays individuals of all abilities and disabilities.



PANELIST

Marlene Krpata

U.S. Army Captain, Retired
TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

Marlene Krpata is a retired U.S. Army Captain and tactical intelligence officer. Her decorations include Meritorious Service Medal (2x), Army Commendation Medal (2x), National Defense Service Medal with a Bronze Star, Iraq Campaign Medal with a Campaign Star, and Kosovo Campaign Medal with a Bronze Star. In 2006, she was hit with indirect mortar fire that severely damaged her right leg, ultimately resulting in amputation. Today, she works for UBS Financial as a financial intelligence analyst.

PANEL RECAP

SHARED INSIGHTS FROM THE EVENT

CHEN: I define accessibility in the workplace as being in a “work eco-system” that cultivates your entire person, allowing you to access your ability ... physically, intellectually and emotionally. Accessibility matters because it is the most important priority to further your company’s mission. To make that happen, you have to create an eco-system/environment for your most valuable asset – your employees – to not just survive, but thrive.

HALL: In my experience “accessibility in the workplace” means that everyone, no matter what their ability or disability, may openly disclose their specific needs to a trusted co-worker and supervisor without bias and concern. Accessibility is a state of mind – an attitude – not limited to building ramps, or removing physical obstacles (although this is a start) – but creating a social/emotional as well as a physical environment that truly supports individual differences and needs. An accessible workplace is a space where those who experience the world differently are not just “included” but provided with the resources so that they can do their best work. One person’s strength is another’s challenge. Accessibility encourages true teamwork where everyone can shine. Accessibility allows each worker to bring their talents and assets into the workplace, creating an atmosphere where everyone is not just included but where everyone belongs.

KEHLER: Employees not only want to be included, but they also want to belong. Employers need to build an environment where their greatest asset, employees, not only survive but thrive. Having a workplace that is accessible to everyone creates a culture of empathy, empowerment and strength. Providing equal access fosters a culture where all employees feel accepted and supported to succeed.

KRPATA: Having an employer that is focused on accessibility is very important and fosters unity and signals that everyone on staff is important to that employer. That’s what people with disabilities need to help bring out the best in them as employees. Accessibility signals that people with disabilities are needed and welcome – regardless of what point they are on in their disability journey.

PÉREZ: Providing access means you are viewing your employees as individuals with different strengths and needs. Providing access means you presume capacity and focus on changes to the work environment. When you are inclusive to disabled employees, you create a culture that is inclusive of everyone. Employers open up the talent pipeline. They increase innovation, especially since disabled folks are innovators by necessity in an ableist world. Hiring employees with disabilities helps employers reach their diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) goals. People, especially younger generations, want to work in diverse settings and consumers want to support businesses that are representative of the world we live in.

CHEN: When you create a workplace eco-system of accessibility, you create shared empathy and shared empathy is shared strength. Empathy is not sympathy. You express sympathy, but you share empathy. A culture of empathy is a culture of active and dynamic caring and connection. Empathy is the most powerful connector that bridges and aligns people and transforms them into comrades. Create a culture that empowers. One that celebrates and commends people to be their entire amazing selves. Accessibility is the greatest form of empowerment. That empowerment and empathy inspired NOVA to completely change our attitude about our products and the medical equipment industry – from one of disability to one of bad-ass ability.

HALL: The pandemic and new hybrid work environments have had some positive impacts on workplace accessibility. In many ways, working virtually has become a great ‘equalizer.’ Those who prefer less stimulating, quieter workplaces can thrive in the sanctity of their own home, being able to do their work without ‘chatter,’ interruptions, and having to feign social grace. By being able to work in our own homes, barriers of accessibility are a non-issue, and we can create the optimal physical space that is needed. At The Miracle Project, a neurodiverse theater and film program for individuals with and without disabilities, we have created two original musical films virtually during the global pandemic. When audiences view the final product (original musical films) – no one knows who does or does not have a disability. Together we are a troupe of creative individuals sharing our strengths and challenges, expressing our voice, and changing the way the world perceives ability.

KEHLER: The pandemic threatened accessibility for everyone. It created an interesting dynamic where the interests of the majority now aligned with those with disabilities, who have been asking for virtual or hybrid options for years. This sparked innovative solutions with the development of new remote working technology and proved that we could really flourish in a hybrid environment.

KRPATA: As businesses go back to work, post-COVID or move to hybrid models, it’s important that companies continue to pay attention to the specific needs of their disabled employees. Self-advocacy can play an important role here, as those who need special accommodations or access remind HR and management what is needed during the going-back-to-work phase.

PÉREZ: Disabled people have been asking to work from home and virtually for a long time. It took a pandemic in which the non-disabled world was threatened for businesses to acquiesce. Eventually, we proved that homework, virtual work, and hybrid work are not only possible but do not have negative effects. In fact, in many ways, it boosts productivity. Virtual work broke down barriers for many disabled people though not all (since access is not a one-size-fits-all thing). What I hope the pandemic has demonstrated is that we have existing technology or at least the means to develop technology to create so much access for people with disabilities. We just have to be willing to think outside the box and make it happen!

PANEL RECAP

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & BELONGING PANEL DISCUSSION

As part of this year's inaugural Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Leadership Forum, the L.A. Times B2B Publishing team hosted a panel discussion exploring trends, updates and issues affecting inclusivity and belonging from a leadership perspective.

The panel was moderated by Sahar Andrade of Sahar Consulting LLC and featured commentary from Andrew Forchelli of HUB International; Dr. Erika D. Beck of California State University, Northridge; and Dr. Thelá Thatch of Paychex.



MODERATOR

Sahar Andrade

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant
SAHAR CONSULTING LLC

Sahar Andrade, MB.BCh, is a diversity, global leadership, personal transformation speaker/consultant. She has lived and been educated in seven countries and speaks five languages. She holds a double bachelor's degree in medicine and surgery, a major in psychiatry from Cairo University and successfully completed an HR studies certificate program. Her Entrepreneur program has received Congressional recognition. She is a USC adjunct professor for the Multi-Cultural Executive Women Leadership Program and an instructor for UC Irvine teaching DEI & Unconscious Bias.



PANELIST

Dr. Erika D. Beck

President
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Dr. Erika D. Beck began her tenure as president of California State University, Northridge in January 2021. A strong advocate for the power of higher education to improve lives, transform the community and promote social mobility, Dr. Beck works to ensure the academic success of students, so that they can become leaders in their communities and excel in today's rapidly changing economy and society. This focus includes an unwavering commitment to advancing equity, inclusion and justice in service of a brighter and more equitable future.



PANELIST

Andrew Forchelli

President
HUB INTERNATIONAL, LOS ANGELES AND ORANGE COUNTY

As the regional executive for HUB's Los Angeles and Orange County operations, Andrew Forchelli has overarching responsibility for sales, talent management, claims, marketing, client services, carrier relationships and strategic planning. He also serves as a member of HUB California's Executive Leadership team and as executive champion for the region's DEI committee. In 2014, Forchelli became the regional executive for the Los Angeles operation of HUB and president of HUB's national entertainment practice.



PANELIST

Dr. Thelá Thatch

Head of Diversity and Inclusion
PAYCHEX

Dr. Thelá R. Thatch leads diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in corporations, boards, and communities. With more than two decades of experience in human resources, talent management, and organizational development, she's passionate about building internal cultures and external communities where an authentic commitment to inclusion, equity, and diversity thrives. Dr. Thatch authored a children's book, "The Dog Chef", and written shorter pieces for several publications. Her latest book, "Inclusionomics," is dedicated to the study of inclusion and scheduled for release in 2022.

PANEL RECAP

SHARED INSIGHTS FROM THE EVENT

Dr. Beck: Inclusive leadership is really at the epicenter of what we need collectively to realize a brighter future for us all. Decades of research tell us that diverse teams are more innovative, creative, and ultimately, more successful than homogenous ones.

Forchelli: Personally, effectively embracing diversity, equity and inclusion in leadership is about always striving to be a positive agent of change, doing my part to make the world around me a better place. Professionally, it's about ensuring the very best talent in the world, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or disabilities, wakes up every day wanting to be part of the HUB organization. Retaining great talent is hard enough. Why would any leader, intentionally or unintentionally, push people out?

Dr. Thatch: Inclusive leadership is critical as we are experiencing turbulent times due to COVID, social unrest, the Shecession, and the Great Resignation. Retention, recruitment, and civic responsibility are the primary drivers motivating increased DEI efforts. According to a recent Paychex survey, more than a third of Gen-Z and Millennials are actively looking for a new job. During these times, a focus on inclusive leadership is one of the key differentiators in how organizations will weather this storm.

Andrade: Belonging is the glue that holds diversity and inclusion and the missing part where everyone feels accepted for who they are, not who someone wants them to be – where they do not need to hide a part of the whole of who they are. It focuses on the beauty and strength of intersectionality. It is focusing on the people that are the number one asset for any organization.

Dr. Beck: The profile of college students today is vastly different than it

was when most colleges and universities were founded – as a result of both a shift in the demographic landscape across the country and also a shift in the intentional effort to expand access to higher education to many more students in service of the public good that an educated populace affords a society. Once largely monochromatic in nature, today's higher education serves a really rich tapestry of diversity of race, identity, socio-economic background, educational and life experiences, which all allows us to harness the cultural wealth and aspirational capital of our students – but only if we are able to reimagine the ways in which we advance our teaching and learning missions to truly serve the students on our campuses today and the communities that we seek to serve for generations to come.

Forchelli: For me, being an ally is largely about being an “unlikely ally.” An “unlikely ally” focuses on the needs of others, leveraging their status and privilege to be champions for those that are in need of an “ally.” To me, it's the ultimate way to model allyship. There is not a person in the world who can't be an unlikely ally to someone else. I love being considered an unlikely ally and wear that label like a badge of honor.

Dr. Thatch: I would like to see organizations practice intentionality around inclusion and belonging. Too often, employees have felt invisible and undervalued. I hope to see a continued commitment to awareness and education that supports learning about new experiences and cultures. I want to see executive leaders seek out and value individual perspectives throughout the employment life cycle – not just at hire, but from hire to retirement. Organizations have an opportunity to practice professional courage and cognizance in how they approach DEI initiatives.



VISIONARIES

LEADERS IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Without question, for those working in the diversity and inclusion space, 2020 and 2021 have been two incredibly transformative years that saw a global pandemic that brought (and continues to bring) challenges that have directly and indirectly impacted DEI strategies, increased momentum behind the Black Lives Matter movement, and a mounting accumulation of calls for organizations to commit to overcoming systemic barriers blocking DEI and the fight for comprehensive inclusion.

The work of DEI leaders has been catapulted into the spotlight as they have been placed under additional pressure to provide guidance to not only their own

organizations but the business community at large. The work of DEI leaders has never been more valued and more important.

In this special section, the Los Angeles Times B2B Publishing team has selected, based on a collection of hundreds of nominated DEI professionals and experts, a list of many of the most prominent game-changers and thought leaders in the space today.

The profiles of professionals alphabetically assorted here are in no way exhaustive and include just some of the DEI leaders whose work has inspired us, and we believe will inspire our readers as well.



Micheline Abounassar

Founder/CEO/Owner / Fine Artist / Writer
MICHASGALLERY.COM

As an artist to the stars for over 20 years, Micheline Abounassar (Artist: Micha) exhibits leadership on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility matters. Promoting diversity in her company, michasgallery.com, bringing awareness with her paintings that are diverse with all subjects: people, pets, landscapes, seascapes, etc., as well as working with many renowned diverse charitable organizations.

Abounassar's entrepreneurial spirit is reflected in her charitable donations that come from sales of her work. Among some of the dignitaries and charities who have received her paintings include: the Pope in the Vatican, the Harley Davidson Love Ride Foundation, the Special Olympics, Glendale Adventist Hospital Doctors, City of Hope Doctors, St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, EWTN Catholic Network: Mother Angelica & The Nuns, and many other celebrities and non-profit organizations.



Ann Anaya

*Chief Diversity Officer and
Vice President of Global Inclusion*
3M

Ann Anaya joined the 3M Company in 2013 and is currently the chief diversity officer and global diversity and inclusion strategic lead. Ann started her career at 3M in the Legal Affairs Compliance and Business Conduct group, where she served clients as counsel for investigation. Subsequently, she moved into the Legal Affairs Litigation and Preventive Law group where she was senior counsel. Anaya has 20 years of experience as a trial lawyer. Just prior to joining 3M, she was an Assistant United States Attorney for the Department of Justice in the District of Minnesota for 11 years.

In 2019 and 2020, Ann was recognized as a Top 50 Chief Diversity Officer, in 2018 as a Top Executive in Corporate Diversity, 2017 Minnesota Lawyer of the Year for Diversity and Inclusion, 2016 3M Gives Volunteer Award and Minnesota Lawyer of the Year.



Sahar Andrade, MB.BCh

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant
SAHAR CONSULTING, LLC

Sahar Andrade has been training government agencies – from counties to cities to fire departments as well as big non-profits – on DEI matters. She leaves an impact wherever she goes to build bridges between diverse employees and organizations. Andrade is unique in the way she marries neuro-science with DEI, especially explaining unconscious bias and stereotypes to deal with the root of the issues not the symptoms to bring lasting changes that promotes team building, safe and positive working environments that generate higher revenues.

She is an instructor at UC Irvine as well as an adjunct professor at USC for the Multi-Cultural Executive Women Leadership Program, teaching DEI and unconscious bias. Andrade speaks at different conferences locally, nationally, and internationally, being a change agent building acceptance and mainly belonging and access.

VISIONARIES

**Indhira Arrington**

*Managing Director and Global Chief
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer*
ARES MANAGEMENT

Indhira Arrington is a managing director and global chief diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) officer in the Ares Human Resources Department, attracting, developing, engaging, and advancing diverse talent within an inclusive, welcoming environment. She also serves as an advisor to support DEI initiatives at portfolio companies across Ares' investment strategies. Prior to joining Ares in 2021, Mrs. Arrington served at Wells Fargo & Company, providing strategic planning and execution of diversity sourcing initiatives. She is a Consortium for Graduate Study in Management Fellow, a Toigo Fellow, and an INROADS alum. She is a Cornell University Certified Diversity Professional/Advanced Practitioner and a member of Association of Latino Professionals for America, PRIMER Network and the Council of Urban Professionals.

**Nadine Augusta**

Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer
CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD

As chief diversity, equity & inclusion officer at Cushman & Wakefield, Nadine Augusta drives global commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) as a firmwide priority. This includes creating an environment that offers equitable and fair growth opportunities for all employees and businesses with which Cushman & Wakefield works, while ensuring the firm brings diverse thought and expertise to its clients. Augusta takes a holistic approach to DEI with a focus on workforce, workplace and marketplace, especially in the areas of recruiting, talent development and supplier diversity.

Augusta has more than 20 years of experience in financial services, with key positions in management consulting, project management, sales and trading, and diversity and inclusion. Prior to assuming her current position, she was Americas Head of Diversity & Inclusion at Goldman Sachs, where she led talent engagement, equity and inclusion efforts.

**Dr. Johné Battle**

Vice President of Diversity & Inclusion
DOLLAR GENERAL

Dr. Johné Battle is a global business executive and thought-leader who brings the powerful combination of skillful talent development and human capital expertise. His deep understanding of human relations, personal branding, diversity and inclusion, and organizational performance have led to a successful track record of business transformation and human capital counseling.

Dr. Battle currently is the vice president of diversity and inclusion for Dollar General Corporation, a \$30 billion-plus retailer with more than 17,000 convenient, easy-to-shop stores in 46 states. He owns the strategy for diversity, equity, and inclusion for over 168,000 associates, working across the organization using belonging indexes, talent-flow analysis, inclusive leader assessments and other data to make data-based decisions. Prior to joining Dollar General, Dr. Battle was a senior client partner at Korn Ferry, where he led clients through large-scale cultural transformation.

**Richard L. Benbow**

Regional Vice President (West)
WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY

Richard Benbow is a forward thinker who seeks to create strategic impact that creates public value for all stakeholders. He is known for fostering a culture of experimentation, innovation and collaboration through the lens of putting the customer first and business performance. His distinguished career spans the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

His previous executive positions include chief officer of government and community relations - at UCLA; senior director of external and government affairs in the West Region at Time Warner Cable; and senior manager at the Los Angeles Franchise Administration, and Constituent Affairs department. In his former position, he drove strategies and efforts for the advancement of UCLA through legislation, policy, regulation and relationship building. He identified opportunities for funding, partnerships, and engagement. In the executive position as a senior director with Time Warner Cable, Benbow expanded the company's brand across new communities and helped open doors for social impacting partnerships.

**Chris Benner**

*Director, Institute for Social Transformation/Director,
Everett Program for Technology and Social Change/Professor,
Environmental Studies and Sociology Departments*
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

Dr. Chris Benner is a dedicated professor who has been changing lives and bettering the world for over 20 years. He has a long history conducting community-engaged research and connecting students to community organizations in predominantly low-income communities of color. At UC Santa Cruz, Benner's work is prolific and far-reaching. Directing the Everett Program for Technology and Social Change, he empowers students to work with communities to create solutions to persistent problems. The program's demographics are around 75% students of color, 75% women or non-binary gender, and 50% first-generation students.

**Marvin Boakye**

Chief People & Diversity Officer
PAPA JOHN'S

Marvin Boakye is a global human resources executive with more than 25 years of experience building and transforming HR strategies that lead to tangible improvements in business performance. He is recognized as a strategic partner and coach to leadership teams that achieve sustainable results. He was appointed as the first chief people officer for Papa John's in January 2019 and currently serves as chief people and diversity officer.

Boakye leads Papa John's organizational effectiveness, talent management, talent acquisition, leadership development, labor relations and M&A due diligence and integration both domestically and internationally. To drive the turnaround of this global pizza restaurant brand, Boakye developed strategic priorities centered on building a culture of leaders who believe in diversity, inclusion and winning. His team implemented a new company purpose with values and revamped processes that put pride back in the brand among team members.

VISIONARIES



Dalana Brand

*Vice President of the People Experience
and Head of Inclusion and Diversity*
TWITTER

Dalana Brand is a seasoned human capital executive with significant global leadership experience in various industries. She has established a career profile that includes both corporate finance and human resources. This dual background allows her to uniquely add value to any organization as she can leverage the link between people and business. Brand has worked at some of the world's foremost Fortune 500 companies, where she led global teams to design and develop innovative people programs that equitably engage employees, create a fair and inclusive culture, and help advance the business strategy of the company.

Brand is currently VP of the People Experience and Head of Diversity & Inclusion at Twitter, Inc. Her most important work is serving as a fierce equality advocate. She is a frequent industry contributor and speaker on topics of equality, gender pay equity, diversity and inclusion, as well as other human resources topics.



Angela Bretz

*Senior Vice President/Chief Diversity
and Talent Acquisition Officer*
NATIONWIDE

Angela Bretz is the senior vice president and chief DE&I officer who reports to Nationwide's chief executive officer and chief administrative officer. In this role, Bretz establishes and oversees all corporate diversity, equity and inclusion work, including strategic programs, procedures and policies to advance Nationwide's culture of DE&I. Externally, she advances the company's brand and reputation through diverse strategic partnerships, philanthropy and community engagements. As a career Nationwider, Bretz has demonstrated strong leadership, a deep background in strategy, project management and claims with extensive knowledge of property and casualty operations, training and development. In addition, she has long championed company diversity.



George-Axelle Broussillon Matschinga

Vice President, Diversity & Inclusion
SEPHORA

George-Axelle Broussillon Matschinga is the vice president of D&I at Sephora. She leads the design, strategic direction, implementation, and business alignment of company D&I initiatives. Joining in 2020, she has focused on developing an even more effective ecosystem where Sephora attracts, recruits, develops and advances diverse talent and fosters workforce inclusion. Broussillon Matschinga has also built out Sephora's overall D&I strategy and governance structure. She oversees the engagement of Sephora's Equity Advisors and Partners, a group intersecting race, culture and civil rights organizations promoting racial equity. She also leads Sephora Employee Resource Groups, and regularly hosts listening sessions and D&I trainings across LVMH.



Betsy Butler

Executive Director
CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

Betsy Butler has been fighting for equality and justice throughout her career. She currently serves as the executive director for the California Women's Law Center, where she works to create a more just and equitable society by breaking down barriers and advancing the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education.

Prior to joining CWLC, Butler served in the California State Assembly representing the 53rd District covering coastal Los Angeles. During her tenure in the legislature, she prioritized bills addressing the needs of veterans, older Americans, working families, the environment and consumer rights. A committed advocate for fairness, Betsy has worked for the California League of Conservation Voters, the Environmental Defense Fund and the Consumer Attorneys of California. She began her career in public service with Lt. Governor Leo McCarthy and was an appointee of President Bill Clinton in the International Trade Administration.



Rosalyn Carpenter

*Chief Diversity, Equity, Inclusion &
Community Impact Officer*
COMMONSPIRIT HEALTH

Rosalyn Carpenter is the chief diversity officer for the newly formed CommonSpirit Health, one of the largest health systems in the U.S. CommonSpirit encompasses more than 800 locations, approximately 150,000 employees, and \$29.2 billion in revenue. Carpenter oversees the Office of Diversity & Inclusion that focuses on diversity, health equity, eliminating healthcare disparity, supplier diversity and workplace culture. She previously served as chief diversity officer for CHI and she also held roles at HealthTrust Purchasing Group and Hospital Corporation of America. Carpenter also served as the president and CEO of the Urban League of Middle Tennessee as well as the executive director at the Metro Human Relations Commission of Nashville and Davidson County.



Paul S. Chan

Managing Principal
**BIRD, MARELLA, BOXER, WOLPERT, NESSIM,
DROOKS, LINCENBERG & RHOW, P.C.**

Paul S. Chan is the managing principal of Bird Marella P.C., leading a diverse and distinguished group of 40 litigation attorneys at its Los Angeles office. For the past 12 years as managing principal, Chan has reflected admirable leadership that has weaved itself into the firm's foundation. Under his guidance, Bird Marella has achieved its highest total of pro bono hours benefitting underserved communities and fulfilled 80% of women and minority promotions in the past decade. He has aided in creating an environment in which women principals are celebrated and regularly earn accolades, and firm initiatives are done with intention and integrity.

Chan has remained proactive with the Diversity Committee, implementing ideas in both internal and external realms of the firm. The committee grew under his leadership within recent years, showcasing his dedication to progressing the firm's efforts.

Here's to a leader who lifts up others.



CommonSpirit Health® is committed to providing equitable care to all. We are advancing health equity for our employees, patients we care for, and communities we serve – not only through quality medical treatment and services, but also through our mission of advocacy for social justice.

We proudly support the essential work of Rosalyn Carpenter, Chief Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Community Impact Officer. The 160,000 employees of CommonSpirit congratulate her for being recognized by the L.A. Times B2B Publishing division in the 2021 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Magazine.



VISIONARIES



Camilla Chan

Partner
RAINES FELDMAN

Since becoming the co-chair of the Raines Feldman Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Camilla Chan has helped to develop an internal website/bulletin board where members can share their thoughts and ideas about resources that promote diversity and inclusion. The purpose of the bulletin board is to spark discussion around ideas of diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as to promote a sense that these topics can be discussed in a safe space.

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee has also begun the process of developing programs aimed at raising awareness about the challenges attorneys from diverse backgrounds might face, whether they are reflections of society's expectations or overt instances of racism, sexism or other biases. She and her team conducted the first presentation in the series where Chan, along with several female partners, discussed the challenges of being women lawyers and the barriers to achieving partnership.



Jyoti Chopra

*Senior Vice President and Chief People,
Inclusion and Sustainability Officer*
MGM RESORTS INTERNATIONAL

Jyoti Chopra is SVP and Chief People, Inclusion and Sustainability Officer for MGM Resorts International. She leads human resources and social impact and sustainability. She oversees ESG reporting and responsible for directing enterprise-wide human and social capital initiatives, along with serving as a liaison to the Board of Directors' Corporate Social Responsibility Committee, and overseeing the MGM Resorts Foundation and Community Relations. Chopra is an award-winning talent, diversity, inclusion and sustainability leader. She served as senior vice president of global D&I and HR operations and transformation at education tech firm Pearson Plc., and as BNY Mellon's chief diversity officer and managing director of global citizenship and sustainability.



Derrick Coleman

Managing Director
CFS (AN AFFILIATE OF GHJ)

Derrick Coleman is managing director for Creative Financial Staffing of Los Angeles (CFS), an affiliate of GHJ. As practice leader of GHJ's recruiting division, Coleman has used his influence to implement diverse and equitable hiring practices. He is continuously promoting and utilizing these practices for clients while encouraging his team to do the same. He continues to be recognized for his leadership in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at his firm, his field and the community.

Coleman is a champion of DEI efforts at GHJ including founding the firm's Black Indigenous People of Color (BI-POC) cohort. He is a dedicated member of the Los Angeles non-profit community through his board membership at the prestigious Downtown Women's Center and a graduate and supporter of the African American Board Leadership Institute. In addition, he is also a sought-after thought leader and advocate of diverse hiring practices and inclusive workplaces.



Hayley Dickson

Wealth Management Advisor and CFP
NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL

Hayley Dickson seeks to help clients un-learn shame, fear, and paralysis when it comes to their financial reality. She realizes that even among highly educated groups, members of our communities have too long gone without the important resource of a sound financial education. An advocate for women, Persons of Color, and the LGBTQ+ community, Dickson views financial planning as a means of empowerment for her clients. She shares her insights on panels, workshops, across digital media in Los Angeles and throughout the nation.

Dickson helped to establish the district-level LGBTQ+ and Ally Council as a means to create an inclusive space for LGBTQ+ individuals in the workplace. The council also helps fellow financial advisors better serve clients in the LGBTQ+ community. Under Dickson's leadership as the vice chair, council members provide company leaders and allies with valuable educational opportunities and resources.

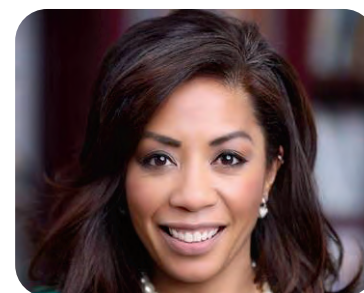


Tim Dismond

Chief Responsibility Officer
CBRE

As Chief Responsibility Officer, Tim Dismond oversees the company's Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) efforts. He is a member of CBRE's Executive Committee, a group of 12 global executives responsible for driving the company's business worldwide. He also serves on CBRE's African American Network Group Executive Committee and was named one of the "Most Influential Black Executives in Corporate America" in 2020 by Savoy, the leading African American business and lifestyle magazine.

Previously, he served as CBRE's first global chief diversity officer, leading the company's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) strategy. In February 2021, his scope of responsibilities expanded to include all ESG efforts, including DE&I, environmental sustainability, workplace safety & wellbeing, philanthropy and public/government affairs. Dismond was also the president of the South Division of CBRE's Global Workplace Solutions (GWS) | Enterprise business, where he oversaw more than 5,000 professionals.



Eloiza Domingo

*Vice President of Human Resources and Chief
Inclusive, Diversity & Equity Officer*
ALLSTATE

Eloiza Domingo, who is vice president of human resources and chief inclusive, diversity & equity, is also a highly accomplished leader with extensive experience in various industries, including healthcare, academic, and law enforcement.

Domingo maintains a nearly 20-year track record of success in providing strategic leadership in human resources, culture, strategy, diversity and inclusion, law enforcement and academics for business improvement and cultural change. She has demonstrated ability to successfully collaborate with and coach C-suite executives. In addition, she possesses outstanding interpersonal skills and advanced proficiency in developing and leading systemic improvements within global and complex systems. A noted diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency expert, Domingo is recognized as one of the 100 Most Influential Filipina Women in the World by the Filipina Women's Network.

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Andrew Forchelli

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Los Angeles and Orange County
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Kevin Bradley

(he, him, his)
Vice President, Diversity, Inclusion & Community
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VISIONARIES



Kiera Fernandez

*Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer,
Senior Vice President of Human Resources*
TARGET

Kiera Fernandez proudly serves as Target's Senior Vice President of Talent & Change and Chief D&I Officer. She leads and advances Target's enterprise-wide diversity, equity and inclusion strategy as well as leading the Talent and Change team. Fernandez's strategies cascade across the company to aid all families in discovering the joy of everyday life. She has an extensive background in human resources, retail operations, process and project management, store operations and leadership. Fernandez began her career at Target in 2001 as an executive team leader for stores, subsequently serving in a variety of leadership roles. She offers a multifaceted perspective to DE&I – championing Target's strategy in every aspect of the business.



Andrew Forchelli

*L.A. Regional Leader and President
Entertainment & Sports Division*
HUB INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE

Shortly after the death of George Floyd in May of 2020 and its subsequent protests, Andrew Forchelli felt a strong need to establish a culture of inclusion within the company. His first step towards creating that culture was to reach out on an individual basis to employees that were most impacted and listen to their perspectives and areas of concern.

From there, Forchelli began to form a DEI committee to represent the diverse voices within HUB's Los Angeles region. He recruited several passionate contributors and empowered them to become agents of change within the organization as chairs of the newly formed DEI committee. Each "Agent of Change" represented a different employment level across the office, which helped ensure that they were considering the perspectives from varying roles and responsibilities. This helped especially in the early days to gain credibility and trust at different employee levels.



Fellicia Foster

Vice President and Head of DEI
BMO HARRIS BANK

Fellicia Foster is the Vice President and U.S. Head of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at BMO Harris Bank. Foster is accountable for developing U.S. diversity talent strategies to attract, develop and engage diverse talent across the enterprise. In this capacity, she ensures the diversity talent strategies will help BMO develop an inclusive workforce and break down barriers for employees to pursue and excel in their careers.

Foster joined BMO in 2010, where she started her career in support roles within business banking. In 2012, she moved into a business banking strategy analyst role within the Personal & Commercial Banking Strategy Team, where she led multiple strategy implementation projects. Foster also leverages her business skills by serving on various non-profit organizations. She serves as the immediate past-president of the National Association for African Americans in Human Resources (NAAHR) Chicago chapter, the Board of Directors for Illinois State University's Alumni Association, among other worthy causes.



Staford Francois

Senior Manager
COHNREZNICK

Staford Francois decided to focus his career on the alternative investment sector when he joined CohnReznick as a senior manager in its Financial Services Group. Francois' clients report that he focuses on completing projects that he undertakes with an unmatched professionalism and unique set of technical skills. He serves as a tremendous resource and helps as client companies continue to expand and grow their businesses.

Francois also serves as a mentor to different colleagues with whom he discusses different career paths either within or outside of public accounting. Due to the low retention rate of minorities in public accounting, Francois usually ensures serving as a mentor or guide to individuals with diverse backgrounds. He finds it incredibly rewarding to see how he can help shape the career path of a counselee.



Terrence M. Franklin

Partner
SACKS, GLAZIER, FRANKLIN & LODISE LLP

Terrence Franklin's widespread efforts and impact in the DEI&A space were underscored when he was named the sole 2021 recipient of Chambers and Partners' "Lifetime Achievement Award" as part of their Diversity & Inclusion Awards: North America. Franklin was honored for his accomplishments in furthering the advancement of diversity and inclusion in the legal industry and beyond.

In 2020, he led efforts for the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) to adopt a statement condemning racism following the killing of George Floyd and the attendant civil unrest. Franklin initiated the process to generate a statement making ACTEC's position clear as well as a commitment to renounce racism in all its forms recommended to the executive committee and approved on behalf of ACTEC. As a leader in the community, he dedicates his time to numerous professional organizations focused on trusts and estates law as well as promoting diversity and inclusion.



Tony Gales

Partner
BPM LLP

With nearly 30 years of accounting industry experience in the Long Beach area, BPM's Tony Gales has proven to be a DEI difference maker in the organization and his community. Since beginning his accounting career as an intern in 1993, Gales has been keenly aware of the critical importance of diversity and inclusion and fostering a workplace culture that allows diverse employees to grow and excel. Since joining BPM, he has been a crucial member in the firm's Inclusion Now! (INI!) committee, which supports and encourages colleagues of all genders, ethnicities and those who identify as LGBTQIA+ to feel safe to be their authentic selves.

Through Gales' involvement, INI's 2021 initiatives have included partnering with historically Black colleges and Black student alliances in addition to aligning with and supporting organizations led by women, people of color and other underrepresented groups in the community.

VISIONARIES

**Julie R. F. Gerchik**

Partner & Chair of the Diversity Committee
GLASER WEIL LLP

In addition to being a partner and top litigator, Julie Gerchik has had a tremendous impact on the infrastructure and culture of Glaser Weil, particularly, the firm's diversity efforts. Gerchik is the founder and chair of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion committee. She is one of two partner members leading the pro bono committee, head of recruiting for the Litigation Department, creator of the Litigation Department's Training Program, and one of two people who designed and implemented the department's mentoring program.

Gerchik started the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee at the firm in 2019, and it has already had a significant impact on the firm and beyond. Under her leadership, the committee has hosted a number of diverse intra-firm cultural events and during the uprisings last summer, Gorsche led the effort to author both a definitive external and internal anti-racist statement on behalf of the firm.

**Lauren Gorsche**

Los Angeles County Complex Director
UBS PRIVATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

A diverse workforce and inclusive culture are crucial to the long-term success of UBS, which aims to achieve 50% diversity in hiring, promotion and retention in the Americas. Since taking on the role of Los Angeles County Complex Director at UBS Private Wealth Management 18 months ago, Lauren Gorsche has made it her priority to grow a team with representation across gender, race, age, ethnicity, education, and gender identity.

She has focused on strengthening the team's culture and reviewing the hiring, promotion and retention of women and people of color. Of the seven advisors the team hired over the past year, 42% have been women or people of color. Gorsche fosters a listening culture by ensuring change is an organic and advisory-led experience and that diverse talent feel it's a safe and inclusive space where their differences are celebrated.

**Philip Hart**

Founder and CEO
HART REALTY ADVISORS

Philip Hart was named ULI's first Managing Director for Diversity and Inclusion in 2008. In this role, he was a co-founder of the Real Estate Diversity Initiative with ULI Colorado and the City and County of Denver. He also expanded the Real Estate Associate Program to nine cities. REAP is the leading diversity program in the commercial real estate industry. Hart now serves on REAP's Board of Directors.

In 2011, Urban Land Magazine published Hart's article, "Planning for a Racially Diverse America." In the past 10 years, he has brought many people of color into the CRE and biotechnology sectors. The CRE development projects he engages in always include a diverse set of planners, architects, engineers, and labor force. Diversity, equity and inclusion has been the hallmark of Hart's career preceding the current emphasis on this important issue.

**Douglas Haynes**

Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

Dr. Douglas Haynes provides executive leadership to empower students and employees to maximize their potential in an affirmative learning and working environment. He leads a team of inclusive excellence champions to advance institutional transformation. Dr. Haynes oversees a multitude of programming to both build and sustain the capacity to support inclusive excellence principles, and manages the baseline climate expectations and priorities of these principles for faculty leaders. He leads the Office of Inclusive Excellence and serves as the director for the UCI ADVANCE Program, which was created to promote an inclusive culture for faculty and graduate student excellence.

In direct response to the murder of George Floyd, Haynes led UCI's 2020 launch of the UCI Black Thriving Initiative – a groundbreaking driver for institutional transformation that mobilizes the campus community, stakeholders and constituencies to be accountable for confronting anti-Blackness and building a university culture where Black people thrive.

**Quita Highsmith**

Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer
GENENTECH

Throughout her career, Quita Highsmith has built a reputation as a risk-taker, a changemaker, and a leader who advocates for diversity, equity, and inclusion in every space she is in. She joined Genentech in 2010, and following leadership roles in sales and advocacy relations, she's now responsible for the creation and implementation of holistic enterprise-wide DE&I strategies at the forefront of the biotech industry. Highsmith believes that DE&I is a key driver in all aspects of innovation and it is time to be bold, stop tiptoeing around race and inequities at work, and come together to build an "inclusion movement."

One example of Quita's exceptional leadership is her work to pioneer and co-lead Advancing Inclusive Research, Genentech's initiative to reduce disparities in clinical research participation for underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

**Les Hiscoe**

Chief Executive Officer
SHAWMUT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

In an industry that faces a glaring lack of diversity, CEO Les Hiscoe is dedicated to accelerating Shawmut Design and Construction's DEI work to drive immediate change and lasting results. He knows that making progress — both within and outside the walls of Shawmut — takes everyone, not just those who are underrepresented. He is devoted to leading this work for the future generation of builders — the success and succession of the industry depends on it.

Under Hiscoe's leadership, Shawmut has been at the forefront of the construction industry for its DEI work. In 2014, the firm reached a set point — recognizing there were areas that needed work, it became more strategic. He declared DEI a business imperative, and Shawmut created a Diversity Leadership Council partnered with Deloitte Human Capital and Catalyst to create a strategic framework to advance toward its goal of workplace equity and inclusion as well as a strong, diverse representation.

VISIONARIES



LaTonya Jackson

Vice President of Services & Operations
MEDIA PARTNERS CORPORATION

Through LaTonya Jackson's life experiences, impressive career, and education, she has proven herself a dynamic, forward-thinking leader who contributes to companies' growth through her extensive experience in talent, workforce development, and thought leadership.

Jackson's contributions toward the company's own DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging) efforts have not gone unnoticed, and under her input and editorial eye, the company released their latest product, "Unintentional Still Hurts: Overcoming Unconscious Bias." Instruction over three module courses address workplace bias and microaggressions. Jackson worked both behind the scenes and as a guest on Media Partners' "PeopleCast," a podcast aiming to humanize DEIB through storytelling.



Malika Jacobs

Founder and CEO
KINGMAKERS

Malika Jacobs founded Kingmakers to promote strong leadership and a solid company culture. The company offers transformative team bonding experiences for business leaders who understand the value of investing in radical employee care. Through facilitation and board gameplay, Kingmakers' virtual, participant-centered experiences enhance joy, connection, and inclusion. After six years of serving both public and corporate clients, in 2020 Kingmakers shifted its focus exclusively to team leaders addressing challenges of engagement, morale, and wellbeing during a time of profound changes in the workforce.

A priority for Jacobs has been to create a space where people who work for her can work within their values, make an impact on the lives of others, and ultimately bring their full selves to work. It has meant that many people who have worked for her have made huge personal and professional strides and shifts as a result of their time under her mentorship.



Monica Jaramillo

Co-Founder
LABEL THE AGENCY IN COLLABORATION WITH MONICA

LABEL the Agency is a full-service, woman of color - led entertainment marketing agency. Led by its founder, Monica Jaramillo, LABEL is a collaboration between industry veterans who specialize in event marketing, red carpet events, public relations, celebrity brand campaigns, and celebrity procurement deals. Most recently, Jaramillo and team created the project BLKOUT Walls, which brought multicultural mural artists from around the country together for a festival to revitalize the North End community of Detroit.

Jaramillo started in the entertainment industry as an intern in college; while growing up in the business, she was fortunate to have great mentors. However, she was, very often one of the only people of color in the room. Today, Jaramillo always makes a conscious effort to hire diverse talent, while mentoring as many young women as she can. Every single one of her consultants is either a woman of color or LGBTQIA+.



Lesley Kantor

Chief Marketing Officer
PANAVISION

Since starting her career in the media and entertainment business in 2003, Lesley Kantor has pioneered integrated marketing practices that have fused deep connections between global brands and their customers. As CMO of Panavision, she leads B2B and B2C marketing strategies for one of the most storied entertainment industry technology and services brands, overseeing a global team that supports the company's six-division portfolio.

This year, Kantor has led Panavision's joint initiatives with the Denton Black Film Festival (DBFF). Through this partnership, Panavision provides camera-rental grant packages to DBFF award winners for Best Narrative Feature and Best Documentary Feature. She was also instrumental in Panavision's collaboration with the DBFF Institute (DBFFI). Under her leadership, Panavision has aligned with DBFFI to organize a series of workshops throughout the year for Black filmmakers to learn the concepts, tools, and best practices needed for their future projects.



T. Katuri Kaye

Director
TRUCKER HUSS, APC

Tchienyonnoh Katuri Kaye is a child of immigrant parents who journeyed to the U.S. in the 1980s from West Africa. Growing up, Kaye watched her parents devote 100% of their time, resources and energy to make sure that her and her siblings could live the "American Dream." From hour-long commutes to never-ending financial demands, Katuri saw first-hand that there were not any roads her parents would not travel to ensure that she and her siblings had the tools to succeed.

She started her own non-profit, The TKK Program, Inc., in 2012 to bridge the gap for those at-risk youth and underprivileged communities who did not have a Mr. and Mrs. Kaye standing in their corner, cheering them to victory. Through her work under The TKK Program, Kaye strives daily to make a powerful difference in her greater community.



Mari-Anne Kehler

Partner and Chief Strategy Officer
GHJ

Mari-Anne Kehler, CDP, is the Chief Strategy Officer and Partner at GHJ. She is known as a staunch champion for driving and supporting diversity in the workplace. As a parent of an autistic son with a determination to live a self-directed life, Kehler has been a proponent for disabled self-advocates for over 20 years. Her son, Liam has lived in his own home with 24/7 supported living services since the age of 20. His fierce independence and passion for self-advocacy is the driving spirit for Kehler's activist work to advance the rights and opportunities for all individuals.

Kehler is also committed to improving diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts at GHJ and in the workplace. In addition, she became a Certified Diversity Professional (CDP) in 2020. She is a driving force and leader behind DEI inside and outside of GHJ.

VISIONARIES

**Lee Ann Kline**

President & Founder
STEM ADVANTAGE

In 2012, Lee Ann Kline, a female computer science and math major, brought together business, technology, and talent leaders in Los Angeles County to discuss the lack of diversity – both gender and race or ethnicity – in STEM professions. Based on personal observations within STEM industries we saw first-hand the lack of females and people of color working in the technology sector.

Kline and team sought to “level the playing field” and created STEM Advantage, an innovative program whose mission is to mentor, prepare and inspire women and underserved communities to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) through paid internships, mentorships, scholarships, professional development, and community. The program provides economic and social mobility to underserved groups, while providing a vetted pipeline of diverse talent to businesses. The vision is to build a diverse, equitable, and inclusive skilled workforce.

**Donna Langley**

Chairman

UNIVERSAL FILMED ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

A U.K. native, Donna Langley is the first British woman to run a major Hollywood studio and was recently awarded the Dame Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (DBE) title by the Queen in her 2020 New Year's Honour List. The honor recognizes Langley's many accomplishments in redefining popular culture and her efforts to expand networks and opportunities for all.

Langley has continued to pioneer and champion diversity and inclusion efforts by overseeing the department she launched in 2017: Universal's Global Talent Development & Inclusion (GTDI). This department focuses on cultivating, amplifying, attracting and retaining an inclusive talent pool on-screen, behind the camera, and within NBCUniversal. The group's efforts continue to yield consistent growth and real institutional change. Since inception, GTDI's programs and initiatives have shown consistent growth that has led to institutional change across the studio and throughout the industry.

**Miriam Lewis**

Chief Inclusion Officer
PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP

Miriam Lewis exhibits and models inclusion. Her contributions have advanced diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility in the workplace, business and community. She has excelled in raising awareness and driving meaningful change. Significant progress has been made under Lewis' leadership. Notable progress includes her work holding listening sessions with over 900 global employees and used insights to create a contemporary global inclusion strategy, solutions, and roadmap along with her efforts to engage regularly with both the board and peers to advance the strategy.

At Principal Financial Group, Lewis evolved the Diversity Council to an Executive Inclusion Council and established modeling of the desired diversity for the organization, including gender, race, geography, generations, etc. She also launched an Inclusion Index and made a public commitment to reach an inclusion index score of 80% or above, with public disclosure of employee representation numbers on the website.

**Fernando Little**

Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer
ATRIUM HEALTH

Fernando Little, Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer for Atrium Health, has Fortune 50, 100, and 500 human resources experience as an analyst, consultant, generalist, manager, and executive. He also has multi-industry experience in financial services, health care, global manufacturing, consumer goods distribution, and retail.

Little is a facilitator of diversity and inclusion program strategy and execution as well as a subject matter expert in human resources policies and procedures, talent acquisition, base salary administration, incentive program design, total rewards strategy, executive compensation, benefits administration, wellness program design, health plan cost-containment, and variable compensation administration (including stock plan services). In addition, he is also a proven strategist in team building, employee engagement, and succession planning along with being well-versed in employment and labor law.

**Flora Lu**

Provost, John R. Lewis College and College Nine, Professor of Environmental Studies

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

Born in Taiwan to parents who fled the Chinese Communist Revolution, UC Santa Cruz professor Flora Lu has spent her career building a better and more just world. She immigrated to the U.S. at age three with her father, a mechanical engineer, and mother, a biochemist. She received her A.B. in Human Biology with honors from Stanford University in 1993 and Ph.D. in Ecology from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1999. She is a professor of environmental studies and provost of Colleges Nine and the newly named John R. Lewis College (formerly College 10) at UC Santa Cruz.

As the provost of John R. Lewis College, Lu is committed to teaching students methods to advance social justice and build community — the theme of the college. Her impact on these programs is profound and transformative to the student experience at UC Santa Cruz.

**Adrienne Luce**

Executive Director, HMC Designing Futures Foundation
HMC ARCHITECTS

As appointed director of the Designing Futures Foundation, Adrienne Luce reorganized the core framework of the foundation to focus its support of education, architecture and design; sustainability and resilience; and livable communities. In addition, she created and launched social innovation teams in each of the HMC's architectural offices throughout California.

The jolt to our community sensibilities in 2020 amidst national social-political divisiveness, the public witnessing of the death of George Floyd, the rise in the voices of Black Lives Matter, the reflections of the historical and ongoing inequities of fairness and opportunities in neighborhoods of color and the worldwide oppression of a pandemic mandated that the DFF rethink, evaluate and principally evolve from the ground on which it stands. As director of the DFF, Luce orchestrated and initiated a social justice and racial equity framework to inspire change.

VISIONARIES



Kim Jenkins Manigault

Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion
PAYPAL

Kim Jenkins Manigault is the Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion at PayPal. She previously served as Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer for KeyBank. In this role, Manigault was responsible for championing a diverse workforce and leading the long-term planning and execution of related initiatives across the organization. Before stepping into the chief diversity & inclusion officer role, she served as Chief Financial Officer for KeyBank's Technology and Operations organization.

Manigault has deep experience in the financial services industry, serving in roles for Bank of America, Deutsche Bank and J.P. Morgan. She is an active member of the Board of Directors of the Greater Cleveland YMCA, serving as the Board Treasurer and Chairperson of the Finance Committee. In addition, she is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Urban League of Greater Cleveland, serving as Co-Chair of the Audit Committee.



Mark Maslah

Financial Advisor
NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL

As a member of the LGBTQ+ community himself, Mark Maslah helped to establish the district-level LGBTQ+ and Ally Council as a means to create an inclusive space for LGBTQ+ individuals at Northwestern Mutual. The council helps fellow financial advisors better serve clients in the LGBTQ+ community. Under his leadership, council members provide company leaders and allies with valuable educational opportunities and resources from which to learn about, volunteer with or host fundraisers for LGBTQ+ community organizations or events.

The council has grown to over 65 members across five local offices and 180+ employees, attracting members representing all segments of the LGBTQ+ community. On a corporate level, they have taken great strides in growing an out and proud network across the organization's 15,000+ employees, pushing for cultural awareness, understanding, education and support that has grown exponentially when compared to only a couple of years ago.



Chip Matthews

CEO & Co-Founder
HOLA RECUPERATIVE CARE

Chip Matthews was raised and lived in an environment where he was often times the only African American in his class, office, or social setting. He lives each day understanding how important it is for people to feel included. Because of this he strives to create an environment where differences are celebrated and recognized as a vital part of making life better for all.

Matthews has made sure HOLA hires and promotes based upon ability. He has created an environment where managers and directors are encouraged to look at an applicant's problem solving skills, determination, and desire to grow, rather than just formal education or past work history. This has opened the door for single mothers, members of the LGBTQ+ community, racial and ethnic minorities, recovering addicts, and even people experiencing homelessness. He also empowers the program director to take risks on people who may not look good on paper.



Eugene "Mitch" Mitchell

Senior Vice President, Diversity and Community Partnerships
SEMPRA

Eugene "Mitch" Mitchell is the Senior Vice President of Diversity and Community Partnerships for Semptra. In this role, he works to create positive and sustainable change and further the company's high-performance culture by leading a collective effort to advance diverse perspectives and promote inclusive environments within Semptra, its operating companies and the communities it serves.

Mitchell joined Semptra in 2005 and has nearly 30 years of public policy and government affairs experience, with 15 of those years in the energy industry. He serves on the boards of the San Diego Housing Commissioner, Lucky Duck Foundation, Sharp Hospital Board of Trustees, Voice of San Diego, San Diego Museum of Art, Children's Hospital of Los Angeles Foundation, and San Diego Opera Board of Directors.



Debbie Pattillo

Principal
DP CONSULTING GROUP LLC

Debbie Pattillo has committed her professional career spanning over 35 years to bridging community leaders, business influencers and key organizations to each other to create impact. Armed with keen people skills and a plethora of critical relationships, she is one of the most effective and sought-after marketing executives in the region. She has a unique ability to connect influential civic and community leaders to develop and maintain key relationships that strategically build valuable partnerships.

Over the course of her career, Pattillo designed and led inspiring community and social impact campaigns while simultaneously driving prominent exposure for American Airlines throughout Los Angeles and the United States. She has worked extensively with institutions such as the National Urban League, United Negro College Fund, U.S. Japan Council, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and many more.



Gary L. Polk

CEO & Co-Founder
POLK INSTITUTE

In March 2020, everything seemed to change for the worse with the novel coronavirus pandemic. This global pandemic has impacted literally everyone in the world at the same time. Regardless of nationality, age, socio-economic class or religion, COVID-19 has been a challenge. Despite that or perhaps because of it, Gary Polk decided to create the Polk Institute Foundation (Pi), a 501(c)(3) in July 2020.

Polk Institute's mission is "serving underrepresented social entrepreneurs to make the world a better place! Its goal is to expose social entrepreneurship as a viable career option and method to find financial freedom to its targeted trainees – especially members of underrepresented minorities (Black and brown people) who probably did not grow up in households where business ownership was considered a viable career option." It launched the first cohort of trainees at the Institute earlier this year.

VISIONARIES

**Andrew Raines**

Partner and Founder
RAINES FELDMAN

As one of the first openly LGBT+ founders of a major Los Angeles law firm, Andrew Raines has been a pioneer for decades in demonstrating that every person has the right to lead an authentic life and seek self-actualization in their chosen career. By leaning into creating an environment where everyone is welcome to live their truth, he has helped to create an environment of community and inclusivity. The success of the firm lies in its founding mission that every voice matters and the more honest, unique and authentic, the better.

Raines has helped launch DEI Committees and developed a speakers program that features diverse members of the firm who share their unique perspectives and challenges in living their lives. This has promoted greater insight and understanding among all members of the RF community, which translates into a more inclusive environment and a feeling of belonging.

**Niona Rich**

Senior Recruiting Director
VACO

Niona Rich is a Senior Recruiting and Client Services Director at Vaco, providing consulting, project resources, executive search, direct hire and strategic staffing, with expertise in technology, finance, accounting, and operations.

As an organization, Vaco has always been committed to diversity and inclusion, but with current events it became clear that the need has never been greater for a renewed focus and increased emphasis on how Vaco could move forward together as a company to be even better and lead change. To that end, Rich was appointed in 2020 to drive Vaco's efforts in creating Vaco's Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (IDEC) Cabinet and Council. Under her leadership, Vaco expanded current programs and developed both formal and informal initiatives to address and improve diversity. The company brings a broad range of perspectives from people with different backgrounds, including gender, race, ethnicity, orientation, culture and economic experiences, for continued growth.

**Reginald Roberts, Jr.**

Co-Managing Partner
SANDERS ROBERTS LLP

In 2008, Sanders Roberts was founded by two talented trial attorneys, Justin Sanders and Reginald Roberts, Jr. Both Sanders and Roberts came from big law and hoped to operate a boutique law firm that could compete with other major firms. However, they wanted a firm where talented individuals could reach their full potential while maintaining a work-life balance. They wanted employees to experience working at a firm that services major companies without the office politics that come with big law.

Today, the firm is comprised of about 46 employees, with 69% of them from a minority or ethnic group, five out of the six partners come from a minority background, and 34% of the employees are women. The firm continuously fosters an open door and team environment where employees are not only happy but motivated to provide the best services to clients.

**Robert K. Ross, MD**

President & CEO
THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT

Robert K. Ross, M.D. is President and Chief Executive Officer of The California Endowment. Since being appointed in 2000, Dr. Ross has taken the organization to new heights to carry out its mission to expand access to affordable, quality healthcare for underserved individuals and communities in California.

Dr. Ross' recent efforts have helped bring a spotlight to the health and wellness of young men of color. A leader at the local, regional and national levels, Dr. Ross has strengthened the health ecosystems of Los Angeles and beyond. He is dedicated to provide services to support the health and wellbeing of underserved and minority communities through his work and launched a 10-year statewide commitment investing \$1 billion to advance policies and forge partnerships to build healthy communities, with a focus on underserved communities. He also serves on numerous boards that promote health and diversity on regional and national levels.

**Lisa Sanchez**

Vice President of Human Resources
ARTCENTER COLLEGE OF DESIGN

Lisa M. Sanchez is the vice president of human resources at the ArtCenter College of Design, a certified executive coach and author. She is also an executive board member of PIHRA Pasadena, the largest professional human resources organization in Southern California. In her role, she takes a collaborative approach to diversity, equity, inclusion, access and belonging. She partners with the vice president and chief diversity officer, Dr. Aaron Bruce, on programming.

Sanchez's goal is to lead a cultural shift as a critical component of all DEI efforts. Plus, she facilitates learning programs to the campus community about the connection between culture and DEI. She and her team have developed a 40-point diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility program. In 2019, under Sanchez's stewardship, the human resources department revised its recruitment guidelines to ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion are an integral part of the process.

**Justin Sanders**

Co-Managing Partner
SANDERS ROBERTS LLP

In 2008, trial attorney Justin Sanders co-founded Sanders Roberts LLP with Reginald Roberts, Jr. In addition to providing competitive market rates, bonuses, and other benefits, including paid time off and 401K for all employees, Sanders Roberts have implemented policies and procedures to foster a work-life balance and ensure diversity and inclusion. For example, Sanders Roberts has encouraged employees to work remotely both before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, a majority of the law firm is working remotely, either full-time or part-time, and are free to do so even after restrictions are lifted.

Several Sanders Roberts attorneys are members of the Women's Law Association Los Angeles and the firm has sponsored events for the association, including an event that discussed strategies for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. The firm is working towards building a Women's and Diversity & Inclusion program.

VISIONARIES



Jennifer Sawday

Partner
TLD LAW

Jennifer Sawday's contributions and enthusiastic service to her profession as an attorney and law firm leader are demonstrated in her commitment to client service and education, selfless volunteer effort, and team attitude for everything she does. She has served the legal community since 2003, covering much of the Los Angeles area. As a very active member of numerous community-based and legal organizations, she has served attorneys young and old, members of the public, and members of her firm.

Sawday, who is disabled (not always apparent), has faced many challenges as a result of her disability. Often potential clients choose to not work with her when they learn this information. However, this has driven her to work even harder and become an avid, knowledgeable supporter of others managing disabilities. She is always ready with a recommendation, accommodation, solution to every challenge faced.



Lara Schmoisman

CEO and Founder of The Darl
THE DARL

Lara Schmoisman was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina where she spent much of her time listening to the radio and watching TV. At just 14 years old, she started working at a radio station learning the ropes. From there, she went to school to earn a certificate in screenwriting and a B.A. in radio and TV production. Suddenly, life and circumstances took her to the United States to learn English.

Schmoisman worked in radio, TV, film distribution, digital, marketing and advertising before ultimately starting The Darl. She has made an impact in the content marketing space by providing accessible bilingual marketing resources and learning platforms to otherwise underserved Latinx communities. Her ultimate mission is to close the gap and make marketing accessible by educating the Latinx community on how to thrive and stand out in the American market.



Khalil Smith

Vice President of Inclusion, Diversity, and Engagement
AKAMAI

Khalil Smith is the Vice President of Inclusion, Diversity, and Engagement at Akamai. Before joining, Smith worked with the NeuroLeadership Institute, a cognitive science consultancy, during which time he oversaw consulting, practices, and research. Prior to that, he spent over 14 years in senior leadership roles with Apple Inc., including time leading teams in retail training and global teams of over 40 learning professionals focused on expanding and strengthening the Apple culture across hundreds of retail stores in dozens of countries and languages. Smith and his team were responsible for critical training elements for Apple, such as employee onboarding, technical skills, and product launches.

Smith holds an M.B.A. with dual concentrations in Leadership and Strategy from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

(Continued from page 18)

increased accountability and visibility on this topic.

While actively supporting the dialogue around D&I plan development and board engagement, the coalition announced the extension of key initiatives to help signatories remain focused on executing the pledge's original commitments. Launched in 2018, CEO Action's Check Your Blind Spots Unconscious Bias Tour and Day of Understanding have reached more than four million people, advancing complex conversations about D&I issues and raising awareness of blind spots. Based on feedback from signatories and their employees nationwide, CEO Action is announcing the extension of the Day of Understanding Initiative.

First held on December 7, 2018 with engagement from 150+ signatories and more than 615,000 employees, the Day of Understanding returned in 2020 and 2021 with signatories hosting employee dialogues anytime during or around the month of February each year, and annually moving forward. A coalition-wide initiative, the Day of Understanding directly reinforces CEO Action's goal of advancing difficult conversations in the workplace. A first for many organizations, signatories cited the first Day of Understanding as an opportunity to build trust between employees, and as a conversation starter

that led to enhancements around recruitment and retention programs.

"The Day of Understanding created a safe space to talk about topics usually avoided at work and was an authentic and powerful experience that left many of our people feeling inspired," said Clorox Chair and CEO Benno Dorer. "I'm glad to see this become an annual event because there's a pull for more of these discussions at a human level. When we have these difficult conversations, it helps people get out of their comfort zones to experience personal growth."

While the Day of Understanding in April is an opportunity to facilitate collective dialogue across the coalition, CEO Action encourages all leaders to engage in these conversations in their workplaces regularly throughout the year. This ongoing commitment allows them to continue to learn about and understand the experiences of their employees, providing critical insights that can help support positive change across organizations.

"Candid conversations lay the foundation for change and help galvanize our efforts to build cultures of belonging in our workplaces and society," said Shannon Schuyler, Chief Purpose and Inclusion Officer at PwC U.S. "This tough dialogue is less about

talking and more about active listening. It requires vulnerability and the courage to give others a forum to share their personal experiences and perspectives. These conversations lead to thoughtful, deliberate behavior changes and actions that are driven by solidarity and embraced through allyship. When that happens, progress is made."

As D&I continues to be a major priority for leaders across industries, CEO Action has experienced steady growth in signatories. Since launching, the coalition has become a unique platform for networking and enablement, realizing measurable change in how signatory organizations are tackling D&I issues.

"CEO Action provides valuable perspective, resources and insights that can help organizations evolve and grow, and a great example is their Check Your Blind Spots Tour, which encouraged our workforce to mitigate unconscious bias," said Susan Stith, Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion, Civic Affairs and the Cigna Foundation. "At Cigna, we are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive culture where employees feel valued and able to do their best work. Helping people recognize and address personal biases will strengthen our ability to work together effectively and inclusively, in support of our mission to transform healthcare for all."

VISIONARIES



Kim Snyder

President and Chief Executive Officer
PANAVISION

As President and CEO of Panavision for more than eight years, Kim Snyder has made it her priority to encourage and integrate women and other underrepresented communities into the motion picture industry. Recently, she has spearheaded Panavision’s key initiatives to educate, empower and uplift women and the BIPOC community. Through partnerships, Panavision provides development opportunities and access to equipment and services, providing members of traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities with the tools necessary to play a fundamental role in the filmmaking world. An example is Panavision’s collaboration with Made In her Image, a non-profit aiming toward social equity for women and non-binary filmmakers of color.



Dr. Maurice Stinnett

Global Head of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
WARNER MUSIC GROUP

Dr. Maurice A. Stinnett is a member of WMG’s senior management team, responsible for worldwide diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, and reporting to the CEO as an executive officer. Before joining WMG, He was the first African American male vice president of diversity and inclusion for an NBA team - the Brooklyn Nets. Upon his departure, the Brooklyn Nets honored him by appointing him their second Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement Ambassador.

Dr. Stinnett brings over 15 years of experience in diversity, inclusion, equity, social justice and multicultural education. He uses his extensive business, management, and planning skills to ensure high-quality diversity, equity and inclusion programs and efficient business practices for all stakeholders and institutions. Dr. Stinnett also has experience as an invited lecturer/workshops facilitator on issues of equity, inclusion and diversity at multiple institutions of higher education, corporations and non-profits.



Riaz Surti

CEO & Founder
HEARTHY FOODS

Riaz Surti hails from a Muslim/South Asian background. Diversity and inclusion, therefore, have been front and center for him as he founded a series of businesses in the food space, including his latest venture of 13 years, Hearthy Foods, based in downtown Los Angeles. The source of inspiration for Hearthy Foods was Surti’s mother, who was unable to enjoy Indian staples like roti because of her diabetes. The result was an innovative flour company – Hearthy Foods — that utilizes fruits and vegetables to make flours as a healthier alternative to everyday baking mixes found in major grocery aisles.

At Hearthy Foods, Surti has further ensured a diverse base when hiring and retaining employees. His employees come from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds – Black, Latino, Arab, Jewish and South Asian. He has created an open and welcoming workplace culture.



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VISIONARIES



Rachel Svoboda

CEO

SUNDAY BRUNCH AGENCY

Rachel Svoboda is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and marketing maven representing companies across Southern California for the past 20 years. She is the chief executive officer of Sunday Brunch Agency, a full-service communications company in Orange County. This advertising and public relations firm works with companies, entrepreneurs, and professionals to achieve the success of their dreams.

Svoboda's mission is to build businesses, products, and create platforms that support and encourage women with clients ranging across industries, from restaurants to technology, real estate, design, non-profits and many more. She hosts a streaming video series called "The Brunch Club," where a glass is raised to champion female talent and leadership everywhere. Svoboda is currently an official MBA mentor at Chapman University and a featured speaker on the university's inaugural Women in Business Association series.



Dynasty Taylor

Founder/President

DYNASTY'S UNITED YOUTH ASSOCIATION

At the age of 24, Dynasty Taylor founded her own non-profit organization during her first year of graduate school at USC called Dynasty's United Youth Association (DUYA). DUYA provides free educational and career services to youth ages 5-18, specifically targeting disenfranchised communities. In the process of forming DUYA, Taylor has established five library locations, partnered with three to four social services agencies, developed a curriculum, served over 800 students, recruited over 80 volunteers, assisted over 20 students with the matriculation process, and launched a Virtual Learning Accelerated program during the pandemic.

In addition to founding DUYA, Taylor is also the co-founder of Mental Health in the Hood. She provides a platform to educate, expand awareness, and allow everyday people to share their stories involving mental health in urban communities. Taylor also serves on the board of the Empowerment Congress South East Neighborhood Council.



Sharon Toji

ADA and Accessible Communications Consultant
ACCESS COMMUNICATIONS

Sharon Toji has been a pioneer in the field of accessible communications in the built environment, most often in the field of signage and wayfinding, as well as providing access for those with hearing impairments and cognitive impairments.

In California, she was part of a special team hired by the State of California to make sure the California standards were compliant with federal standards. Access Communications, Toji's consulting company, partners with the original sign company — H Toji and Company — founded by her husband Hitoshi Toji in 1954 to fabricate and install accessible sign systems. Unlike most other sign companies, instead of just making whatever the client wishes, the Toji Companies attempt to teach about accessibility to their clients and persuade them to choose the most accessible pathway. Most recently, Toji and team have been working on a greatly improved special font for tactile reading.



Hendry Ton

Associate Vice Chancellor for Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
UC DAVIS HEALTH

As the Associate Vice Chancellor for Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Hendry Ton has led the dedicated teams that work to advance DEI at UC Davis Health. Teams work to create a climate of inclusion reflected in the health system's structures, policies, practices, and relationships through transformative education, community partnerships, and collective impact. He has received the UC Davis Chancellor's Achievement Award for Diversity and Community twice, the Dean's Award for Excellence in Community Engagement, and the Dean's Inspirational Faculty Educator Award for his work with students, communities, underrepresented groups, and health equity.

Originally from Vietnam, Ton immigrated to the United States with his family as a refugee. Growing up with experiences of discrimination, food insecurity, and limited access to health care, he appreciates their impact on health and wellness and has made addressing these inequities the center of his life's work.



T. Tara Turk-Haynes

Vice President of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Talent Management
LEAF GROUP

T. Tara Turk-Haynes has long been passionate about the diversity, equity and inclusion space and dedicated herself to encouraging education and awareness. In her role at Leaf Group, Tara is helping usher the company along its ongoing DEI journey, and introduced programs and resources for both one-on-one and group learning, helping the global team expand their awareness of issues affecting underrepresented communities, including Leaf Group's team members, customers, creators and influencers.

Turk-Haynes has led virtual events, fireside chats, panel discussions and more, furthering Leaf Group's knowledge and educational journey. She developed and led the company's DEI Counsel made up of representatives across their portfolio of digital lifestyle media and marketplace brands. She is also widely considered a leader who employees know they can turn to for thoughtful perspectives and advice.



Yessy Ulloa

President
iCore LENDING, INC.

Yessy Ulloa, a woman of vision and inclusion, supports her employees in constant training, creating leadership and empowerment in her team of more than 200 employees, including African Americans, Latinos, Asians and White Americans.

Ulloa is the president of iCore Lending, Inc., an independent, full-service mortgage bank that specializes in purchase loans, refinancing, and innovative lending solutions. Under her stewardship, iCore Lending, Inc. prides itself on a reputation for integrity, honesty and consistency, with team members going above and beyond to get their clients the best loan possible. iCore has helped first-time home buyers as well as investors acquire the perfect funding solution. At iCore, Ulloa has created a movement for minority women through six training and recruitment camps, providing a valuable opportunity for these women, who are mostly single mothers and now have a profession in the lending industry.

VISIONARIES

**Traci Wade**

Senior Director of Diversity & Inclusion
ORACLE

As Senior Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Traci Wade leads global programs that build awareness of the business impact and value of a diverse and inclusive culture at Oracle. She engages with senior leadership in creating and supporting strategies that infuse and elevate a culture of diversity, inclusion, and equity into the workplace. Her team actively leads and supports Oracle's Employee Resource Groups to help build companywide communities, develop future leaders, encourage partnerships, and retain talent.

Wade played a key role in establishing the company's first D&I strategy and team more than a decade ago and has been providing leadership and guidance ever since. She is regarded as a strategic and inclusive thought leader and expert on the subject, and has received recognition and numerous awards from a wide variety of publications and organizations for her commitment and success in leading D&I corporate efforts and outreach.

**Celeste Warren**

Vice President of Global Diversity and Inclusion COE
MERCK

As the leader for Merck's Global Diversity and Inclusion Center of Excellence, Celeste Warren is responsible for working with Merck's global leaders to advance and embed diversity and inclusion throughout the organization to enhance the employee experience and maximize business performance. She joined Merck in 1997 and held numerous positions of increasing responsibility within the organization.

Warren serves on the boards of RWJBarnabas Health Systems, "All In Together" and Merck's Political Action Committee. She is also a member of CNBC's Workforce Executive Council and World 50's Inclusion and Diversity Impact Community. Her articles on diversity, equity and inclusion have been featured in numerous national and global publications and she has had the opportunity to speak at various events across the world. Warren attended the University of Kentucky where she earned her B.S. degree and received her master's degree from Carnegie Mellon University.

**Bud Weisbart**

Co-Owner and Vice President
**A&R TARPULINS INC.,
DBA AR TECH AND AR INDUSTRIES**

Bud Weisbart is the co-owner and vice president of A&R Tarpaulins, Inc., DBA AR Industries and AR Tech. A&R is a small business located in Fontana that manufactures custom engineered products that are completely or primarily made of fabric.

The company is now minority women-owned by Carmen Weisbart, who is Filipina, and has a diversified population of 35 employees. Non-supervisory staff have been with the company for an average of 12 years. A&R's ethnic diversity composes of Salvadorian, Mexican, Japanese, Colombian, Ecuadorian, Filipina and Indonesian. The staff at A&R is like a family, which is a culture the Weisbarts created. No one has been denied an opportunity with A&R. The staff receives great mentorship and taught skills such as sewing, installing and welding from experienced supervisory staff who have been in the company for an average of 35 years.

By putting lives first, we've created a legacy that lasts

For over 130 years, we have tackled some of the world's biggest health challenges and provided hope in the fight against disease. At Merck, our mission to save and improve lives expands beyond inventing medicines and vaccines. We value diversity and inclusion in all its manifestations and strive to reduce disparities and advance racial, health, social and economic equity for our people, patients and communities

Today, we continue in pursuit of medical breakthroughs that benefit patients and society for today, tomorrow and generations to come.



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SETTING THE STANDARD FOR IMPLEMENTING DEI&A INITIATIVES

The companies here recognize the need for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility initiatives not merely as a necessity but as an advantage in today's evolving business climate.

CSUN

CALIFORNIA
STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTHRIE

GHJ&

 **Greenberg
Glusker**

 **HUB**

**Lathrop
GPM** 

LOUIS PERRY
SECURITY EXPERT
Kadima Security


**MILLER
KAPLAN**

SCHOOLS**FIRST** 
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

STREETLIGHTS
creating ethnic diversity behind-the-camera since 1992

 **WEDBUSH**