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WINNING COMPANY CULTURE

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VETERANS IN THE WORKPLACE

GET READY—
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INCLUSION

*Creating Globally
Inclusive &
Culturally
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Workplaces*

WINTER 2020
+ ISSUE 5

Leading the
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– Carlos Cubia, VP and Global Chief Diversity Officer

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Creating Globally
Inclusive & Culturally
Competent Workplaces

Issue 5 + Winter 2020



INCLUSION

sat down with some of the country's most innovative D&I thought leaders to find out what was on their mind.

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INCLUSION INSIDER

Dear CEOs: Training Is Not the Fix

Cultural Transformation Is

BY DR. SHIRLEY DAVIS

As a 30-year HR veteran, a former global chief diversity and inclusion officer for several major organizations, and a workforce management consultant, I speak from experience when I say that training—whether on diversity and inclusion,



Culture transformation takes time, effort, energy, and commitment.

implicit bias, leadership effectiveness, or any other related topic—is not the cure for responding to poor decisions made by management, or to public outrage when revelations of bad behavior go viral and threaten your company brand.

We saw this happen when Starbucks closed 8,000

stores to hold mandatory training for its entire workforce to address racial bias issues that occurred in one of its stores by a frontline supervisor. While the move was bold and drastic, I worry about what happened after the training concluded, employees went back to work, and the public applauded the company's show of commitment to training. The truth is, a few hours won't result in behavior, attitude, or mind-set shifts. If the

necessary systems are not in place to drive sustainable change, this huge investment of time, money, and resources will be deemed a futile exercise. The reality is that training is not the fix—organizations must begin with culture transformation.

Here are 12 actions and strategies that need to happen in order to transform a culture.

1. Start with a culture audit among all of your stakeholders—inside and outside your organization—to identify any current issues, challenges, and strengths as well as opportunities.
2. Establish core values to be more inclusive, flexible, and respectful of different ways of working, thinking, and believing.
3. Update your policies, procedures, and strategic plan to reflect how you will serve the changing demographics in your talent pool, customer segments, and communities.
4. Communicate your values up, down, and across the organization as often as possible.
5. Change the people who don't want to change.
6. Let go of archaic belief systems that breed power structures through homogeneity, conformity, and hierarchy.
7. Integrate inclusive behaviors into all organizational processes and practices.
8. Offer learning and development resources that reinforce your mission, vision, and values.
9. Lead by example and live your values.
10. Practice sound decision-making and problem-solving.

11. Institute accountability systems that reward inclusive behaviors.
12. Sustain the culture by operationalizing the above strategies through continuous innovation and transformation.

It may sound like a lot to do, but culture transformation takes time, effort, energy, and commitment. To be fair to Starbucks, the steps taken by the company after the news cycle passed have not been widely publicized, but many companies do training, check the box, and never focus on transforming their culture.

My advice is not to use training as a quick fix and hope that problems will go away with the changing news cycle. Don't wait for a disastrous PR nightmare, the threat of a lawsuit, the request for your resignation, or, even worse, the loss of someone's life because your culture does not reflect inclusiveness, guarantee a respectful, safe workplace, or provide a sense of belonging where all talent feels welcome and can thrive. **IN**

Dr. Shirley Davis is a highly sought-after global authority on workforce 2030, leadership excellence, and culture transformation, providing strategies and solutions for achieving more inclusive, inspiring, and winning workplace cultures.

Frontlines written by TAMARA E. HOLMES

THE DEEP DIVE Gen Z Is Coming

Here's What You Need to Know

After years of focusing on how to keep millennials happy in the workplace, recruiters have a new mission: understanding how best to work with and maximize the value of generation Z.

In a white paper titled *From Baby Boomers to Generation Z: How to Manage Across Generations*, information and solutions provider XpertHR points out that with members of gen Z now beginning to enter the workforce, five generations—gen Z, millennials, gen X, baby boomers, and traditionalists—will be working collaboratively in the workforce for the first time.

Born in 1997 or later, generation Z is the most diverse generation yet. Here's what recruiters and managers can expect.

Gen Z is digital minded.

"Even more so than millennials, generation Z is digitally connected," says Robert S. Teachout, a legal editor at XpertHR. Not only have they never known a world without computers or the Internet, but "the oldest generation Z workers were only 10 years old when the iPhone came out, so they grew up with smartphones," he says. Expect them to use that technology to achieve their goals in the workplace. They are also interested in the power



technology gives them to work remotely. "Across the board, you're going to see a greater demand for workplace flexibility," Teachout says. Gen Zers have grown up with social media and texting, so they are accustomed to never being entirely off the grid.

They crave a human touch. Despite their comfort with technology, members of gen Z still value face-to-face communication, particularly for important conversations, XpertHR found. A 2018 report by recruiting company

RippleMatch titled *Gen Z in the Workplace* echoes that sentiment. It found that gen Zers prefer a collaborative workspace where they can interact with their peers.

They are globally minded.

Borders don't matter to generation Z. "They're conscious of the world around them and their impact on it," Teachout says. That means many gen Z workers will look beyond an employer's bottom line to see how they are making a difference in the world at large. However, social

impact is more important to some segments of generation Z than others, according to the RippleMatch study. It is a higher priority among LGBTQ+ gen Zers and people of color and less important to white males.

Success is a motivator.

Members of generation Z place a high value on experience and learning opportunities, so they'll be looking for employers who can offer that, Teachout says. Also, generation Z is more focused on personal achievements, both educational and professional, than those who came before them, according to a study by research company Barna and faith leadership organization Impact 360 Institute. And there are early signs that they may become the most educated generation yet, according to the Pew Research Center. Along those lines, they want to know if they're doing a good job. "Generation Z wants and expects frequent feedback and clear communication," Teachout says.

Trends and generalities can help HR professionals prepare to welcome generation Z into the workforce, but every employee brings his or her unique strengths. So Teachout advises, "Manage the person, not the stereotype."



DATA ENTRY

Inclusion Is in the Eye of the Beholder

The best people to gauge whether initiatives designed to promote inclusion are working are the targets of those initiatives: diverse employees. To that end, Boston Consulting Group surveyed approximately 16,500 people for a 2019 study, “Fixing the Flawed Approach to Diversity,” to rank which measures proved most effective.

The study focused on three groups: women, employees of color, and LGBTQ+ employees. It found that inclusion means different things to different groups, and effective programs must take those

differing viewpoints into consideration.

When given 31 diversity and inclusion initiatives and asked to rank their top 15, all three groups ranked antidiscrimination policies as the most effective company intervention. However, women ranked flexibility programs as the second-most effective intervention, while people of color ranked such programs 11th and LGBTQ+ employees ranked them 13th. People of color valued the opportunity to make their voices heard through employee surveys, ranking surveys fourth, while women and LGBTQ+ employees ranked them

ninth and eighth, respectively. Employees of color ranked formal sponsorship programs 14th, while neither women nor LGBTQ+ employees ranked such programs in their top 15.

If you’re looking for ways to make diverse employees happy, here are the top four initiatives by group.

LGBTQ+ employees

- ▶ Create antidiscrimination policies.
- ▶ Advocate for company participation in external events like Pride activities.
- ▶ Offer appropriate health-care coverage, such as a transgender-inclusive plan and equivalent partner or spousal benefits.

- ▶ Provide formal cultural competency training.

Employees of color

- ▶ Create antidiscrimination policies.
- ▶ Provide formal cultural competency training.
- ▶ Use blind-screening techniques.
- ▶ Issue employee surveys.

Women

- ▶ Create antidiscrimination policies.
- ▶ Set up flexible work programs.
- ▶ Offer parental leave, including for adoption.
- ▶ Provide formal cultural competency training.



Let's Look Inward to Lead Inclusively

Inclusive leadership has a direct impact on employees' experience of being valued and feeling authentic, trusted, and psychologically safe at work, as found in Catalyst's research study, "Getting Real About Inclusive Leadership—Why Change Starts With You."

In this study of 2,164 employees across the globe, Catalyst tested a model of inclusive leadership—Leading Outward, Leading Inward—which is a call to action to take a hard look at how we lead and who we are in order to drive inclusion. More than 45 percent of employee experiences of inclusion can be explained by managers' ability to lead inclusively.

The report defines inclusive leadership:

- ▶ Leading outward is what you do to ensure team members are treated fairly and are able to flourish. Core behaviors: accountability, ownership, and allyship.
- ▶ Leading inward requires taking a hard look at who you are and your inner ability to act courageously, learn, and self-reflect. Core behaviors: curiosity, courage, and humility.

When employees experience inclusion at work, organizations benefit from enhanced team problem-solving and employee innovation. Yet women report significantly lower scores than men on two aspects of inclusion: ability to be trusted as influencers in decision-making and feeling psychologically safe enough to take risks.

"Getting Real About Inclusive Leadership—Why Change Starts With You," is available at catalyst.org. — Dnika J. Travis, PhD



Clip and Save

JANUARY ▶ National Mentoring Month

FEBRUARY ▶ Black History Month

MARCH ▶ Women's History Month

APRIL ▶ Autism Acceptance Month

MAY ▶ Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

JUNE ▶ Caribbean American Heritage Month

JULY ▶ National Ice Cream Month

AUGUST ▶ Women's Equality Day (August 26), commemorating the granting of voting rights to women in 1920

SEPTEMBER ▶ National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 – October 15)

OCTOBER ▶ LGBT History Month

NOVEMBER ▶ Native American Heritage Month

DECEMBER ▶ International Human Rights Day (December 10)

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Five Ways AI Will Change D&I

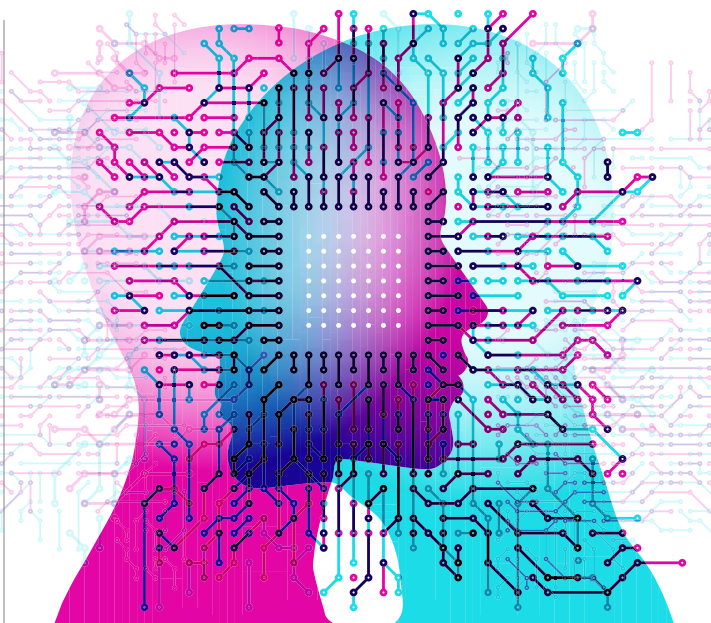
What was once the stuff of science fiction is now par for the course in the nation's workplaces. Artificial intelligence (AI)—the use of computer algorithms to make decisions that would otherwise be made by humans—is transforming field after field, and diversity and inclusion are no exception.

Since machines don't have the prejudices and judgments that people have, these systems are sold on the premise that they will eliminate bias. Because bias is often conflated with diversity and inclusion, these tools may be perceived as a solution to broad organizational issues related to diversity.

Here are five ways you can expect AI to change D&I.

► It will help root out unconscious bias.

Unconscious bias refers to automatic judgments made for or against someone or something without valid evidence to back them up. Since such judgments happen on an unconscious level, they can be hard to detect with the logical mind. However, AI doesn't have human limitations. AI systems can be programmed to identify unconscious bias in workplace communications. For example, FairFrame, a technology platform



created by the New York-based company of the same name, flags unconscious bias in job descriptions so the language can be removed before it turns off potential applicants.

► It will help facilitate blind hiring.

Diversity can be undermined during the recruiting process if the recruiter has biased perceptions about certain groups and prevents a great applicant from getting a fair shake at a job. AI programs can analyze and narrow down a list of potential candidates and strip personal information from an applicant's résumé, such as name, schools, and other identifying information, until the applicant is further along the interview process.

► It will expand the recruitment pool.

A human can only see so many potential candidates. However, systems powered by AI aren't limited by time and can reach candidates remotely through video and chat, giving companies the ability to expand their pipeline to more diverse groups.

► It will require new systems of evaluation.

AI systems are only as effective as the humans who create them. In other words, the creator's bias can be built into the system. In 2018, MIT Media Lab researcher Joy Buolamwini conducted a study called *Gender Shades* that found that some AI systems designed to identify gender through facial recognition had an error rate that was higher when used on

darker-skin females than on lighter-skinned males. Along the same lines, a 2019 study, called *Discriminating Systems: Gender, Race and Power in AI*, by New York University's AI Now Institute, claims "a diversity crisis in the AI sector across gender and race."

Because of the possibility of undesired bias, Buolamwini recommends that companies have an external evaluation system that will make sure any AI systems are doing what they are designed to do.

► It will change the needed skill set for the D&I professional.

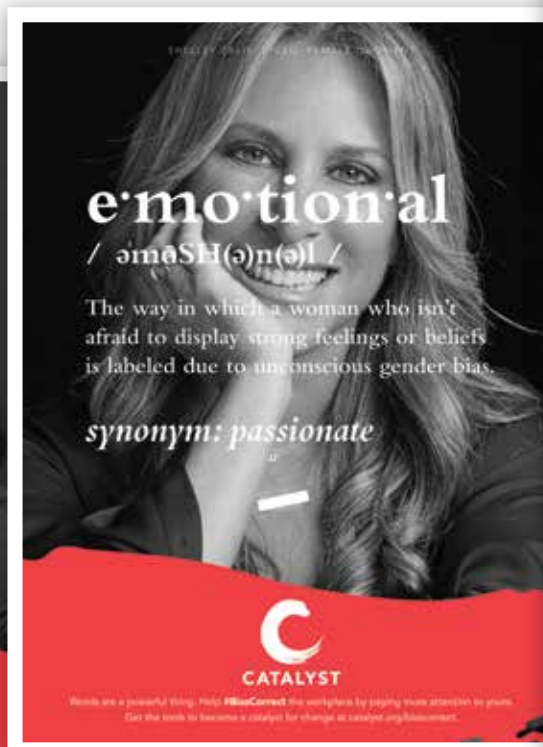
D&I professionals will have to know how to work with AI systems and whether an AI-powered process meets the organization's needs or brings in unintentional risk. This will require a better understanding of technology and other skills as AI evolves, says Terri Horton, EdD, MBA, MA, a workforce futurist, corporate trainer, and speaker in greater Los Angeles. The time to prepare is now. "Organizations in the U.S. will significantly increase the implementation of AI systems across the enterprise between 2020 and 2025," she says. "Therefore, jobs will be reimagined to deliver a higher level of value to organizations."

#BiasCorrect

Global nonprofit Catalyst's workplace research shows unconscious gender bias fuels the gender gap because it's so ingrained in society even the most progressive among us is guilty of perpetuating it. To remove this barrier, people have to learn how to spot their own biases, so Catalyst created the #BiasCorrect Plug-In (like spell-check but for gender bias) to speed up the process.

To promote this equality tool, Catalyst partnered with 60 thought leaders in a campaign that highlights the power of words. Each woman was featured with a bias they've been labeled with throughout their careers. The campaign redefines these words to showcase that at their core they describe the same behavior as their synonyms—words used to champion men in the workplace.

Visit catalyst.org/biascorrect



“Women and men with the same talents and skills are often described in very different ways due to unconscious gender bias, creating invisible barriers that can have an enormous impact on women’s advancement.”

— Lorraine Hariton, President and CEO of Catalyst

boss·y

/ 'bôse, bāse /

The way in which a woman who excels at taking charge of a situation or project is labeled due to unconscious gender bias.

synonym: a boss



CATALYST

qui·et

/ 'kwīət /

The way in which a woman who prefers to take time to consider all angles before voicing an opinion is labeled due to unconscious gender bias.

synonym: thoughtful



CATALYST

push·y

/ 'pōōSHē /

The way in which a woman who is skilled at using reasoning to persuade someone to do or believe something is described due to unconscious gender bias.

synonym: persuasive



CATALYST

bitch

/ biCH /

The way in which a woman who confidently voices her opinion in the workplace is commonly described due to unconscious gender bias.

synonym: leader



CATALYST

dra·matic

/ drə'madik /

The way in which a woman who is protective of a particular undertaking that she has devoted her time, effort and energy to is often described due to unconscious gender bias.

synonym: passionate



CATALYST

cold

/ kōld /

The way in which a woman who is concentrating on a particular goal and not wasting time or energy on other things is described due to unconscious gender bias.

synonym: focused



CATALYST



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INCLUSION INSIGHTS

D&I Practioners: Engage Your Leaders

BY REGINA HUBER

In 2018, in a quest to gain insights into the most pressing challenges of today's diversity and inclusion teams, Transform Your Performance interviewed 11 D&I leaders at top companies in the financial and legal industries, who shared their



Metrics are key to gain not only initial buy-in and to get dollars approved, but to ensure consistent accountability.

expertise on the implementation of large-scale D&I initiatives. They revealed some of their most successful strategies to gain greater buy-in at all levels, while speaking candidly about both systemic and industry- and organization-specific challenges. We compiled the most important findings from

our interviews in our white paper *Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives Thrive with Maximum Leadership Support*.

When asked about the driving forces for successful D&I initiatives, many D&I leaders mentioned a holistic approach, budget prioritization, and leadership support.

Among the best practices cited for attaining leadership buy-in were

actively involving leaders, socializing initiatives, taking a business approach (reminding leaders of indisputable evidence in favor of substantial D&I efforts), and then moving beyond the business case with effective communication strategies and D&I operationalization. More talent development was also high on the list, especially coaching. As one interviewee put it, "I think coaching is powerful. If I had unlimited budget, I'd put more money into that."

When leaders discussed the cost of D&I budget constraints, top of the list were disengagement and loss of talent as well as the resulting replacement cost, followed by stunted growth—not only for diversity and inclusion efforts but also for innovation and the bottom line—which affect sustainability in the long term. Bigger budgets, on the other hand, allow larger D&I teams to implement more substantial and coherent programs and increase the impact for all stakeholders.

Metrics are key not only to gaining initial buy-in and to getting dollars approved but to ensuring consistent accountability in daily business. Having compelling and well-packaged data at hand is critical, whether it's to dispel myths, flag and correct inequities, measure success, or change course when necessary. Strategic, data-driven approaches go a long way when it comes to making a case for a comprehensive initiative, especially when using state-of-the-art platforms that deliver real-time output.

Accountability at all leadership levels is also driven by what managers are reviewed and compensated for.

The numbers suggest that including D&I goals in performance reviews is more than just the right thing to do. It can positively impact other business goals when we put enough weight on building trust; creating a welcoming, inclusive culture; and encouraging people to bring their best selves to work and contribute their creative ideas. This means that business and D&I-focused people goals are not only compatible but also aligned. Explaining this correlation, adding relevant parameters to review forms, and setting clear priorities could help raise accountability.

We are far from where we want to be. This will not stop us! We will persist, and with our combined brilliance, we can come up with cutting-edge approaches. As one participant said, "When we're out of a job, we'll know we have succeeded." Until then, let's join forces and learn from one another to break down more barriers, co-create more substantial positive change, and move the needle faster. **IN**

Regina Huber is the founder and CEO of Transform Your Performance. She helps companies leverage their diverse talent and transform their D&I strategy by humanizing the workplace.

How to Create a Winning Company Culture **for Everyone**

The key to a successful workplace culture shifts the focus from diversity to inclusion

This past June, cosmetics giant Sephora became the second major US company to close all its stores, during business hours, to provide its 16,000 employees across the country with bias and

**BY
CAROLYN
M. BROWN**

inclusion training for one hour. Last year, Starbucks was the first retail company to forgo sales during regular business hours to provide bias training for some 175,000 employees in its US stores and corporate offices. A Sephora press statement described the purpose of its training as “what it

means to belong, across many different lenses that include, but are not limited to, gender identity, race and ethnicity, age, abilities.”

About \$8 billion is spent on such diversity training per year, according to McKinsey & Company. While unconscious bias awareness training has become increasingly common, it hasn’t been shown to be that impactful in moving the diversity and inclusion needle. Unconscious bias training can raise awareness, but there is little evidence that it changes behavior, and some evidence shows that it can backfire, reports the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Just the

same, as the Starbucks and Sephora racial profiling incidents heightened bias awareness, the #MeToo scandals have companies reexamining issues involving women in the workplace, such as sexual harassment and inequities in pay and promotions. Likewise, the Equal Opportunity Commission Select Task Force on the Study of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace found sexual harassment and misconduct trainings to be ineffective in prevention because companies were not incorporating such trainings as part of a holistic culture of nonharassment that starts at the top.



Experts say that racial bias or misconduct trainings along with diversity and inclusion practices are not going to work unless a company first transforms the culture. "Our perspective is to drive change," says Pooja Jain-Link, executive vice president of the Center for Talent Innovation (CTI). "We really have to change the system, not the individual. There's only a limited impact that individuals can have in these trainings. They make people aware: 'Oh yes, we all have bias.' That's great to know, but it's not helping guide them in a more holistic manner about how to change the way they act." A CTI study called "Disrupt Bias, Drive

Value," she notes, revealed that bias awareness trainings don't show if people are acting on biases, if those actions change after the training, and how training impacts behavior.

Driving Company Culture and Inclusion From The Top Down

Company culture, an all-encompassing term or concept, covers employee experience, attitudes, opinion, leadership behaviors, and business models. "It's broad, but it underpins how employees are experiencing the organization that they're a part of," says Jain-Link. "What we're seeing is that leaders may think they know the culture, but if they've been at the organization a long time, the culture has likely changed over that time. And they might not be as attuned to it as they think."

Take on-site employee perks like haircuts, gaming areas, bowling alleys, day-care centers, pet-friendly cubicles, fitness rooms, massages, and personal concierge services provided by some big and small companies alike. These touted extras, offered in addition to standard work-life balance benefits like flexible work schedules and family leave, can make the workplace fun, comfy, and appealing. However, perks cannot be used as a substitution for a high-performance culture, notes CultureIQ, a cultural management company. Rather, employee perks can be a distraction from what really matters—respect, recognition, and value add, among other aspects of organizational culture, according to CultureIQ. What's more, they can be smokescreens for a toxic workplace culture.

An inclusive company culture has to be open, says Jain-Link. Can people talk openly about how their gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, or other concern impacts their experience? Are diversity and inclusion linked back to the CEO? Research at

Company culture covers employee experience, attitudes, opinion, leadership behaviors, and business models.

Russell Reynolds Associates reveals that an organization's senior-most leaders—CEOs, chairs, and board members—play pivotal roles in creating inclusive cultures.

Tim Ryan, US chairman and senior partner of global financial services leader PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), concurs that business leaders must pay more attention to company culture in balancing their approach to D&I. "Workplace culture is critical to advancing diversity targets, and also creates greater equity, unity, and opportunities for minorities, women, and other underrepresented employees," Ryan writes in a blog post, "Why Focusing on Diversity Numbers Won't Really Make Companies More Inclusive." "Establishing a workplace where each employee feels comfortable bringing their true selves to work is key to supporting them to stay, thrive, grow, and contribute within an organization," adds Ryan, who is cofounder of CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion, a 700-organization-strong coalition committed to changing the D&I landscape and driving accountability.

A PwC survey, "Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarking," found that while many companies have publicly declared their commitment to D&I, they are struggling with translating that strategy into action. PwC conducted the global, cross-industry survey of business, diversity, and HR leaders (as well as employees) to understand what impact their D&I strategies are having on employee experience. Even though 87 percent of the responding companies prioritize

diversity and inclusion, 42 percent of the employees still feel diversity issues are a barrier to progress.

"There are opportunities every step along the way to integrate D&I controls when you're planning your workforce, when you're hiring your workforce, when you're onboarding them (organizational socialization), compensating them, providing them with learning and development, mobilizing them across the organization, ultimately offboarding the workforce. But a lot of firms are missing that opportunity," says Stefanie Coleman, PwC's director of financial services people and organization practice.

Companies can't understand if they're making progress on diversity and inclusion, Coleman adds, if they don't have a "good baseline of workforce data, good governance to surround that data, good systems of record, and technology infrastructure to support the security of that data." This includes slice-and-dice employee engagement surveys by diversity dimensions, exit surveys, and deep-dive interviews to understand levels of turnover, and doubling down on examining the nature of employee complaints.

Good People Quit Poor or Toxic Cultures, Not Companies

As with bias and sexual harassment trainings, diversity-related hiring targets alone aren't the answer. Simply having employees with a wide array of backgrounds won't ensure that a company culture is all-inclusive. It's not enough to hire for diversity or introduce an initiative focused on gender, ethnicity, age, or sexual orientation, according to Emplify, an employee engagement solutions company based in Fishers, Indiana. A company must create a culture where diversity is embraced at large. This is where employee experiences come into play.

To a certain degree, recruitment and retention are reliable indicators of how well a company's diversity and inclusion initiatives are working, notes Dr.



"Simply having employees with a wide array of backgrounds won't ensure that a company is all-inclusive."

Allison Scott, chief research officer at the Kapor Center for Social Impact.

Kapor's "Tech Leavers Survey," for which Scott served as lead author, examined the tech industry nationwide and found that workplace culture was a key factor in employees' decisions to quit their jobs. The number one reason driving turnover was unfairness or mistreatment, across all groups.

"Unfair, noninclusive, and toxic cultures are what drive people out, and the trends are particularly pronounced for women, LGBTQ+ employees, and underrepresented people of color," says Scott. The new study shows that experiences differ across groups. People of color, especially women, are troubled with stereotyping. Roughly one-third of women of color reported being passed over for promotion more than any other group. African American women and Latinas expressed that, in comparison to their peers, they have watched people with less experience and less education advance into top positions in their companies.

Women across ethnicities indicated they were subjected to sexist jokes and sexual harassment in the workplace, according to the Kapor survey. LGBTQ+ employees indicated more so that they faced bullying and public humiliation or embarrassment. And while LGBTQ+ employees and employees of color were most impacted, an astounding 78 percent of employees reported experiencing some form of unfair behavior or treatment. "When we were looking at experiences in the workplace," says Scott, "we summed up everything from their sense of belonging in the workplace, their negative or positive experiences, and their overall satisfaction with their jobs and with their companies."

Additionally, the survey revealed

that turnover due to unfairness, bias, and bullying costs the high-tech industry more than \$16 billion annually. Scott points out that when comprehensive D&I policies and practices are in place, negative workplace experiences are lower, and people are less likely to leave due to unfairness. Having a comprehensive D&I strategy has a much greater impact than executing single efforts or initiatives, she adds.

The "Tech Leavers Survey" suggests that the way to create inclusive cultures is by identifying a set of core values, developing a code of conduct, and striving to create and continuously evaluate and improve a company's culture. Other recommendations include conducting employee surveys at regular intervals, examining data by each demographic group, providing transparency about culture issues, and acting upon the findings and addressing areas of concern.

Chief Diversity Officers Have Need of Money, Power, and Respect

The Center for Talent Innovation has a task force of about 90 companies at all different phases of the D&I journey. "Some have been at this for 20 years, while others are one to two years into their journey," says Jain-Link. "We have seen best practices from a number of companies that we think are doing some innovative work. EY [Ernst & Young] is one of them. Another is Bank of America. These companies are really looking at culture and how it can change to be more inclusive."

According to the Kapor Center, the most effective company D&I strategies have five common initiatives: 1) a diversity and inclusion director; 2) set quantifiable diversity and inclusion goals, with targets at every level of the company; 3) paid bonuses



for referrals of candidates from underrepresented backgrounds; 4) unconscious bias training, and 5) employee resource groups.

The real issue when it comes to driving a comprehensive D&I strategy is accountability, Coleman says. Middle management needs to have some skin in the game, meaning D&I metrics within their scorecards and performance metrics. In most companies, no one is designated to D&I, or that person has limited clout with C-suite executives and board directors.

A new survey from executive search consultancy Russell Reynolds sheds light on this dilemma. Although some 47 percent of companies included on the S&P 500 index currently have a chief diversity officer or equivalent, most CDOs and others in this role are not empowered to do their jobs effectively. More than half of those surveyed reported that they don't have

the resources they need to execute new programs and strategies, and they are burdened with additional corporate responsibilities outside their D&I work. The bottom line: They lack money, power, and respect. This is because they have limited budgets, and often their ideas get stonewalled by legal or HR.

Someone who is exercising clout is Maxine Williams, Facebook's global chief diversity officer, who has been developing strategies to attract and support underrepresented people in all teams. Under her leadership, the number of women globally at the social media giant has increased to 36 percent, up from 31 percent in 2014, and women in senior leadership expanded to 30 percent from 23 percent. According to Facebook's fifth annual diversity report, the percentage of Latinx employees grew from 4 percent to 5 percent, and

African Americans from 2 percent to 4 percent.

Williams has spearheaded three programs at Facebook—Diverse Slate Approach, Managing Unconscious Bias, and Facebook University—which aim to increase diversity and opportunities for people from underrepresented backgrounds. What's worked is building deep relationships with organizations that support people of color and women, including Anita Borg, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, and National Society of Black Engineers, as well as others, Williams notes in Facebook's report.

She points to company-wide programs that have been very well received internally, such as the managing bias training workshop; a managing inclusion program that helps managers support diverse teams, including learning how to identify micro aggressions; and Be the Ally, an initiative on understanding various cultural identities.

Facebook is also pushing for employees to be their authentic selves. "We've worked hard at retention as well by creating an inclusive environment where people from all backgrounds can thrive and succeed," Williams says. "This includes our many Facebook Resource Groups, which help build community and support professional development—as well as the investments we have made to tackle bias and create an inclusive culture."

Facebook is not alone in championing such initiatives. Other companies are moving beyond just tracking their numbers to build a culture of belonging where every employee can thrive. **IN**

*Carolyn M. Brown is an award-winning journalist, author, and playwright. She is the coauthor of the career self-help book *Climb: Taking Every Step with Conviction, Courage, and Calculated Risk to Achieve a Thriving Career and a Successful Life* (Open Lens, 2018).*



Heroes for Hire

Karen Brasch feels an energetic heaviness when she thinks back to the rough time she had trying to get a civilian job after a career in the military. She retired from the US Navy, having served as a commander and a pilot, and when looking for a job, realized she was speaking a language that few hiring managers could understand.

BY KATIE MORELL

Translating her military experience, with its accompanying acronyms and jargon, was nearly impossible. Even though she had an MBA to bolster her experience, she wasn't sure how to explain how the skills she had developed in her long service career could be matched to her dream job.

How companies can attract and retain former service members (and their spouses), and why it is so important

"It felt like I was in the middle of 'The Amazing Race' TV show," she remembers. "It was like someone had dropped me in the middle of a foreign country without a compass and without a network. I didn't know who to call, even though I knew my skills would be the perfect fit for many corporate environments."

It took time, but she did get a job, and today works as a principal technical program manager at software company Intuit in San Diego. In addition to her day job, she volunteers as the global lead for the Intuit Military Network, the company's veterans-focused employee resource group.

"We are all about education, recruiting, mentorship, and outreach to veterans and military spouses," she says. "We believe that they have unique perspectives, past experiences, and training that can really help us at Intuit. One of the biggest challenges is that their experience gets lost in translation. We work to bridge that gap."

The topic of hiring military veterans for civilian jobs is discussed much more in corporate circles today than it was a decade ago. This is in part

thanks to major initiatives like Joining Forces, a program launched in 2011 by First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden to help pair military veterans and their spouses with public and private sector jobs. Additionally, Amazon, Intuit, Wells Fargo, and many other companies have made public pledges to educate, train, and hire military veterans and their spouses by the thousands through a variety of programs.

On the military side, the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers the VA Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to help prepare soon-to-retire service members for life in the civilian world, including how to find a job. Depending on the veteran you speak to, though, reviews of TAP are mixed—although some say the program has improved in recent years.

Unemployment numbers provide a glimpse into the challenges facing veterans but don't tell the entire story. In May 2019, the US Department of Labor reported that the unemployment rate for veterans was 2.7 percent—it's lowest since 2000. That number, though, does not account for the unemployment of military spouses, a demographic that is often negatively impacted by long periods of not being able to work while partners are away and by frequent relocations.

A report published by the Council of Economic Advisers in May 2018 revealed that there are approximately 690,000 military spouses and spouses of recent veterans, many of whom can find only part-time jobs once their partners exit the military, even though they'd prefer full-time work. The report says 2017 unemployment rates for military spouses hovered around 16



Seeking Heroes

In recent years, many organizations have formed to help veterans and their spouses enter the workforce.

- ▶ **RallyPoint** — solutions.rallypoint.com
- ▶ **Wounded Warrior Project: Warriors to Work** — woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/warriors-to-work
- ▶ **Hire Heroes USA** — hireheroesusa.org
- ▶ **Military Connection** — militaryconnection.com
- ▶ **LinkedIn** — linkedin.com
- ▶ **The Honor Foundation** — honor.org
- ▶ **VetsinTech** — vetsintech.co
- ▶ **Vet Employer Roadmap**, part of US Department of Defense — vetemployerroadmap.org
- ▶ **Hiring Our Heroes**, part of US Chamber of Commerce Foundation — uschamberfoundation.org/hiring-our-heroes

percent, while other sources say that number could be as high as 24 percent.

The question, in addition to résumé translation, is how to attract and ultimately retain military veterans and their spouses. Thankfully, many people and companies are on the case, including Sean Kelley, Amazon's director of talent acquisition for worldwide operations. A US Navy veteran himself, he is proud that his company currently employs more than 18,500 veterans and spouses, with plans to increase that number in the coming years.

"Veterans and military spouses have a lot to offer a company," he says. "Their bias for action, their ability to think on their feet, and their roll-up-their-sleeves mentality always help push my teams forward and deliver better results for customers."

Kelley's sentiments are widely echoed by others in this space. Even

when a veteran's technical skill set doesn't reflect a job description to the letter, it is always worth it to give them a chance, says Kristen Kavanaugh, Tesla's senior staff partner, diversity and inclusion, and a retired US Marines officer. She says hiring managers should consider veterans when writing job descriptions to make them friendly for that demographic.

"If you are saying someone needs five years of project management experience, what you are actually saying is that the person needs to be able to lead a team, problem solve, and meet deadlines," she says. "If you just write about project management, you won't attract the talent you want, which might come from a veteran's experience. I recommend getting clear on the actual requirements of the job and translating those in a way that doesn't seem overly complex."

Companies looking to attract veterans and spouses are also smart to



create veteran-specific career landing pages, says Tim Falletti, manager of executive recruitment for Adecco USA in Chicago and a US Army veteran, adding that veterans want to know a company is actively looking for them.

On such landing pages, or in job descriptions, Intuit's Brasch suggests speaking their language.

"Explain that your company is 'mission oriented' and is looking for people who 'know how to get things done' and who have experience 'making hard decisions under pressure,'" she says. "Those words matter."

Launching an initiative to attract veterans and their spouses can start inside a company with current employees, says Falletti, who adds that business leaders can ask who already on their payroll is a veteran—a question that may illicit surprising answers, as many do not self-report. Business owners can then work with those staffers to create a program to attract and retain more veterans.

Amazon's Kelley agrees with this concept, and adds that it is best when a company can hire full-time military recruiters and then invest in programs for veterans.

"We have programs designed to help veterans grow in their careers," he says. "Adapt is a recruiting initiative for wounded, injured, or ill military service members. Our Military Leaders Program helps them excel as

"[Veterans' and military spouses'] bias for action, their ability to think on their feet, and their roll-up-their-sleeves mentality always help push my teams forward."

senior leaders and executives in high-priority business areas globally."

The existence of veteran-related employee resource groups, or affinity groups, also helps in the retention of this demographic, as do formal mentorship programs.

"There is so much transitioning from military to corporate or civilian life, and if a veteran isn't placed in an organization that is sensitive to that—to his or her need for camaraderie and career pathing—it can be hard," says Le Nette Rutledge, military talent programs manager at Wells Fargo in South Carolina. "It isn't that they are looking for a BFF, but having someone on hand to answer questions can be a huge help."

The topic of hiring veterans comes with a host of misconceptions, some of which can be deeply inappropriate and offensive to former service members when looking for jobs.

"I've been stigmatized. Some people thought I was 'John Rambo' when I got out of the military and entered the corporate world," says Adecco's

Falletti. People would ask him directly if he suffered from PTSD or had killed someone while in the service. "You should never bring something like that up in the workplace. Instead, ask them what they did in the military, job-wise. Otherwise, it is incredibly inappropriate. Never ask or force it out of them."

Rutledge agrees, adding that it is important to develop authentic relationships with a veteran or spouse before ever talking about mental health or potential combat. She also wants to dispel the myth that veterans with PTSD are somehow bad for companies.

"If someone has served and is wounded—physically or emotionally—it doesn't mean they are unstable," she says. "Most vets in that category have a drive to prove the opposite. They show up at a higher level because they want to dispel any of those myths."

Lack of transferrable skills—even on a technical level—is another toxic myth. People who've served in the military, and their spouses, come with strong levels of discipline, leadership, teamwork, resilience, loyalty, strategic decision-making, and flexibility, which arguably could help every environment.

"When you hire a service member, you are hiring the positive intangibles with them," says Falletti. "Coming into your company, they will want to build a family, build camaraderie. You will have someone willing to fight for you and your company. Why wouldn't you want to hire someone like that?" **IN**

Katie Morell is a journalist based in San Salito, California, who is passionate about veterans' rights and whose brother is a longtime member of the US Army. Read more of her work at katiemorell.com.

FRESH TAKE

Relationship Building Across Differences

BY LESLIE TRAUB

As a white woman, it took years to see what I could not see. Seeing, it turns out, is learned, and the learning stems from deep self-inquiry and consideration of one's place in society. If I can't



Relationship building across difference is where true growth comes from.

recognize and acknowledge the relative privileges that have accrued to me throughout my life as a white woman, whether I was aware of them or not, I can never understand, empathize with, or support the pathway of women who, regardless of any socioeconomic privileges, will be seen

first as women of color, with all of the associated stereotypes and inequities that accompany that label. If on the continuum of advantages, I can't acknowledge that I as a white woman inherently have more than others, I stand never to have my meritocratic worldview challenged—that if women of color wanted to progress, advance, and get the top jobs, they'd just do it.

My blindness wasn't cultivated intentionally. My parents didn't tell me that I was better than women

of color. It was blindness by omission. But once you see it, you can't unsee it. Once you're sitting with the CEO because you've been invited to talk about the struggles of women in your organization, and you look around and there are only other white women, you can't ignore that. When you walk into a women's leadership development program attended by the top 200 leaders in the institution, and even the women's resource group comprises exclusively white women or includes only one or two women of color, you can't ignore that. As women assume positions of increasing power in our institutions, albeit hard fought and slow to rise, we have to take notice. And if we notice, we have to say something. Because if we see something, we have to speak out. But first we have to see it.

So what can we do? When selecting high-potential candidates for development programs, be sure to work with the program manager to ensure a focus on diversity in selection. In your women's resource group, invite other resource groups to join you in exploring how to create both a place of intimate connection where members can bond easily and a place where you can explore experiences across differences.

When doing your own hiring, ensure that you're searching deeply and broadly for women who aren't in your line of sight. The perpetual questions must be, Who am I missing? Who am I not thinking about?

If when doing a meta-analysis of your performance ratings, you find that your ratings are skewed by identity, face the truth about differing

expectations without shame and see if you can uncover your own biased thought patterns.

Speaking up on behalf of those who aren't in the room is an essential step, but it isn't enough. Deeply exploring our own identities and the conditioning that comes with them is a start, but it cannot be done in isolation.

Relationship building across difference is where true growth happens. This means having to sit in the fire, questioning ourselves, telling our stories and listening intently to others. Practicing empathic listening to the points of difference will likely reveal there are many more points of commonality.

Be willing to make mistakes, and recognize they often come from conditioning. Learn to receive feedback graciously and with a growth mindset. And always ask, once you can see yourself, Who's missing, and how can I open those doors? It's a better and richer world, both personally and professionally, when we're all at the table. **IN**

Leslie Traub is a leading consultant committed to building bridges across differences and to growing our collective ability to engage our better angels for a stronger society.

Jackie Glenn

Founder & CEO, Glenn Diversity Inclusion & HR Solutions

Jackie Glenn has a long and distinguished career in human resources, beginning at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care followed by 16 years at the Fortune 500 Company EMC Corporation. At EMC, Glenn quickly progressed to global chief diversity officer, coaching and educating a workforce of 55,000 employees worldwide. In this role, she conceived, planned, and developed programs in organizational development and leadership consulting, as well as employee training and development.

During her tenure at EMC, Glenn created a groundbreaking transgender reassignment and benefits program, multiple women's corporate advancement immersion experiences, and recruiting partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) featuring a summer internship that builds a pipeline of high-potential future employees in STEM fields.

EMC merged with Dell Computer in 2016. During the transition, Glenn served as global vice president of diversity and inclusion and oversaw the melding of corporate cultures for the combined workforce of 150,000 employees worldwide.

In 2018, she parlayed her experience and connections to launch her own consultancy, Glenn Diversity Inclusion & HR Solutions. She specializes in executive coaching and helping



“Artificial intelligence and machine learning enable us to sort through data and gain new insights that otherwise could have taken decades.”

corporations implement inclusive strategies and best practices.

In addition to operating her own consultancy, Glenn is a dynamic and engaging speaker. She hosts national and international conferences and participates on numerous industry panels.

Glenn holds an MS in human resources management from Lesley University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a BA from Emmanuel College, Boston. Her love for community advocacy and civic leadership encompasses service on the board of Children's Services of Roxbury (in Massachusetts), the board of the Museum of African American History of Boston, and the board of overseers of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

Glenn is the author of *Lift as I Climb: An Immigrant Girl's Journey Through Corporate America*. This instructive biography follows her journey from nanny to vice president and chief diversity officer to author and CEO.

Inclusion: What will be some of the biggest issues and challenges in 2020 for a corporate diversity and inclusion leader like yourself?

Jackie Glenn: It begins with redefining D&I for millennials, who are often characterized as looking for more than words about diversity and inclusion—they want to see action and results. A large part of my work is preparing future leaders of organizations, and I know that until we start showing more diversity in our corporate leadership, we are not satisfying the expectations of all segments in our workforce.

Another challenge will be learning how to work with and support the immigrants who join us as they bring their gifts to America. How do we think and act inclusively as national legislation and regulations shift the opposite way? How does the current climate toward immigrants affect industry in our country—everything from farming to technology, and hospitality to health care? As a global D&I leader, I know that other nations are facing this same issue as more people arrive seeking to make a better life. Other challenges we will need to address include demographic shifts, pay equity for women—especially women of color—and belonging, as well as continuing to educate workforces about gender identity and expression.

IN: Over the last few years there has been a great deal of excitement about artificial intelligence and machine learning in creating more inclusive workplaces. What do you see as the opportunities and challenges?

JG: The opportunity I see is discovery and efficiency—artificial intelligence and machine learning enable us to sort through data and gain new insights that otherwise could have taken decades. The opportunities within AI and machine learning when applied to areas such as health care can mean breakthroughs for medical diagnoses and treatments. Several of my clients rely on AI as well as machine learning to help with



Find Jackie's new book, *Life as I Climb: An Immigrant Girl's Journey Through Corporate America* on Amazon and on www.glenndiversity.com.

improving customer service and data security, or creating software that enhances how clinical trials are conducted for lifesaving treatments. As a leader who is fortunate to work with the Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council, I can tell you that AI and machine learning are essential to our continued breakthroughs.

However, while the benefits are many, the risks are great. There is the danger, for example, that the AI used to create new health-care treatments can also be used to

create powerful computer viruses. In addition, these machines are programmed by humans, often humans with biases. This can leave a lot of room for error, and often it is our minority populations who suffer based on the profiles programmed into these systems.

IN: What brought you to do this work? Is there a personal motivation that inspired you in this direction?

JG: I was basically asked, or told, to take my first diversity job. I cried because I felt as if the position was not respected and not yet viewed as a serious role. As my own leadership evolved over the years, I came to recognize that inclusion is my passion. It fulfilled an early promise I made to myself shortly after I arrived in the United States from Jamaica. One bitter, cold morning, I waited for the bus and watched cars whiz by. Right there I vowed, "When life gets better for me, no one will be left at the bus stop."

Today I am proud to continue my work as a global diversity and inclusion consultant with many clients, and it immerses me in a variety of industries, business challenges, and perspectives that broaden and deepen my thinking.

IN: A concept that is increasingly being addressed now is cultural transformation of the workplace. What does this mean to you and how is your company working to transform its culture?

JG: Cultural transformation means taking a deeper look and making bold steps to redefine how your organization operates, and in the process discovering or rediscovering your core values. It is generally centered on how to serve customers and employees in a more inclusive way.

My tenure as a technology leader gave me direct experience working to build a culture of trust, helping 55,000 employees around the world understand the dimensions of respect, credibility, fairness, pride, and camaraderie and how they work together to transform a culture.

Cultural transformation takes on other dimensions as well, including the willingness to change the culture and to think differently; asking uncomfortable and hard questions; and making sure that your company's C-level leaders are engaged and participative in this effort—they should



Glenn, with her husband, Windsor Glenn.

be cultural champions. It also means learning to do things you have never done before, doing them with an open mind, and going places you have never gone.

Lastly, it is critical that your company conducts a cultural audit led by an objective outside expert. This will give you a bird's-eye view of some of the cultural nuances that would otherwise be undetectable.

IN: In the last few years, gender inequality in the workplace—including sexual harassment—has become large in the public eye. We all know these challenges are not new. How does this new public awareness help close the gender gap?

JG: The verdict is still out whether the gender inequality gap is closed, especially for women of color. In many organizations, the gap is still quite large with no change in sight.

However, this new awareness of gender equity shines a bright light on the subject and forces organizations to do a lot more due diligence and pay more attention. All leaders have easy access to the data on pay and promotions to see where gaps exist within the company. But only a few share these reports and address them. Unfortunately, we see the results of that when pay inequity is revealed.

If there is an upside to all the coverage in the media, it is that having a harassment-free workplace is seen not just as an HR policy, but as something to be owned and lived by everyone, with an extra level of accountability for leadership.

IN: As more millennials join the job force, and as baby boomers are slowly aging, has this phenomenon provided challenges for your clients? And what are your suggestions for addressing them?

JG: Yes, there is certainly a difference in work style and expectations that can cause friction. I consider these as critical

“New awareness of gender equity shines a bright light on the subject and forces organizations to do a lot more due diligence and pay more attention.”

challenges that must be addressed: work style; ethics; bringing everyone together to figure each other's strengths and then learn from each other; and reverse mentoring.

Some of the challenges revolve around breaking through our traditional norms and perceptions about age. I've worked with clients to look at behavior and ensure that they are working across generations with respect and understanding. And I've helped organizations that are saying, hey, we are not attracting the next generation here—why not?

IN: How does a company best cultivate a diverse talent pipeline?

JG: It starts by investing time and resources with organizations and associations—engineering associations, for example—and becoming involved with them in deeper and more significant ways. For example, offering to have an executive serve on their board and become a visible mentor and advocate. Investing time at the college level is also essential, and you need to show that your company will have a consistent and reliable presence, not disappearing at the first budget downturn. I invested many years in building relationships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and the power of that collaboration helped bring new faces and perspectives into our talent pipeline.

And then, when new employees arrive at your workplace, you must have a well-designed onboarding program that includes mentors to help with acclimating to the environment. This will ensure success and retention.

IN: How do you use data and metrics to measure D&I success?

JG: At a very basic level, I look at data around the two As—attraction and attrition. Are we getting a broad representation of people applying to work here and in our candidate pools? Why or why not? Once here, are they staying and succeeding? Again, why or why not?

Exit interview data is also helpful, as are the direct questions in global all-employee surveys asking if people feel that they are treated fairly based on a variety of individual characteristics. **IN**



Susan Stith, Vice President, Diversity, Inclusion, Foundation, and Civic Affairs, Cigna

As vice president of diversity, inclusion, foundation, and civic affairs at Cigna, Susan Stith is responsible for shaping and steering the company's enterprise-wide diversity and inclusion, philanthropy, and community outreach strategy and initiatives. In her role, she leads the efforts to create innovative D&I programs in the areas of employee recruitment, retention, and talent development, and ensures senior leadership commitment.

Stith has a long-standing career in diversity, cultural competence, and inclusion, spanning several industries, and specializes in bringing innovative, creative, comprehensive, and sustainable business strategies to life with a lens on people, programs, and processes. She is a visionary with experience in matrixed environments and provides leadership by promoting values-driven initiatives.

Stith has won numerous diversity and inclusion recognitions such as *Diversity Plus* magazine's Top 25 Women Impacting Diversity, *Diversity Woman's* Top 50 Diversity Champions, Urban League's Salute to Women in Leadership, and *Black Enterprise's* Top Executives in Corporate Diversity. She also serves on several boards in the nonprofit sector.

Stith earned her bachelor degree at University of Missouri–Columbia and her master's from University of Phoenix, where she was named Graduate Student of the Year.

Inclusion: What will be some of the biggest issues and challenges in

2020 for a corporate diversity and inclusion leader like yourself?

Susan Stith: Diversity without inclusion is exclusion, and without inclusion, diversity efforts are destined to fail. Simply put, businesses will not succeed without having an employee population that reflects the population of those they serve.

A company is no different than a community: we need a neighborhood where everyone feels valued and respected for their unique perspectives, thoughts, and backgrounds. When you think about where you live, you want to feel energized by those around you. Work is no different.

Whether in the health service arena where I work or another industry entirely, our biggest opportunity—and our biggest challenge—lies with our people. And for us, it's going to take all 74,000 of our diverse employees worldwide to make our dream to build a sustainable model for health care a reality.

Together, Cigna and Express Scripts (who merged in 2018) are on a mission to transform health care by delivering a full range of services to make our entire health ecosystem more connected, personalized, and affordable. As a global health service company, we have an extraordinary responsibility—and an unparalleled opportunity—to empower people to live healthier, happier, more productive lives.

We are much more successful when we recruit, retain, and reward a diverse group of colleagues who know they are valued, and understand how the work they do every day delivers on the needs of those we serve. That's how we earn trust as employers. It's why people choose to come work for us, and why they choose to stay.

IN: What brought you to do this work? Is there a personal motivation that inspired you in this direction?

SS: This work absolutely found me. I like to say I work at the intersection of passion and profession. What led me here is a combination of who I am, what I believe, and my desire to make an impact.

One of my favorite quotes by Martin Luther King Jr. is, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?"

That's why I am so proud of the Healthier Kids for Our Future initiative, which we launched as a newly combined company in December. It is a five-year, \$25 million commitment that addresses three global challenges facing children: poverty, hunger, and health and



well-being. We know it is a big challenge, but we are also persistent and urgent in doing important work for others. Above all, these are challenges we—as a combined company—are uniquely suited to tackle.

We have already teamed up with nonprofit organizations, school districts, community leaders, partners, and, of course, our employees to take action to reduce childhood hunger. For example, earlier this year, employees at nine US sites and two international cities packed 16,500 backpacks with enough food to feed a child for a weekend. We worked with Blessings in a Backpack and schools to distribute them, knowing it might be the only food that child had to eat until Monday.

This was just the first step. All of our employees are doing something, every day, to continue to help. Even if we have different backgrounds, our ability to come together and rally around a common cause leads to uncommon improvements in health and well-being.

Left, top to bottom: Celebrating with Pride, Express Scripts; International Women's Day 2019, Jackie Joyner-Kersey Foundation. Right: Inspiring tomorrow's leaders, Express Scripts.

IN: A concept that is increasingly being addressed now is cultural transformation of the workplace. What does this mean to you and how is your company working to transform its culture?

SS: Cultural transformation is a top priority for us, and it goes beyond what you might expect. This past June, Cigna and Express Scripts flew the rainbow pride flag in several locations across the country. We continue to celebrate what makes us unique, and we do so in a visible, meaningful way, thanks to our shared values. At the end of the day, our values set the tone for how we engage with each other, both internally and externally. Employees, and our community, understand what we're about when it comes to diversity and inclusion.

That's just one outward sign of how we are moving ahead together as a combined company. Every day, we have cultural champions across our company who demonstrate and live the values that represent us. Words on a wall can only do so much, but when those words inspire action, engagement, and compassion, that's when our values come alive.

IN: In the last year, gender inequality in the workplace—including sexual harassment—has become large in the public eye. We all know that these challenges are not new. How does this new public awareness help close the gender gap?

SS: Diversity and inclusion form a foundation that lets us better understand and relate to each other. And the business case for diversity, including gender diversity, is clear. Research shows the value of a diverse workforce, and, in particular, having more women in leadership positions drives better business performance.

And yet, while we are making progress, overall there are too few women in senior leadership positions, in C-suite roles, and on corporate boards. Because of this reality, it's important for employers to bolster, empower, and inspire current and future female leaders.

I'm proud to work for a company that views diversity as a driver of innovation, creativity, and business results. This is something we put into practice every day—through concentrated efforts on recruiting, retaining, and promoting diverse employees. At Cigna, I am proud to say



“Every day, we have cultural champions across our company who demonstrate and live the values that represent us.”

70 percent of our workforce comprises women, and nearly half of senior management roles are held by women.

And our women's employee resource group is also leading the way with approximately 5,000 members, as well as other initiatives like our Lean In Circles. This internal group is making powerful connections among female leaders, providing them with opportunities to grow their leadership skills.

IN: As more and more millennials join the job force and as baby boomers are slowly aging, has this phenomenon provided challenges for Cigna? And what are your suggestions for addressing them?

SS: At this moment, there are five generations in the workplace—and at Cigna, that is no different. Our multigenerational resource group implements reciprocal mentorship programs that allow the generations to support each other on their respective career paths.

Additionally, our internship and rotational development programs for early career employees and our encore program that allows retired employees to return to work on a part-time basis allow cross-functional work and a continuous knowledge transfer across generations.

When we open our minds and hearts to learn from everyone around us, ageism fades away and is replaced by receptivity to new ideas, a rejection of stereotypes, and a recommitment to the ideals of diversity and inclusion. **IN**

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Lisa Coleman Senior VP, Global Inclusion and Strategic Innovation, New York University

Reporting to the president, Dr. Lisa Coleman is the inaugural SVP for global inclusion and strategic innovation at New York University (NYU). She also serves as chief diversity officer.

Dr. Coleman and her teams collaborate with deans and other senior leaders, varied and divergent sectors, as well as internal and external stakeholders locally and globally to advance, build capacity for, and implement inclusive, innovative, diversified, equitable strategic organizational research and best practices.

Prior to joining NYU, Dr. Coleman served as the first chief diversity officer and special

“I was, and am, inspired by the work that dedicated and often unrecognized people do in the face of adversity.”

assistant to the president at Harvard University, from 2009 to 2017. During her tenure, she and her team developed some of the first pilot programs focused on the intersections of emerging technologies and disability.

Dr. Coleman advises and consults with C-suite leaders globally. She sits on various national and international boards, and her current work focuses on the intersections of leadership, innovation, and inclusion. Dr. Coleman is the recipient of numerous awards, recognitions, and honors for excellence in leadership and teaching, and for her work on diversity, inclusion, belonging, equity, and innovation globally.

Dr. Coleman earned a doctorate in social and cultural analysis, American studies, from NYU and three master's degrees from Ohio State University in African and African American studies; women's, gender, and sexuality studies; and communication studies. Her undergraduate foci were computer science and sociology.

Inclusion: What will be some of the biggest issues and challenges in 2020 for diversity and inclusion leaders like yourself?

Lisa Coleman: Immense opportunities can be found in how we engage changing demography and technological advances, and sustain and grow future global talent. These opportunities are intermingled with rapidly shifting, diverse, inclusive entrepreneurial and innovative markets. As new constituencies evolve—including people with disabilities; multiethnic and multiracial communities; gender, sexual, and multifaceted intersectional identities; and generations—so do ideas about equity, belonging, work, and community. Those on the neurodiversity spectrum, generation Z, the alpha generation—or my nickname for this newest generation, the double AAs, because they are double packed—are asking all types of questions about education, technology, work, home, and family; these are opportunities, versus challenges, for us to create better work, educational, and community spaces now and for our collective futures.

IN: What are some of the most salient D&I issues and challenges specific to academia?

LC: As global and for-profit higher educational



Dr. Coleman models and inspires joyful, inclusive leadership.

markets expand, there are increasing pressures to define the benefits of higher education in the US. Moreover, access and the affordability of higher education are at the forefront of many deliberations in the media as some contemplate the proposed value of higher education.

There is much research demonstrating the benefits of higher education. At NYU, we are building on this research and creating initiatives directed toward affordability, and related programs, such as food security, first-generation students, etcetera. Faculty, board, and senior leadership diversification also continues to be a concern for many universities, and as many are aware, these mirror corporate and nonprofit challenges and opportunities. We employ emerging research and best practices, including mentorship, augmented retention and promotional processes, cohort/critical mass hires, and new pathway programs—and there remains much more to do.

IN: What brought you to do this work? Is there a personal motivation, that inspired you in this direction?

LC: I was, and am, inspired by the work that dedicated and often unrecognized people do in the face of adversity. Very early in life, I was honored and humbled to work with volunteers who served the homeless and people with disabilities. The fortitude and empathy these teachers, volunteers—successful and ordinary people—demonstrated shaped my world. They provided roadmaps of compassion with practical tools that allowed me to see how even the smallest of gestures, a blanket, can change a life. I was also greatly influenced by the 1980s/'90s HIV pandemic. As a young volunteer, I saw some retreat with fear and horror, but I saw others—caretakers, nurses, and doctors—take up the hard work at hard times; they stood in the face of uncertainty with grace and gentleness. I thought if they can do it, and if I could model my life after this kind of work, then maybe I, too, could make a small contribution to make the world better for others. I continue to try to do my best; there is so much more to do, so I keep working, and volunteering.

IN: A concept that is increasingly being addressed now is cultural transformation of the workplace. What does this mean to you and how is NYU working to transform its culture?

LC: Cultural transformation is key to understanding organizations, and I engage research globally, including transformation work in South Africa. Historically, and far too often in the US, diversity and inclusion work is focused on changing people. We learn from global research that organizational cultures must be examined and unpacked, and different institutions engrain different cultures. We all know the adage “culture eats strategy”; my addition is culture eats people. It is imperative to assess culture(s) to be effective.

Many cultures of academia are steeped in and driven by research, teaching, and new knowledge production; also, cultures in academia vary because there are numerous types of educational institutions. To be effective in organizational reimagining, development, and transformation, it is important to query the organizational type. This is also true for corporations, and for governmental and nongovernmental agencies. In other words, how diversity and inclusion strategies are developed for banking may not be the best for art organizations because cultures are distinct. In higher education, there is a tendency to focus on students, but culture in higher education is also created by faculty, boards, alumni, administrators, other stakeholders, and heterogeneous disciplines/schools. NYU, like others, has many schools, including global health, arts and humanities, science, engineering, business, public policy, and many more. These constituencies' and schools' cultures and interests are not always analogous.

Accordingly, transformation efforts must be specific and grounded in data analytics that relate to the particular type of organization or institution, its histories, and relevant micro and macro cultures. I engage a design-thinking model to spark new ideas and pathways for creating more effective transformation tools.

IN: Tell us about your greatest success story.

LC: Building capacity for more research, increasing resources, and raising funds for those who have been systemically and systematically excluded, and historically disenfranchised. I have also been privileged to work with a team and raise funds to build one of the first pilot



and testing labs for people with disabilities across the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, and gender and sexual identities.

IN: What are some of the recent thought leader topics in the world of inclusion that organizations are learning about and implementing?

LC: Much emerging research is focused on advantage-based models building on the scholarship of Dolly Chugh, Scott Page, and other scholars that underscore the science of inclusion, growth and sustainability models, data- and evidence-based organizational analyses, and interconnected implementation strategies. We all know the future will be different than the present. In global inclusion, we take the opportunity to learn from the present and our communities. Therefore, the second area is neurodiversity; exploring this burgeoning research is one way that we, at NYU, are innovating and expanding ways of teaching and learning. Lastly, researching shifting demography and expanding entrepreneurial markets provides insight into future definitions of community, identity, work, family, and much more.

IN: Over the last few years, there has been a great deal of excitement about artificial intelligence and machine learning in creating more inclusive workplaces. What do you see as the opportunities? How is NYU using these technologies? What are some of the cautionary tales we need to be aware of?

LC: Artificial intelligence, machine learning, and robotics, as well as other technological

advances, are crucial to diversity, inclusion, belonging, and equity advancements. I see these as opportunities yet to be fully imagined. We designed our inaugural office to highlight how the intersections of global inclusion, innovations, and sustainability are at the nexus of our collective futures. New technologies must be sustainable and take into account the complexities and histories of bias and discrimination, exclusion, and inclusion. The opportunities are to figure out how technologies will benefit human-centered learning and engagement; mitigate present-day prejudices, biases, and stereotypes; and safeguard new and future technologies and global power structures from systems that sustain and perpetuate the disenfranchisement of particular communities. At NYU, we employ novel, innovative research and technologies to build capacity for debate and belonging, and to engender more equitable strategies, processes, and practices.

IN: What do you see as the challenges and opportunities posed by gen Z?

LC: Generation Z and the alphas present limitless opportunities. The best practices in higher education reveal and underscore the vast and immeasurable cross-generational possibilities, not just today but for the future. Newer generations might help everyone appreciate and share emerging technologies and innovations. Older generations might provide information about, and assist with, navigating an increasingly complex world built in histories that we must untangle collectively. Together we can build extraordinary nimble multigenerational communities in work, education, and so much more.

IN: How does a university best cultivate a diverse talent pipeline?

LC: Universities sit at the center of creating globally multifaceted collaborative learning, research, and work opportunities across all sectors. Fittingly, it is imperative to teach and partner with all sectors and entities as we create and expand globally inclusive, transformational, diverse, and thriving pathways. At NYU, we collaborate with corporations, nonprofits, community organizations, K-12, NGOs, hospitals, and many others. And across our global network—which includes three degree-granting campuses in New York, Shanghai, and Abu Dhabi, and other sites in Sydney, Buenos Aires, Paris, London, Accra, Prague, Madrid, Athens, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC—we have increasingly globally diverse student, administrative, and faculty bodies. This network allows us to collaborate, learn, innovate, and partner across sectors around the world as we reimagine what higher education is, and will be.

IN: How do you use data and metrics to measure D&I success?

LC: Higher education is built in, and on, research. In 2018, we completed a survey and collected qualitative and quantitative data from close to 22,000 respondents about inclusion, equity, diversity, and belonging on our campuses. This exemplifies how we employ data analytics, research, evidence-based modeling, and best practices to guide the work of the NYU's inaugural Office of Global Inclusion and Strategic Innovation. **IN**



**Valerie Irick
Rainford**

**Head of Advancing Black
Leaders & Diversity
Advancement Strategies,
JPMorgan Chase**

Valerie Irick Rainford is head of advancing black leaders and diversity advancement strategies at JPMorgan Chase. As a member of the Human Resources Operating Committee, she is charged with partnering with the firm's Operating Committee and head of talent management and diversity to deliver increased focus on attracting, hiring, retaining, and advancing top black talent at all levels of the organization. Celebrating three years in this role, the first of its kind at JPMorgan Chase, Rainford has leveraged her problem-solving skills to achieve historic results. She has embedded transformative strategies that have yielded impressive gains, which include increasing JPMorgan Chase's black senior executive talent by over 40 percent.

Prior to joining JPMorgan Chase, Rainford served for 21 years at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, where she rose to become the most senior black woman and the first to achieve a senior vice president title.

Rainford wrote a memoir, *Until the Brighter Tomorrow: One Woman's Courageous Climb from the Projects to the Podium*, published in 2014. She sits on the board of trustees at her alma mater, Fordham University. She is also a board member of the Executive Leadership Council—the preeminent organization for the development of global black leaders—and is a founding member of the Black Women for Black Girls giving circle. Additionally, Rainford is a cofounder and the board chair of Black Women of Influence.

She has received numerous awards for her leadership and commitment to the community, including *Black Enterprise's* Most Powerful Women in Business and *The Network Journal's* 25 Influential Black Women in Business.

Rainford recently announced her decision to leave JPMorgan Chase at the end of the year to launch her own consulting practice dedicated to advancing black talent across companies and industries, looking to multiply her successes in moving the needle for black professional talent. She will transition into a consultant role for JPMorgan Chase.

Inclusion: Describe your role and how it is the first of its kind in hiring, developing, and advancing black leaders.

Valerie Rainford: Three years ago, our chairman and CEO, Jamie Dimon, cohosted an employee town hall to launch our black strategy—a first for the firm and the industry. And in his 2016 annual shareholders letter, he reinforced this commitment: “There is one area in particular where we simply have not met the standards JPMorgan Chase has set for itself—and that is in increasing African American talent at the firm. While we think our effort to attract and retain

“Culture is what makes a business unique and is the sum of its values and behaviors.”

black talent is as good as at most other companies, it simply is not good enough. Therefore we introduced a new firm-wide initiative called Advancing Black Leaders.”

With that intentional and bold declaration, I was fortunate enough to be appointed to lead this groundbreaking effort. My team is responsible for partnering with the firm's Operating Committee and head of talent management and diversity to deliver increased focus on attracting, hiring, retaining, and advancing top black talent at all levels of the organization across the globe. We then take results and learnings from the foundational work done to promote leadership and advancement within the black community and expand them to other diverse communities in the firm so that all may benefit from the learnings. What makes our approach unique is its strategic, results-driven focus. It's not a mar-

keting initiative, but a strategy focused on making a real, tangible impact.

IN: What are some impacts your work has had at JPMorgan Chase?

VR: After an initial listening tour of both our leaders and our black talent, we shaped the Advancing Black Leaders [ABL] strategy around issues of concern to both sides: identifying black talent inside and outside of the firm—with emphasis on executives and students—and developing the pipeline, transparent reporting, and leadership accountability.

Since 2016, the firm has increased the number of black managing directors by 41 percent and black executive directors by 53 percent. A good start—but that was just the beginning. We're applying our learnings from ABL to a broader set of roles and putting more focus on increasing black representation at more junior levels while continuing to strengthen representation at the more senior ones.

These results are a combination of our disruptive strategy at work and the engagement and commitment of our firm's community, including senior leaders and the JPMorgan Chase board of directors.

IN: What are some of the challenges specific to African American women and men who aspire to top leadership roles?

VR: The perceived “pipeline problem,” bias—unconscious and not—and lack of representation are only a few of the challenges that are unique to people of color. But the barriers that I believe are most limiting to advancing black leaders are lack of feedback, advocacy, and sponsorship.

Giving good, honest feedback is a challenge for many leaders. It’s a key component to anyone’s pursuit of success because we can’t make better what we don’t know is holding us back. But many nonethnic managers may feel uncomfortable giving people of color feedback, afraid of getting it wrong, leaving those at a severe disadvantage in the workplace where feedback is critical.

Another critical tool in the workplace is advocacy or sponsorship—someone who attests to one’s excellence on that person’s behalf and plays a big role in moving a career forward.

IN: What brought you to do this work? Is there a personal motivation that inspired you in this direction?

VR: I feel like I have been preparing to do this work all my life, both personally and professionally.

I am a child of sharecroppers. Both my parents were limited to a sixth-grade education. As soon as they were old enough to pick cotton, they had to, in order to help feed their families. Menial jobs and lots of tragedy followed, so I grew up having to devise different and creative solutions in order to survive, so this work is natural for me and, yes, it’s personal too.

In my career, I’ve held various roles, so I bring a full range of perspectives to solving these issues along with a passion for diversity.

There is much more to do to solve these challenges for us all, and it will take transformative change and cooperation from all sides to continue to move the needle. It’s programs like ABL that will close the gap in blacks ascending to leadership roles over time in Corporate America. I am very proud of the foundational work that we have started at JPMorgan Chase and am encouraged that other firms are now launching their own black talent strategies.

IN: Describe what you consider to be your greatest success story.

VR: In the early years of my career, I had no experience with success. I didn’t even really think about what success meant—it was more about survival. Today, I am grateful and

“The barriers I believe are most limiting to advancing black leaders are lack of feedback, advocacy, and sponsorship.”

blessed to look back on a number of successes that I am especially proud of.

Professionally, ABL has been a great achievement with historic results in the financial services industry.

On a more personal level, I was recently appointed to the board of trustees at my alma mater, Fordham University. This is a special honor to me after having dropped out of Fordham during my sophomore year when I lost my mother to suicide. I lost my way for a bit, but my family and Fordham never let me go. Knowing that my mother’s greatest dream for me was to graduate from college, I went back with a vengeance. To now sit on the Fordham board of trustees is such an honor and an accomplishment that I know would make my mother proud.

IN: A concept that is increasingly being addressed now is cultural transformation of the workplace. What does this mean to you and how is JPMorgan Chase working to transform its culture?

VR: Culture is what makes a business unique and is the sum of its values and behaviors. With the launch of ABL, our senior leaders and culture carriers were saying we need to keep building on who we are. JPMorgan Chase is a thought leader in many regards, and all its initiatives—Advancing Black Pathways, Women on the Move, Office of Disability Inclusion, and Office of Military/Veteran Affairs, to name a few—work together to make JPMorgan a place where people of all backgrounds, experiences, and talents can thrive. **IN**



Women Business Collaborative

Organizations across the country join forces to help women rise to the top

As of August 2019, there were 34 female CEOs at Fortune 500 companies—or, in starker terms, just 6.8 percent. Though women were 20 percent of C-suites, the data showed that only 5 percent likely had P&L or operating roles. Overall, women of color made up less than 4 percent of the C-suite, and even on boards with more female representation, fewer than 4 percent were women of color. Meanwhile, many organizations have been dedicated to drive change, but there has been little collaboration

among them. The Women Business Collaborative (WBC) was founded in 2019 to change that story, so organizations could work collectively to push the data trajectory. The WBC (WBCollaborative.org) is a nonprofit alliance of women's business organizations, corporations, trade associations, researchers, and media partners working together as an accelerator to advance diverse female representation in C-suites and boardrooms; to achieve gender diversity and parity in the workplace; and to promote the growth of women-owned businesses and their access to capital sources.

Edie Fraser is CEO of Women Business Collaborative and has been managing director of Diversified Search since April 2007.

While at Diversified Search, she has had the satisfaction of advancing top talent and diverse talent. She is also an entrepreneur, who has sold two businesses, and a philanthropist. Fraser has won 55 major awards in innovation, diversity and women's leadership, entrepreneurship, and communications.

She served as CEO of STEMconnector and Million Women Mentors from January 2011 until taking the helm at WBC in January 2019. Previously, she was the founder and CEO of Public Affairs Group, where she worked with more than 250 Fortune companies and many government agencies, and with several hundred other stakeholders, advancing best practice programs on women and diversity leadership.

Fraser has written or served as publisher of many books, papers, and articles, including *Do Your Giving While You Are Living*.

She serves on the board and is a founding member of the women's executive leadership group C200. She also served as the first woman chair of the World Affairs Council of Washington, DC. She was inducted into the Enterprising Women Hall of Fame and is a winner of the Mosaic Award from *Diversity Woman*. Fraser graduated with honors in political science from Duke University and has actively supported women in public policy, especially working to gain more women in the US Senate.

Inclusion spoke to Fraser about the Women's Business Collaborative.

Inclusion: Why was the WBC launched?

Edie Fraser: I think back to 1982, when we formed the Committee of 200—C200—now with nearly 600 members, and how much pride we women, as successful operating executives, had in finding each other, sharing our successes and challenges. At the same time, other women's business organizations dedicated to advancing executive women in corporate suites and on boards, as well as recognizing the importance of entrepreneurs and their access to venture capital, were beginning to proliferate.

When we met at major business forums, we recognized that corporations were more than 90 percent white male at the top executive ranks. We have advanced the number of women executives serving on boards and the support of female entrepreneurs, but not far enough. Women of color have made the least progress. We owe it to our sisters of color to stand up and move those numbers. Together, we can move the needle much faster.

IN: How does WBC advance its agenda?

EF: We have five strategies.

- ▶ **Connect:** We share like-minded organizations' best practices, strategies, and results to drive the advancement of female leaders in business and to achieve gender and diversity parity along the way.
- ▶ **Collaborate:** We engage and convene organizations to achieve accelerated results.
- ▶ **Aggregate:** We leverage resources and build unity.
- ▶ **Communicate:** We use every vehicle possible to spread information and results.
- ▶ **Celebrate:** We tell the stories and share actions and outcomes.

IN: Who are the WBC stakeholders? How were they recruited and what commitment did each make to WBC?

EF: As of September 1, we have partnered with 27 women's business organizations. We have organized around nine Action Initiatives. We have built a strong and diverse WBC Board, Advisory Board, and Women Business Leaders Council.

Our Founder Organizational Partners

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▶ 2020 Women on Boards | ▶ National Association of Corporate Directors |
| ▶ ATHENA International | ▶ Paradigm for Parity |
| ▶ C200 | ▶ theBoardlist |
| ▶ Catalyst | ▶ Executive Leadership Council |
| ▶ Diversity Best Practices | ▶ Thirty Percent Coalition |
| ▶ Diversity Woman Media | ▶ U.S. 30% Club |
| ▶ <i>Enterprising Women</i> magazine | ▶ Watermark |
| ▶ Golden Seeds | ▶ WomenCorporateDirectors |
| ▶ Hispanic IT Executive Council | ▶ Women in the Boardroom |
| ▶ Information Technology Senior Management Forum | ▶ Women Presidents' Organization |
| ▶ <i>LATINA Style</i> magazine | ▶ WOMEN Unlimited |
| ▶ Latino Corporate Directors Association | ▶ Women's Forum of New York |
| ▶ National Association for Female Executives | ▶ Working Mother Media |
| | ▶ Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index (Resource Partner) |

IN: How will you measure progress and success?

EF: We will work with the WBC Action Initiative chairs and their committees and a data team to do this. We will share stories and produce scorecards and reports to the nation.

IN: Women account for just 6.8 percent of CEOs at Fortune 500 companies and fewer on boards. Why do you think this number has remained so low?

EF: It takes corporate commitment of the top leadership, of CHROs [chief human resources officers] and boards of directors. The time is now to hold leaders accountable. This is particularly true for women of color. We must see significant commitment to diverse executive leadership and board seats.

IN: Are the challenges and barriers for women the same for the C-suite as for boards? Or does each have a unique set of challenges?

EF: C-suites and boards have different challenges and strategies. The C-suite needs great team leaders who possess operational excellence. Therefore, significant focus must be on skilled talent for the right executive jobs and P&L acumen. Board of director leaders must look out for the financial health of the company and also focus on transformation and the human quotient—great talent. But boards do not have the daily planning and operating responsibilities like C-suite members do.

IN: The corresponding numbers for women of color in C-suites and boardrooms are much lower than for women overall. What unique challenges do women of color face?

EF: It has been said that women in general face a glass ceiling and that women of color face a concrete ceiling. These numbers must change. There are many qualified candidates who need training and uplifting with sponsorship and mentorship. There must be the commitment to drive numbers. Unique challenges mean we assure success by moving the supply chain of great women of color forward and upward. We must showcase women of color leaders, build advocacy for them, and report our successes.

IN: Are there any signs in the workplace you can point to that give you optimism?

EF: Yes. Years ago, I wrote an article titled “Pragmatic Idealism.” Optimism from all top leaders must be the modus operandi. Excitement to drive action must be our mission. We have no choice as change leaders. Look at the CEOs and board leaders who are championing this work. Bring a light to this work and to all those who excel at building the elements of success. We call this a movement, and that demands so many voices of leaders leading the cause as great for business. As Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” **IN**

WBC's Nine Initiatives**▶ CEO Leadership and Sponsorship of Women CEOs**

THE CHALLENGE: Reach 10 percent women CEOs by 2025 and 20 percent by 2030, against 6.8 percent today.

▶ Women in the C-suite and Executive Leadership with P&L Responsibility

THE CHALLENGE: Accelerate C-suite advancements overall. The goal is 8 percent of women with P&L experience and overall 10 percent women of color in C-suites by 2025.

▶ Women in the Boardroom

THE CHALLENGE: Aim for women and women of color holding, respectively, 35 percent and 10 percent of the Russell 3000 board seats by 2025.

▶ Gender Parity in the Workplace

THE CHALLENGE: Full gender parity in the C-suite by 2030.

▶ Diversity and Inclusion

THE CHALLENGE: By 2030, fill 25 percent of boards and C-suites with women of color.

▶ Women in Technology

THE CHALLENGE: By 2025, push the number of women leaders in high tech to 25 percent.

▶ Entrepreneurs and Venture Capital

THE CHALLENGE: By 2025, grow the number of women-owned firms with revenues above \$10 million by 20 percent, double the venture capital firms available for women, and grow the number of women partners in venture firms to 15 percent.

▶ Learning, Training, and Development

THE CHALLENGE: Achieve full parity of leadership development and P&L training; provide rising women leaders with mentors and sponsors; and achieve 50 percent of women in the pipeline to P&L roles.

▶ Strategic Communications and Media

THE PLAN: WBC will build a digital platform to highlight media stories on what organizations are doing, with links to their work. We will develop a Report to the Nation and a Scorecard. We will continue to produce an aggregated Calendar of Events and attend and support others' events as well as our own annual Summit of Leaders [this year on April 23–24, 2020].



Cynthia H. Bowman

Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer, Bank of America

In her role as chief diversity and inclusion and talent acquisition officer for Bank of America, Cynthia H. Bowman serves as the chief strategist for diversity and inclusion globally, focused on leading programs, initiatives, and policies that actively support the bank's diverse and inclusive workplace—in thought, style, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, culture, and experience.

Bowman serves on the bank's Global Diversity & Inclusion Council (GDIC), comprised of senior leaders responsible for keeping diversity and inclusion at the forefront for managers throughout the company. She leads the company's Global Diversity & Inclusion organization (GDIO), which drives enterprise-wide diversity initiatives, diversity conferences, strategic partner management and sponsorships, diversity metrics and data reporting, and inclusion learning. The GDIO also provides strategic oversight to the bank's 11 Employee Networks, made up of more than 160,000 memberships around the globe.

Before joining Bank of America in 2007, Bowman was a senior executive at Accenture, with responsibility for deploying performance sales and consulting projects. Bowman was recognized on the 2016 *Ebony* Power 100 list and was named one of Black Enterprise's Top Executives in Corporate Diversity for the past three years. Under Bowman's leadership, the bank has been ranked the top bank for diversity and inclusion by Euromoney and has received the prestigious Catalyst award for investing in women, among other honors.

Bowman graduated from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University with an MBA in organization behavior and operations. She also earned a bachelor of science in industrial engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology and a bachelor of science from Spelman College. Bowman is a member of the board of trustees of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America (Northeast Region), the Forté Foundation, and the Sphinx Organization.

Inclusion: What will be some of the biggest issues and challenges in 2020 for a corporate diversity and inclusion leader like yourself?

Cynthia Bowman: There is more visibility into these issues than ever before, with data, media, and politics playing a greater role in exposing hidden truths. However, the biggest hurdle for diversity and inclusion continues to be time. For those who have been fighting this fight for decades, awareness can feel like half the battle, and it's easy to be frustrated when momentum doesn't necessarily lead to quick, tangible change. But at Bank of America we are continuing to move the needle by creating a culture that prioritizes diversity from the top down and offers a range of inclusive programs and informed goals.

Change can often be bottlenecked in our sometimes polarizing culture, but through our courageous conversations program, for example, we are working to drive a culture of mutual respect and empathy by engaging employees in candid dialogue and conversations on issues that matter most.

We continue to address diversity and inclusion in all that we do at the bank. New and evolving programs are helping to ensure that we have a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace. More importantly, we measure our progress, embed decisions into key processes, and drive accountability throughout our business.

IN: A concept that is increasingly being addressed now is cultural transformation of the workplace. What does this mean to you and how is Bank of America working to transform its culture?

CB: While many companies are making great strides to be more diverse and inclusive, there's a common misconception that this cultural transformation can be achieved simply through updating programs and policies.

Personally—and this philosophy also drives our company culture—I believe that cultural transformation is only truly possible when a diverse and inclusive culture is made a business priority that is driven from the top, and when leaders are held accountable; when all employees feel able to bring their whole self to work; and when all employees are given the opportunity, tools, and resources to succeed and grow.

I'm incredibly proud of our culture at Bank of America, which does just this—and it starts at the top with our CEO, Brian Moynihan. He has chaired our Global Diversity & Inclusion Council for 10 years—and has never missed a meeting. We hold leaders accountable for building diverse teams and fostering an inclusive environment, rooted in this philosophy, where each employee is valued for who they

“We’ve made a conscious effort to build initiatives that create an environment where women feel empowered and supported, and it shows.”

are and for the unique perspective they bring.

Through a range of programs, we also encourage our employees to have courageous conversations on topics that are important to them. These help promote inclusion, understanding, and positive action by creating awareness of different experiences and perspectives. Supplemented by our 11 Employee Networks with over 160,000 members, teammates connect on shared interests and experiences across the globe.

IN: Describe what you consider your greatest success story.

CB: Beyond any individual story, I'm most proud of our collective narrative around progress for women within our organization.

We've made a conscious effort to build initiatives that create an environment where women feel empowered and supported, and it shows. Our policies and recruiting strategy have led to greater representation overall, with women commanding more than 50 percent of our workforce and 40 percent of our managers. Additionally, we welcomed our most diverse summer internship class in our company's history in 2019, with 47 percent of our global interns being female and 57 percent of our US interns being people of color.

Not only are women leading our operations in many cases, but they're being awarded salaries that reflect their performance and match that of their male counterparts. On average, compensation received by women is equal to 99 percent of that received by men. To reinforce our pay-for-performance philosophy, we use outside experts to review and analyze employees' pay before year-end compensation decisions are finalized, and we adjust compensation where appropriate.

Programs like our Women's Next Level Leadership course are giving our female team members the tools and training needed to excel in their roles, both tactically and through personal advocacy. Plus, mentorship programs for our small-business clients are helping to advance women on a global level.

The excitement felt through the company when we receive recognition for these efforts is unparalleled. It serves as validation that we are, in fact, moving the needle and positively



impacting the lives of our team members. This past year, back-to-back recognition from the Bloomberg Equality Index, Catalyst Award, Euromoney, and Fortune Top 100 Great Place to Work reinforced our corporate goal of creating a diverse and inclusive culture where team members feel excited to come to work.

IN: How do you use data and metrics to measure D&I success?

CB: Integrating a diverse and inclusive culture on a global scale requires goal setting and a consistent evaluation of practices and programs. But most of all, leaders need to be held accountable. We regularly review our programs to ensure they remain competitive and deliver in practice, not just theory.

At Bank of America we've integrated this philosophy into our leadership and decision-making through the Global Diversity & Inclusion Council. The role of the GDIC is to set D&I priorities, goals, and metrics; drive progress; and measure impact on issues that matter most to our various stakeholders. D&I goals and metrics are included in all business plans and are reviewed with leaders throughout the year—they are a business priority.

In a very powerful way, we've combined data with personal accountability. Our goals tracking is reviewed monthly with each member of our management team, and their success is based in part on how they foster diversity and inclusion within their teams. And what is exciting is that the numbers are showing real growth and leadership. As well as more than 50 percent of our global workforce being women, more than 45 percent of our US workforce are people of color. Additionally, over 45 percent of our board of directors are women and/or people of color, and our management team is over 50 percent women and/or people of color.

IN: For a number of years practitioners of diversity and inclusion have been making the business case for D&I. Do you think this message is sinking in?

"We are working to drive a culture of mutual respect and empathy by engaging employees in candid dialogue on issues that matter most."

Left to right: Cynthia Bowman; Sheri Bronstein, chief human resources officer; Thomas Montag, chief operating officer; Andrea Smith, chief administrative officer (all Bank of America), at the company's Black Executive and Hispanic-Latino Leadership Summit, Charlotte, North Carolina, July 2019.

CB: Without buy-in from leadership, there is no way for a company to truly and fully integrate diversity and inclusion into its culture. Not only is it important for leadership to support these efforts, but it must be prioritized and viewed as integral to the business function; and at Bank of America, this practice rings true.

Diversity and inclusion impact every part of the business, from diverse perspectives to workplace productivity, and it must be treated this way—baked into each business goal, program, or innovation.

What makes the continuity of our diversity and inclusion efforts so successful is that our CEO holds his leaders accountable for fostering a great place to work for all our teammates. For instance, our Diversity and Inclusion Index is the highest it has ever been at the bank, and we measure this index each year. By setting the standard that each team leader and decision maker be an advocate within their realm, the trickle-down effect is permeating. For example, our CEO embeds diversity and inclusion into business reviews—D&I is about business results and is not treated like a separate function.

Maintaining this focus from the top down better positions companies to attract the best talent and build meaningful relationships within the organization and with stakeholders. Through the voice of our leadership—and the GDIC, which is dedicated to structurally and accountably bringing about inclusivity across the business—we ensure it's not only communicated, but fully demonstrated that the diversity of our team members makes us stronger. **IN**



Carlos Wesley Cubia

Vice President & Global Chief Diversity Officer, Walgreens Boots Alliance

Carlos Cubia is vice president of human resources and global chief diversity officer for Walgreens Boots Alliance (WBA) and leads the development and implementation of enterprise-wide diversity and inclusion strategies. As a member of the global human resources leadership team, Cubia operates worldwide with responsibilities for effecting positive change across a workforce of more than 415,000

“While our global vision drives everything we do, we execute our programs with a local mind-set.”

employees. He heads Walgreens Boots Alliance’s global diversity and inclusion center of excellence, which promotes inclusive leadership behaviors and workplace practices, and drives diversity recruitment, talent development, performance management, and succession planning. His team also has responsibility for vendor and supplier diversity, affirmative action, and EEO compliance, as well as Walgreens Boots Alliance’s employee-driven business resource groups.

Prior to joining Walgreens Boots Alliance, Cubia served as the chief diversity officer for a global enterprise with more than 38,000 employees. He has more than 20 years of experience in the insurance and health-care industries, where he has been directly responsible for sales, marketing, and distribution management, and developed and implemented corporate diversity and inclusion initiatives. Throughout his career, Cubia has been instrumental in identifying strategies and implementing changes necessary to advance the business.

Black Enterprise recognized Cubia as one of the Top Corporate Diversity Executives in 2018, and *Career Mastered* magazine honored him with a Men as Allies Diversity in Leadership Award.

Inclusion: What will be some of the biggest issues and challenges in 2020 for corporate diversity and inclusion leaders?

Carlos Cubia: As businesses more deeply understand the value of and invest more in diversity and inclusion, it’s critical for D&I teams to demonstrate the return on investment. The good news is that organizations today are increasingly looking to D&I teams to provide counsel on many aspects of the business, like marketing, product development, and advertising, to name just a few key areas. Leaders understand the value of embedding D&I in the business strategy and operations, but we must demonstrate our value to stay there.

Another challenge is creating an effective, sustainable global vision that addresses unique, local market and geographical issues. It’s virtually impossible to take a one-size-fits-all approach to D&I around the world; each of

the regions in which Walgreens Boots Alliance operates faces different challenges, from ethnicity to classicism to gender equality. While our global vision drives everything we do, we execute our programs with a local mind-set focusing on relevant challenges and opportunities in that market.

Additionally, most industries have a long history of having a leadership team that is predominantly white men. Despite greater awareness and advancements in racial and gender balance, equity in hiring and promotions of women and people of color into top management continues to be a challenge. We know that meaningful change in any organization starts at the top, so unless a business makes a commitment to diversify leadership—starting with its board of directors—it will likely continue on the same trajectory.

IN: Over the last few years, there has been a great deal of excitement about artificial intelligence and machine learning in creating more inclusive workplaces. What do you see as the opportunities? How is your company and its clients using these technologies? What are some of the cautionary tales we need to be aware of?

CC: The opportunities to leverage AI technology to hire, develop, and engage people—and help them to succeed—are endless. Further, technology can help organizations assess and manage pay equity and advancement. And in a competitive, global marketplace, AI gives us greater opportunities to recruit and retain strong talent with flexible work arrangements, including a work-from-anywhere arrangement.

However, as with any new technology, we must understand and thoughtfully develop the algorithms that inform AI while maintaining strict standards to protect confidential information and general data privacy. If used correctly, AI can help reduce underlying biases in many people processes by using standardized and objective methodologies. To be effective, we must develop AI with the same mind-set that we are using to build more diverse and inclusive workplaces today.

IN: A concept that is increasingly being addressed now is cultural transformation of the workplace. What does this mean to you and how is your company working to transform its culture?

CC: Cultural transformation is a top priority at Walgreens Boots Alliance as we integrate two large, historic, and iconic brands to form the first global pharmacy-led health and well-being enterprise. We view our transformation as an evolutionary process that will deliver a “One Team” mind-set. We want our employees to have a shared vision and



Left to Right: Carlos Cubia, vice president and global chief diversity officer; Vivian Ayuso-Sanchez, senior manager, networks and programs; Gina Stuart, director, diversity strategy and programs; and Shaun Jones, director, supplier diversity.

purpose. We also want them to feel a strong sense of belonging and feel comfortable to bring their authentic selves to work; we want to create a workplace that encourages different work styles, new ideas, and fresh approaches to meeting our customers’ needs. Kathleen Wilson-Thompson, executive vice president and global chief human resources officer, sees cultural transformation through the lens of every voice, and with over 400,000 employees of WBA, it becomes critically important to treat everyone with dignity and respect so that we all bring our best each and every day.

IN: As more and more millennials join the job force, and as baby boomers are slowly aging, has this phenomenon proved challenging for Walgreens Boots Alliance? What are your suggestions for addressing this challenge?

CC: There are five generations in the workforce today, including traditionalists, baby boomers, generation X, millennials, and gen Z. Each generation has different ways of communicating, different ways of working, and different expectations from their employer for compensation, benefits, and advancement. To succeed, we need to help managers learn to motivate and engage each generation—and help them to collaborate and build effective working relationships with one another.

No matter the age, our managers are encouraged to focus on the results employees produce



Carlos Cubia presenting at the WBA Global Women's Executive Conference, November 2018.

rather than on how they get it done. This gives employees some flexibility in how they want to work and measures everyone on the same scale. For instance, flexible work arrangements can help boomers nearing retirement to remain working longer, and it gives millennials the flexibility they desire.

We also offer different approaches to learning. For instance, some may favor more traditional training methods, like PowerPoint presentations and handbooks, and other workers may prefer technology-based learning.

Regardless of the approach, the key is to maintain parity so other employees don't feel alienated. Employees who are close to retirement may want to reduce their work hours. Parents may want flexibility to attend their children's events. Businesses must support and extend these opportunities to all employees.

Finally, we strive to give all employees a voice. Regardless of age and tenure, we give all employees a forum in which they can share ideas, feedback, and concerns. This approach makes our workplaces more inclusive, which then yields solutions and outcomes that benefit all.

IN: What brought you to do this work? Is there a personal motivation from your past that inspired you in this direction?

CC: We face a huge lost opportunity in the business world, and I'd argue in our personal lives too, when we don't seek out and build relationships with people who are different from

"We give all employees a forum in which they can share ideas, feedback, and concerns ... which then yields solutions and outcomes that benefit all."

us—getting to know them, taking a chance on them, or giving them the opportunity to learn and grow. If we don't do this, we all lose, because we miss out on the potential and range of contributions that others can offer.

When I was young, my parents separated, and my mom had to figure out how to support four children following 15 years as a homemaker. When she was starting over, most people discounted her; however, she went on to put four children through college, grad school, and law school. She could have thrown in the towel, but she overcame a multitude of hurdles because she believed there was too much at stake.

As a person of color in Corporate America, I'm often the only one in the room who looks like me, and sometimes that can feel like I'm on an island all to myself. But learning from my mother, who fought for others with far fewer resources and opportunities than I

have now, I know I need to continue to be the change I want to see in the world, inviting others onto my island and encouraging them to do the same.

IN: For a number of years, practitioners of diversity and inclusion have been making the business case for D&I. Do you think this message is sinking in? If your CEO or someone else on your leadership team does not fully buy in to the idea that a culture of diversity and inclusion is a competitive advantage, how do you convince them?

CC: For a large, consumer-based business, diversity and inclusion is not an option but rather a business strategy. We MUST understand, reflect, and respond to the consumers who purchase our products around the world and the employees who serve them.

Data is the key to success. Through data, we can illustrate the demographics of who we sell to, what they purchase, when, and why. When we can demonstrate to a leader the return on investment or we can illustrate how D&I can be operationalized on a daily basis, the message sinks in and we gain full buy-in.

At WBA, we also have a fierce champion of diversity and inclusion in our executive vice president and global chief human resources officer, Kathleen Wilson-Thompson. She positions D&I as a business imperative—a means by which to accelerate change and maintain our competitive advantage in the marketplace. Kathleen knows that D&I is an essential driver of business performance; a talented, diverse, and highly engaged workforce is what every purpose-driven organization seeks to acquire and retain. Through her ongoing engagement with the executive leadership team, she positions D&I as a regular business topic at executive and board of directors' meetings. **IN**



John Volturo

Executive Coach

John Volturo is a business strategist and executive coach. His transformational omnichannel consumer initiatives have driven over \$1.5 billion in top-line growth for brands such as Havas, Viacom, Bertelsmann, Guthy-Renker, BeachMint, Spark Networks, and Basic Research.

Volturo's team built out Tony Robbins's Personal Power and Get the Edge products, which have changed the lives of 40 million customers. He was also responsible for reigniting the Pilates craze in the United States through the introduction of Winsor Pilates.

Through Volturo's leadership at BeachMint, he connected six celebrity/influencer-driven

businesses, generating millions of members for Jessica Simpson, Justin Timberlake, Kate Bosworth, Rachel Bilson, and Brooke Burke.

Volturo is president-elect of the International Coaching Federation of Los Angeles. As an out gay man for 30 years, he is passionate about advancing LGBTQ+ acceptance at work. He has dedicated his life's work to raising awareness with allies and developing strategies with LGBTQ+ people to navigate the workplace. This work has never been more important because more than 50 percent of all LGBTQ+ people in the United States are still in the closet and are not bringing their authentic selves to work. Volturo's work in the LGBTQ+ community focuses on strategies that drive inclusion and full expression of each person.

Inclusion: What brought you to do this work?

John Volturo: I am compelled to help LGBTQ+ people navigate the workplace because I grew up without any models for success, and it doesn't have to be that way anymore. Growing up in Brooklyn, New York, in the 1980s, I was the young gay boy who was not savvy enough to realize that I should hide who I was to be accepted. Instead, I presented the full spectrum of myself to people, and I was often on the receiving end of discrimination and physical violence.

The same experience followed me to college and the workplace. I decided to be myself, not knowing I would become a target for sexual comments, overt discrimination, and worse. There were zero out LGBTQ+ leaders when I started work—not much has changed, as there are only about 20 openly



“I got an executive coach who sadly told me to model myself in the image of my boss—basically to be someone else.”

gay directors of Fortune 500 companies. Back then, people uttered hateful things to LGBTQ+ people they’d never speak to anyone else, even at that time. I thought I would never succeed because non-LGBTQ+ people equated being gay with sex. I was uncomfortable at work and overlooked, though I was a productive contributor. When that happens, sometimes we seek to create a distraction. So I got an MBA. I became a worker with an MBA instead of just a gay employee. As a leader, I intentionally hired women, people of color, and people from different religious backgrounds. I knew personally that diversity was vital to workplace success. Fast-forward, and I’m an executive coach. Everything is coming full circle, where now my main focus is helping LGBTQ+ leaders navigate and succeed in the workplace.

IN: What are some challenges you faced in the workplace as an out gay man, and how did you navigate them?

JV: It’s challenging to be an out LGBTQ+ person at work. Many LGBTQ+ people don’t have traditional backgrounds. At one job where I was an executive, there was an impenetrable old boys network of married white men with kids. I wanted to excel, but I didn’t want to be someone else. It was rough. I got an executive coach who sadly told me to model myself in the image of my boss—basically to be someone else. To succeed, I was told, I had to change my way of dressing, how I styled my hair. Only then would I be part of the club—the club that held the key to my entire professional future.

In another role, I was the chief marketing officer at a Christian-only dating website. Imagine, an openly gay man running one of the world’s largest Christian dating sites! Before I

took that job, I mentioned to my CEO that I am a married gay man with children (visualize a straight ally having to do this). I told my CEO that a safe environment was required for me to fully show up and do the job the CEO and board wanted me to do. That’s a luxury many others don’t have, and I recognized this. When I arrived at the job, I faced a different reality, however. The words on paper didn’t mean as much when we dealt with outside stakeholders, who would say things like, “I don’t want to work with an organization that supports gay rights or marriage.” We needed those stakeholders to perform for us so we could achieve for the Christian community. I felt torn. My stress level rose because I had a responsibility to the board, but I also had a duty to myself and my family. I had to walk a tightrope to be authentic while getting the job done. That was a pivotal moment, and I realized the ground rules had to change for LGBTQ+ people at work and that my experiences and journeys could be transformative for others.

IN: Is there a piece of advice that a mentor or sponsor in the workplace gave you that has served you well?

JV: In California in 2008, Prop 8 was on the ballot. My family’s and friends’ futures were in the balance. Voters would either approve or disapprove of gay marriage, potentially nullifying those marriages already made. It felt like it was a vote to determine whether I was a legitimate member of society. A mentor told me I should be myself and fight for my rights. After the vote passed and marriage became restricted to opposite-sex people, I oddly felt this permission to stop being someone else at work and, instead, to stand up for rights and to be visible about it. Three or four years of wearing different outfits, combing my hair conservatively, and trying to figure out how to get into the good ol’ boys club were finally over. I didn’t fit that mold, and it was okay. I began to look inward and start making choices that were authentic to me to succeed.

IN: You are an executive coach. Who do you coach?



JV: My clients include LGBTQ+ individuals and their straight allies. While we may want similar outcomes in life, we may have different ways of achieving those professional and personal goals. With LGBTQ+ individuals, I work to identify strategies to grow their presence, contribute at their highest value, and show up as a whole person. To achieve that outcome, many recognize that the success formula requires openness and honesty. So, we work together on strategies to come out, first learning how safe it would be at their company—and, if that's their path, how best to bring their whole person to work. It's a process, and the employee's safety, both physical and emotional, is of paramount importance.

I also work with LGBTQ+ people who are already out and want more from their careers. They want to make sure their values are in alignment with their company, so together we develop a plan and a process to succeed. Leadership presence is a key reason people seek executive coaches. Sometimes this also means building presence, enhancing leadership skills, becoming more self-aware—important workplace traits that allow people to achieve for the company and themselves.

I also work with non-LGBTQ+ managers on building diverse, more inclusive workplaces that focus on success metrics. We all know, via research, that decisions that result in higher profitability occur when made by a diverse group of people. On top of that, we also run coaching circles for LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ people, workshops, and seminars. I do public speaking engagements as well.

IN: What are some common misconceptions that need to be dispelled to help LGBTQ+ feel fully included in the workplace?

JV: LGBTQ+ people battle bias in the most common of routines. Whether we want to buy a wedding cake or hit the gym with friends, everyday activities and work are fraught with potential challenges. We can all help dispel the most common biases about LGBTQ+ people, including their sexualization. For example, it's just as likely that non-LGBTQ+ people will be

attracted to others at work as it is for LGBTQ+ people. Issues of gender identity are challenging for non-LGBTQ+ people. Very few straight men worry about their masculinity. Gay men do. This can result in intentionally lowering one's visibility, which is not going to help people grow their companies or their salaries. Allies can help to bridge the gap in understanding each other by fostering open dialogues at work and helping to visibly increase the contributions of LGBTQ+ people at work and in the community.

IN: What are some of the challenges specific to the LGBTQ+ population who aspire to top leadership roles, such as the C-suite?

JV: Interestingly, the biggest challenge I see today for up-and-coming LGBTQ+ leaders is in aligning company culture with stated LGBTQ+-friendly policies, plus fostering an environment where LGBTQ+ leaders with significant influence and authority can be open and more visible, so LGBTQ+ people may advance in the workplace. We need more visible role models at the very top.

Despite the fact that 93 percent of all Fortune 500 companies have diversity and inclusion initiatives, for a lot of LGBTQ+ people, it's still "don't ask, don't tell," meaning they will remain quiet about their lives to land a job, and maybe, just maybe, come out over time if it feels safe and after they've developed



From top: John in the studio recording *Lessons My Father Never Taught Me* podcast, April 2019; John on *Food Exposed*, with Jackie Keller; John with International Coaching Federation CEO Magda Mook and Coach Asuka Naito

“Despite the fact that 93 percent of all Fortune 500 companies have [D&I] initiatives, for a lot of LGBTQ+ people, it’s still ‘don’t ask, don’t tell.’”

a proven track record. The reality is often different for those on the ground who are thinking about an upward career path. Coaches are powerful allies for individuals in the LGBTQ+ community. Questions like “Can I keep a photo of my spouse or partner on the desk?” become very real deal-breakers for someone striving to be part of the C-suite. That’s too much stress to deal with when you have deadlines. When you look at corporate leaders, it’s hard to find openly LGBTQ+ leaders. Fewer than 20 of the board directors at Fortune 500 were openly gay in 2018. With more out role models, things can change.

We may have marriage equality in the US, but there is still no federal protection that prohibits LGBTQ+ discrimination, meaning a person risks getting fired in 29 states for being lesbian or gay and in 31 states for being trans. So, there’s a hodgepodge of protections, and unless the federal law changes, we will have to continue to open the hearts and minds of people until enough people demand that change happens. Sadly, for LGBTQ+ workers to be protected depends on where you live and the company for which you work.

IN: Is security a pressing concern for LGBTQ+ people in the workplace? Do you have any metrics or stories as examples?

JV: Security is absolutely a pressing concern for LGBTQ+ people in the workplace. According to the Human Rights Campaign, around 50 percent of LGBTQ+ workers are in the closet at work, and unfortunately, they have a good reason. Consider this data from Catalyst, the research company: 20 percent of LGBTQ+ Americans have experienced discrimination when applying for jobs, 22 percent have not been promoted or paid equal to their peers, 27 percent of transgender workers either were not hired, were fired, or were not promoted due to their gender identity, and over 50 percent of LGBTQ+ employees overheard harmful lesbian or gay jokes at work. Perhaps, as a result, 31 percent of LGBTQ+ workers say they’re depressed or unhappy at work. It’s no wonder LGBTQ+ people often hide personal relationships and change the way they speak and the way they look. It’s not that safe. That’s why they are looking to avoid



John at “What is Culture?” conference, Los Angeles, June 2019.

discrimination and harming work relationships.

Things may change, however. All eyes are on the Supreme Court now as three landmark civil rights cases are in the justices’ hands. In each case, a company fired a worker because the worker was part of the LGBTQ+ community. If the court rules in favor of the plaintiffs, Title VII could cover sexual orientation or gender identity and provide federal workplace protections to the LGBTQ+ community.

IN: How can allies and LGBTQ+ people work together to increase workplace acceptance and security?

JV: LGBTQ+ people are constantly observing surroundings for signals that it’s safe to be ourselves—and, yes, it’s exhausting. Allies have been and will remain critical to our safety, growth, and workplace acceptance. Thank you, allies!

I generally tell allies that the best they can do is visibly help out and listen to LGBTQ+ people, take a stand against derogatory comments, and use nongender pronouns as often as possible. This behavior is inclusive and makes a real difference.

Sharing can make a huge difference in the workplace. Case in point: A straight friend of mine leads one of the largest gay employee resource groups in his industry in a southwestern state. At his wedding, he and his bride proclaimed that they don’t take privilege for granted. They talked about the work to be done and devoted their ceremony to the inclusivity of the LGBTQ+ community in the workplace and community.

To effect change at his company, he started a conversation about inclusion, affirmed the LGBTQ+ people he knew, and created a safe place by making sure conversations did not contain noninclusive or offensive language, and then LGBTQ people became more comfortable. This gathering for LGBTQ+ people and their allies took off, and it made a difference for many, many workers when the resource group got off the ground. When we look at how partners can support us, I tell this story. That’s a faithful ally. **IN**

THE LAST WORD

Diversity/s Working

BY DR. SHEILA ROBINSON

In the last year or so, I've been reading in scholarly journals and hearing reports about how diversity and inclusion initiatives are not working. These sources cite the lack of diverse representation in C-suites, that diverse employees continue to be subject to bias on a day-to-day basis, and even that racism may have been normalized in our society in recent years, creating a work environment that is not conducive to real change.

I am here to tell you to ignore those naysayers because every year, in fact every day, I see positive signs that the work we do is making a difference.

Here's a sampling:

- ▶ About 750 CEOs, in 85 different industries, have signed a pledge to create a more diverse workplace. We all know that change must start at the top, so this is very encouraging.
- ▶ Companies are announcing that they have reached—or even surpassed—their D&I objectives. For example, Intel recently announced that it achieved its goals for the hiring of underrepresented minorities (URM) two years ahead of schedule.
- ▶ A Deloitte study revealed that from 2012 to 2018, the number of Fortune 500 companies with greater than 40 percent board diversity doubled.

“Companies are not faceless entities. They are made up of people, people who are committed to bettering their workplace.”



the remarkable ways in which companies are transforming the culture of their workplace to make sure people feel that they can bring their fullest self to work every day.

I think my biggest takeaway from this issue is this: the universal acknowledgment that companies are not faceless entities. They are made up

- ▶ Earlier this year, the state of California passed a law that requires all publicly held domestic and foreign corporations whose principal executive offices are in California to have at least one female director on its board, the first state to do so.

Then there is Salesforce, which every year conducts an internal pay audit to make sure there is pay equity across the board.

This certainly isn't to say that we still don't have a long way to go and a lot of work to do to achieve gender parity, especially for women of color. But I like to look at these positive trends as harbingers of change.

This issue of *Inclusion* is another powerful example of how companies are getting it. Eight D&I leaders do a deep dive into the cutting-edge trends and challenges that drive companies today. I was amazed and heartened by the sheer variety of issues addressed—from the application of AI to

of people, people who are committed to bettering their workplace, their communities and, indeed, the world. Creating inclusive workplaces, bottom line, is about making them more human.

As our society and workplaces become more tech driven, maintaining that human element will become more challenging—and important. We need to be intentional in creating workplaces that are welcoming, inclusive, and creative. Read on and you will be as impressed as I am how companies and their D&I leaders are leading the way. **IN**

Dr. Sheila Robinson is the founder and CEO of Robinson & Associates Communications LLC, and the publisher of Diversity Woman and Inclusion magazines. She is the author of Lead by Example. #inclusionmatters

SCENES FROM LAST YEAR



WORKFORCE 2025: Transforming Culture for Greater Inclusion & Business Success

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As leaders in the tech industry

you recognize the importance of gender diversity, the challenge of finding great talent, advancing and retaining that talent in corporate environments that are often not set up for women to succeed. This conference provides leaders with the tools and cutting-edge practices to become proficient in recruiting, retaining and advancing more women inclusive of diverse and multicultural women.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Male Advocates for Gender Diversity and Advancing Women in Tech
- Business Leaders Who Recognize the Importance of Diverse Teams
- Human Resource Leaders
- Diversity & Inclusion Leaders
- Supervisors & Managers
- Non-Profit Leaders
- Career Game-Changers
- Diverse & Multicultural Women



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