CAREER BUSINESS EDUCATION LIFESTYLE

MAGAZINE

JANUARY 2024

INAUGURAL ISSUE

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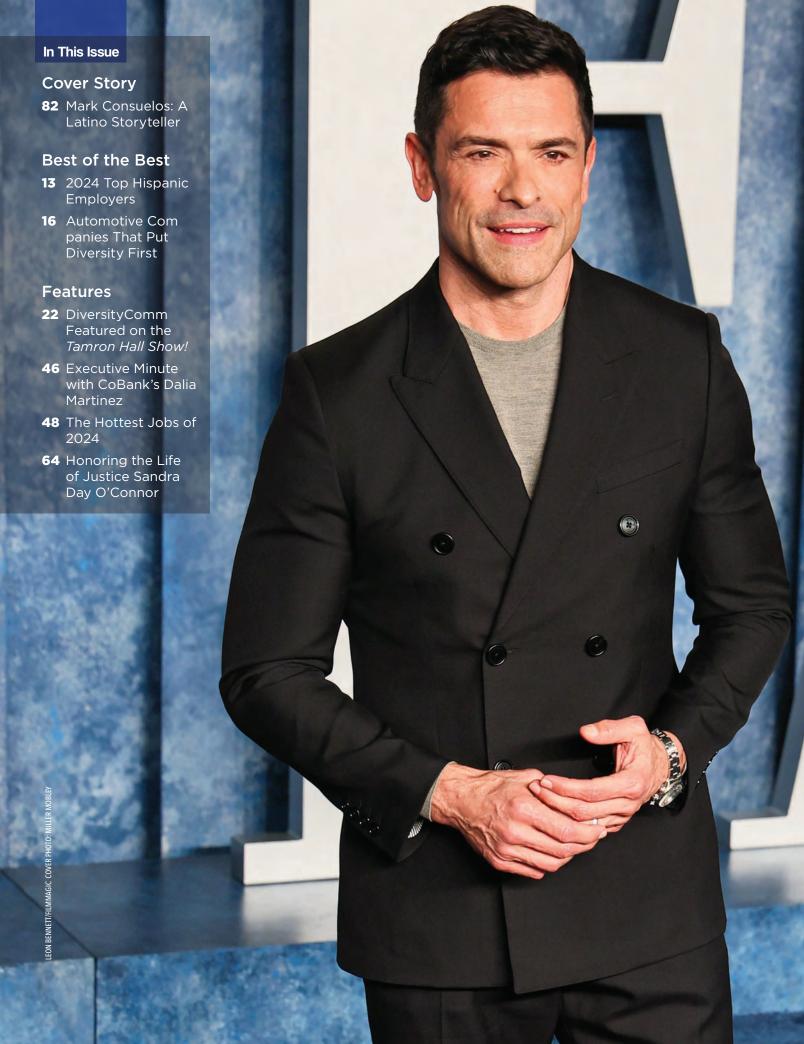
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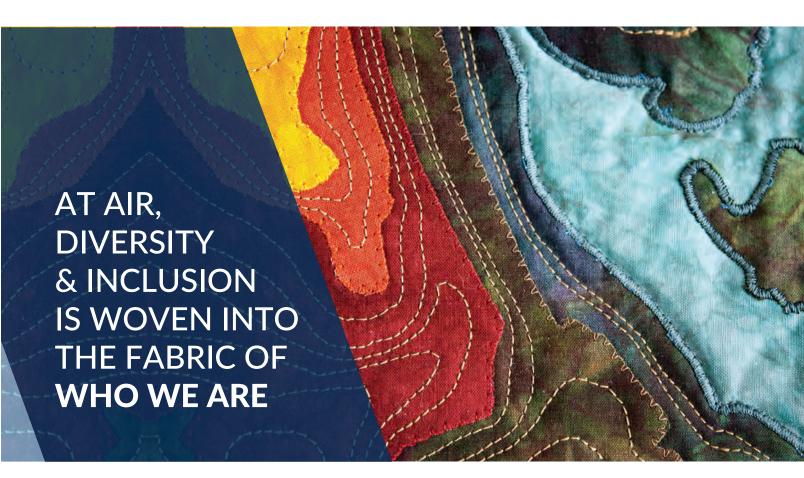


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AIR's commitment to diversity and inclusion starts with our staff. We seek to include people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives in pursuit of our mission. Our staff differ not only in their racial and ethnic backgrounds but also in age, work style, gender identity, education, area of expertise, and much more. At AIR, diverse perspectives are shared, heard, and included in the decision-making process to help us understand and connect with communities of all backgrounds and cultures.

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Our purpose

Bringing our heart to every moment of your health™



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2024 Salary Guide

Get the insights that are helping employers and job seekers make smarter salary decisions.

Explore the guide now at roberthalf.com/salary-guide



Welcome to DiversityComm Magazine!

Dear Valued Readers,

I am thrilled to share the launch of *Diversity Comm Magazine* with you. As publishers of esteemed titles such as the *Black EOE Journal*, *HISPANIC Network Magazine*, *Professional WOMAN's Magazine*, *DIVERSEability Magazine*, and *Diversity in STEAM Magazine*, we are proud to consolidate our expertise and bring you a magazine that encapsulates the very essence of what you love about our publications.

In crafting *DiversityComm Magazine*, our goal is not only to further celebrate the rich tapestry of multiple diverse communities but also to focus on how we can elevate these groups within the professional world. Emphasizing education, business and employment, we are dedicated to featuring perspectives and advice from industry leaders, professionals and fascinating individuals who are making a difference.

This all-inclusive magazine allows us to amplify our digital footprint, reaching an even larger and more diverse audience with the organic and comprehensive articles, resources and opportunities you have come to appreciate. Building on our 35+ years of experience in the DEI sector, *DiversityComm Magazine* will introduce new and improved features beneficial to

career seekers, workers, recruiters, managers and business owners alike.

Here are some highlights of what you can expect:

- Job Postings: Explore tailored employment opportunities from DEI-focused companies and diversity professionals, both in our magazine and on our new online job board.
- Best of the Best Recognitions with C-Suite Series: Our program recognizing top diversity professionals will now include a different Best of the Best list alongside an exclusive profile with a different C-suite DEI executive in many of our issues.
- Organic Feature Articles: Engage with comprehensive articles containing valuable information for working professionals.
- 4. Partnerships: We are committed to providing a targeted and impactful experience for our readers through partnerships with diverse conferences, career fairs, and events.
- 5. Inclusive Reach (Geo-Targeting): Utilizing first-party proprietary data, we connect advertisers and recruiters with their desired target audience.

Beyond our digital magazine, DiversityComm remains committed to providing a targeted and effective experience for our readers. Celebrating over 30 years in the industry, we take immense pride in introducing *DiversityComm Magazine*, poised to grow our distribution and readership to over 1 million strong. This achievement is a testament to the passion for diversity that we share with our dedicated team—a team committed to delivering unparalleled customer service.

To our readers, thank you for your unwavering support on this incredible journey. We eagerly anticipate embarking on this new chapter with you, creating a space where diversity is not just celebrated but embraced in every issue of *DiversityComm Magazine*.

Here's to a future filled with inspiration, inclusivity and boundless possibilities!

To subscribe and gain access to our newly updated website, including our seven diverse subsites, visit diversitycomm.net.

Sincerely, Mona Lisa Faris Founder & Publisher, DiversityComm Magazine





January 2024 Vol. 1, Issue 1

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DiversityComm Magazine is published monthly by DiversityComm, Inc. 18 Technology Drive, Suite 170, Irvine, CA 92618

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Print subscription: 1 Year (12 Issues) \$60.00 Digital subscription: \$11.99; Single copy: \$5.50 subscription@diversitycomm.net

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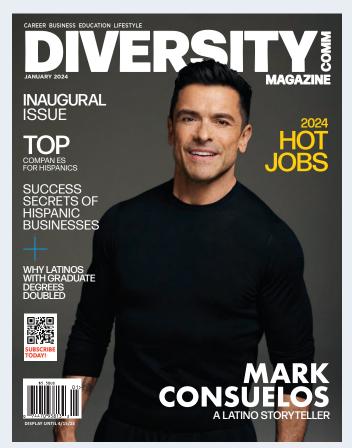




DiversityComm Magazine (DCM) is the premier resource magazine providing career, business, education opportunities, lifestyle news and is the link between the qualified students, career & business candidates, educational institutions, corporate America and the federal government. DCM is a WBENC- and DOBEcertified company.

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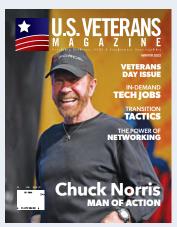
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t DiversityComm, Inc., we believe that diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are the foundations of success for any business or organization. Tracking the trends, staying aware of forward-think ing DEI policies and being listed on the top lists of diversity and equity leaders is what it's going to take for businesses, institu tions and nonprofits to continue growing and performing. According to one study from Ethi sphere, ethical companies outperform their competition by 7.1%. Though another study from i-Sight found that those on key DEI lists and rankings made more than double the prof its of comparable companies. Our Best of the Best list seeks to recognize the organizations that have gone above and beyond to create

more inclusive, equitable workspaces where diverse talent can be recruited, developed and retained. We recognize them for their commit ment to uplifting values and fostering a great workplace culture. In the words of Mona Lisa Faris, our founder and publisher, "Diversity is your superpower," she said, "Embrace it. When you embrace and understand the value of diversity, you have the capability to maxi mize your creativity, problem-solving skills and inclusivity, which ultimately leads to increas ing profitability. It allows you to compete on a whole other level businesswise, both inter nally and in reputation." For more information, please visit diversitycomm.net/methodology.

To receive a survey invite, please contact surveys@diversitycomm.net.

We are proud to continue and further our commitment to our Best of the Best program, which recognizes the top companies putting DEI initiatives at the forefront of their business models.



Abbott Laboratories	Comcast
Accenture	Consolidated Edison Company
Adient	Cummins Inc.
ADP	Danaher
Aflac	DaVita
Air Products & Chemicals	DISH Network, LLC
ALDI	Dow Inc.
Alight Solutions	Ecolab Inc.
AT&T Inc.	Eli Lilly and Company
Avery Dennison	F.N.B. Corporation
Bank of America	Fannie Mae
Baylor Scott & White Health	First Horizon Corporation
Booz Allen Hamilton	Ford Motor Company
Bristol Myers Squibb	FOX Corporation
Cardinal Health	General Dynamics Information Technology (GDIT)
CarMax	General Motors
CBRE	Global Atlantic Financial Group
CDW	Higher Education Recruitment Consortium
Charter Communications	Hilton
Chevron Corporation	HP Inc.
Chipotle Mexican Grill	Humana
Cigna	IBM
Citigroup Inc.	Idaho National Laboratories
CoBank Inc.	Intel Corporation
Colgate-Palmolive Company	Johnson & Johnson



JPMorgan Chase & Co.	Stanley Black & Decker
KPMG US	State Farm Insurance
Kyndryl	State Street Corporation
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories	
Levi Strauss & Co.	The Boeing Company
Lowe's Companies, Inc.	The Coca-Cola Company
Marriott International, Inc.	The Hershey Company
Mastercard Inc.	The Interpublic Group of Companies, Inc.
McDonald's Corporation	TIAA
McKesson Corporation	Tyson Foods
Medtronic plc	U.S. Bank
Merck & Co., Inc.	Union Pacific
MetLife, Inc.	United Rentals, Inc.
Michelin	United Sites Services
Microsoft	USAA
Morgan Stanley	Veolia North America
New York Life	Verizon Communications Inc.
Nike, Inc.	Walgreens Boots Alliance
Northern Trust Corporation	Walmart Inc.
Northrop Grumman Corporation	Wellmark
Nvidia	Wells Fargo & Company
Pfizer	Wesco International
Procter & Gamble	Windstream Holdings
SAIC	Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, Inc.
Southwest Airlines Co.	Xerox Corporation



Automotive Companies That Put Diversity First

DiversityComm Magazine's Best of the Best program will now include industry-specific top companies and employers who excel at moving the needle forward with their diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts. The following industries will be featured throughout the year: hospitality, pharmaceutical, banking, insurance, health care, finance, travel and utilities, retail and telecom, manufacturing and tech.

ccording to the Center for Automotive Research, over 1.7 million people are employed in the automotive industry. We all know that promoting and executing DEI-focused initiatives is important, but it can make a significant impact within larger corporations like those in the automotive industry. This month, we're taking a look at some of the top automotive companies working to prioritize

DEI within every sphere of their

business.

2024 TOP AUTOMOTIV	E BUSINESSES
Toyota	Honda
General Motors	Volkswagen
Ford Motor Company	Hyundai
Stellantis	Volvo
Nissan	Kia



TOYOTA

Regarded as one of the top diversity-centered companies, Toyota has been working towards a more inclusive workplace for at least 20 years. In 2002, Toyota founded the Toyota Lexus Minority Owners Dealership Association, an organization prioritizing DEI commitments to dealerships nationwide that is still active today. They are not only known for increasing inclusion in their office through their diversity inclusion board but have created several business partnering groups—employee-driven networks amongst specific demographics of Toyota employees. These volunteer organizations function similarly to ERGs and work to support business goals, strengthen innovation and promote inclusion. Toyota has also been recognized numerous times by organizations like the National Minority Supplier Diversity Council (NMSDC) and the Human Rights Campaign for their continued commitment to diversity. Source: Toyota

GENERAL MOTORS

Another top innovator of diversity in the industry, General Motors (GM), prides itself in its inclusion efforts. The company has clear DEI goals focusing on the importance of global inclusion, and they pride themselves on their ERGs and pay rates. Like Toyota, GM also hosts a plethora of specialty groups for employees of differing races, ethnicities, abilities, genders, sexualities and areas of origin designed to educate and strengthen workplace relationships. In an article published by CNBC in 2019, GM was also the only company to achieve a pay gap of less than 3% between men and women. GM has also created an Inclusion Advisory Board where diverse leaders within and outside of the company contribute their expertise and resources to develop DEI initiatives that are informed and effective.

Sources: CNBC, General Motors





Fairness. Respect. Inclusion.

With multicultural roots, Nissan is committed to providing an inclusive space that encourages innovative ideas from our diverse workforce and supply base. We not only respect, but eagerly welcome, the varied perspectives of these talented men and women. Nissan believes our commitment to our core principles of diversity - fairness, respect and inclusion - is essential to creating quality and innovative products.



EMBRACING DIVERSITY



FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Ford is one of the companies most dedicated to DEI and one of the oldest. In 1968, Ford Motor Company launched its Supplier Diversity Development program, the first in the United States. Through this program, which is still going strong today, Ford has worked with numerous minority-, women-, LGBT- and veteran-owned businesses to increase business opportunities, clientele and profits on both sides of the partnership. Ford has numerous diversely-owned businesses, with 168 of their locations being minority-owned as of 2018. Ford has also promoted diversity and inclusion through donations and nonprofit work through the Ford Fund, an initiative that promotes education, safe driving, volunteering and community across the country. Source: Ford Motor Company



NISSAN

From equal hiring opportunities, supplier diversity partnership opportunities and inclusive synergy teams to partnering with diverse community organizations, Nissan has given 110% when it comes to being an inclusive company. But what makes Nissan stand out is their internship program and work with the Nissan Foundation. Since the early 1980s, Nissan has partnered with minority organizations and scholarship programs to help young adults from minority and low-income communities secure the funding, resources and training they need to enter the workforce. These goals are further exemplified through the Nissan Foundation, which aims to promote cultural diversity and inclusion through education, museum work, grants and community events. Source: Nissan



STELLANTIS

The producers of popular car brands such as Jeep, Fiat and Chrysler, Stellantis currently employs workers from about 170 nationalities across 130 markets. With a workforce this diverse, the company has been a longtime advocate for diversity and inclusion initiatives. Along with forming ERGs and setting diversity goals, one of Stellantis' biggest steps toward inclusion came in 2022 when they announced the Dare Forward 2030 campaign. Through this initiative, Stellantis strives to place diversity, people and innovation at the forefront to achieve companywide success and a reduced carbon footprint. One of the many goals of Dare Forward includes diversifying women's leadership positions to over 35% and growing their partnership portfolios to better serve the specific needs of diverse communities around the world. Source: Stellantis



HONDA

Besides achieving the hallmarks of a successful DEI program, Honda has taken their efforts a step further through education and partnerships. Partnering with organizations like the National Urban League and the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Honda has donated funds for scholarships and established programs that promote education for young people of all backgrounds. They host a Battle of the Bands showcase with a scholarship prize for HBCU schools, donate funds to encourage Hispanic scholars in the STEM field and have participated in events supporting racial equality. Most notably, Honda has been the proud host of the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge, which has provided networking, mentorship, leadership opportunities and over \$9 million in grants to HBCU students for over 30 years.

Source: Honda



Inspired by Innovation Powered by Diversity

Visit stellantis.com to learn more about what drives us.



















With over 14 global organizations controlling more than 60 brands, the automotive industry is a competitive environment, but some companies are performing better than others, due in large part to their commitments to achieving DEI-a critical component of the social element of environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria. Source: LinkedIn



VOLKSWAGEN

Volkswagen (VW) also holds DEI to the highest standards; most notably seen through the numerous programs they have implemented to accomplish their goals. Under their diversity program, Diversity Wins @ Volkswagen, VW's diversity management team has set up a thorough training and hiring program to recruit diversity-focused leaders. All VW employees hired into leadership positions must undergo mandatory training sessions detailing why DEI is important to the company. Volkswagen has also implemented The Complete 2.0 Program, which is focused on recruiting and training women into leadership positions, and the Impact Program, which is working to diversify VW's higher-up roles at their headquarters in Wolfsburg, Germany. Source: Volkswagen



HYUNDAI

As part of their DEI efforts, Hyundai focuses on bringing a broad representation of people into their company. Hyundai is dedicated to providing equal opportunities for employee retention and supplier diversity opportunities regardless of their background and experiences. They even host many affinity groups to foster workplace inclusion and recruit diverse candidates into their company. Besides their employees, Hyundai donates their funds to community causes from education and health initiatives to providing up to \$1,000 in accessibility equipment for drivers with disabilities.

Source: Hyundai



For over 10 years, Volvo has committed themselves to everything DEI. They signed the #EmbraceDifference pledge, a European initiative that brings multinational companies together to focus on diverse efforts and have a goal to increase gender equality in their leadership by 35% over the next six years. Volvo also utilizes diverse hiring and "reverse mentoring" to encourage communication, collaboration, inclusion and the flow of new and old ideas to grow their company. The automobile company additionally takes pride in diversifying their engineering field, tailoring jobs and providing accommodations for those with disabilities and their strict code of conduct policies that help to keep the workplace environment inclusive and harassment free. Source: Volvo



Kia is another company that prioritizes diversity not only within the workplace but also outside of it. Within the last few years, Kia has implemented new programs and wide-ranging investments to embed DEI into business and operation practices across the enterprise. Kia's commitment extends to workforce diversity, learning and development programs, and community initiatives. They have also expanded scholarship awards for more than 600 students of color with community partners like the United Negro College Fund, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, American Indian Services and the Korean American Scholarship Foundation. They also have local partnerships extending to school districts and universities for initiatives for low-income students and students of color. Other highlights include the expansion of corporate giving across Kia's national footprint with local community organizations serving communities of color and underrepresented and underserved individuals.

Source: Kia America

V O L V O

DIVERSE PARTNERS MAKE OUR TEAM STRONGER

The Volvo Group, a proud corporate member of NMSDC and CVMSDC, is deeply committed to supplier diversity and acknowledges the tremendous potential of diverse suppliers in fostering innovation, agility and supply network resiliency.







DiversityComm Featured on the Tamron Hall Show!



n November, DiversityComm, Inc. received a very unexpected but welcome surprise. The Emmy Award-winning talk show host, news anchor and producer Tamron Hall, who was featured on the cover of our Summer 2023 issue of the Black EOE Journal, contacted us, asking if she could share the cover live on her daytime ABC talk show, the Tamron Hall Show.

We were thrilled to tune in and were further delighted to learn that not only did Hall proudly share her Black EOE Journal cover on her show, but in a shot of the newsstand rack, pointed out her cover that just happened to be right next to another of DiversityComm's publications, Professional WOMAN's Magazine—specifically featuring our Fall 2023 cover of the iconic Brooke Shields. A very exciting coincidence for sure!

Although these titles have since been merged into our new multicultural publication, DiversityComm Magazine, we are thrilled about the recognition and thank Hall and her show for helping us further our diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.





These Companies Are Looking For You Now!

Employment Opportunities























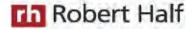




























Supplier Diversity Opportunities















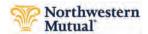






























Mi Triunfo: A Celebration of Hispanic Excellence

This month, we celebrate the accomplishments of the Hispanic and Latinx communities. Here are some of the highlights and the latest and most exciting news:





Bad Bunny Album Becomes the Most Streamed Album in 2023

One of the most successful names in music today, Puerto Rican musical artist Bad Bunny has broken yet another record. On October 13, 2023, Bad Bunny released his newest album, "Nadie Sabe Lo Que Va a Pasar Mañana." It became the most streamed album on a single day in 2023 on the day of its release—out streaming artists like Taylor Swift and Lana Del Ray, who also released new albums last year. Bad Bunny was the most streamed artist on Spotify for the last several years, and his accolades are expected to continue as we head into the music award season.

Sources: Rolling Stone, Billboard



Adriana Kugler **Becomes** the Federal Reserve's First Latina Governor

Economist Adriana D. Kugler made history this last year when she officially became the first Latina to serve on the Federal Reserve System's Board of Governors. The Federal Reserve Board is tasked with overseeing the nation's federal reserve banks and helping implement the country's monetary policy. Appointed by President Joe Biden and confirmed in September of 2023, Kugler will serve her term through January 31,

Sources: Federal Reserve System. Wikipedia





Karol G Awarded Spirit of Hope Award

Karol G is well known for her artistry in the music world, philanthropy and advocacy efforts. At the 2023 Billboard Latin Music Awards, Karol G was honored with the Spirit of Hope Award, designed to commend individuals doing exceptional humanitarian work. She was recognized for her work with her organization, the Con Cora Foundation, which addresses the social, legal, educational, cultural and emotional needs of vulnerable women in Latin America. Upon receiving her award, she stated, "This will probably be one of the most special awards I receive in my career." Sources: USA Today, Con Cora Foundation



Eva Longoria and Cris Abrego Launch New Diverse Media Company

Actress and activist Eva Longoria has partnered with producer Cris Abrego to launch Hyphenate Media Group, a diversity-focused and creator-led media company. The platform will showcase scripted and unscripted works, including many of Longoria's current projects, with the goal of giving control back to diverse creators. Many, if not all, of the programs will also highlight creators from historically marginalized groups. Longoria said of the project, "I know creators who are being suffocated by the system (Hollywood), so Hyphenate will create the ultimate model."

Sources: Deadline, Wikipedia



Latinos with **Graduate Degrees** Doubled in 10 **Years**

A recent study by the Pew Research Center found that Latinos have seen the fastest growth in obtaining advanced degrees out of any racial or ethnic group. In analyzing the data of graduate students from the 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2021 censuses, analysts found that Latinos with graduate degrees jumped from 700,000 to 2.5 million from 2000 to 2021. Specifically, Latina women with graduate degrees increased by 291% and Latino men with degrees increased by 199%.

Source: NBC News



Daniel Noboa **Becomes Youngest President of Ecuador**

A new president has been elected in Ecuador, and he's already making headlines. Businessman, entrepreneurial heir and politician Daniel Noboa was elected to office in late September, just a few months shy of his 36th birthday. He is the youngest person to ever serve as the country's president. Noboa was elected when former President Guillermo Lasso's term was cut short due to controversies. He will serve as president until May of 2025. Noboa will work to establish effective safety measures as Ecuador struggles with its high violence and criminal activity rates.

Sources: NBC News, Wikipedia



"Little Joe" Awarded the National Heritage Fellowship Award

The National Endowment of the Arts, the highest national award honoring folk and traditional arts, recognized music legend Joe "Little Joe" DeLeón Hernández with their National Heritage Fellowship Award. This award seeks to acknowledge talent that has shown artistic excellence and national influence throughout their career. Not only is "Little Joe" credited with popularizing an entire genre, bringing Tejano or Tex-Mex music to the mainstream, but he is credited with helping other Latin artists like Selena rise in popularity. He has released 70 albums throughout his career, winning four GRAMMYS and one Latin GRAMMY, and is known for his extensive work in social justice activism.

Sources: National Endowment for the Arts, NBC News





AEC Unites:

Pioneering a More Diverse Industry for Architecture, **Engineering & Construction**

eaded by one of the oldest Black-owned construction companies in the United States, the architecture, engineering and construction fields are introducing an initiative that is putting diversity as a priority.

National architecture, engineering and construction leaders are launching AEC Unites to inspire, promote and spur equity and inclusion in the AEC industry for Black talent and Black-owned businesses. Historically, Blacks have been severely underrepresented in AEC, which employs over 13 million workers-9% of the U.S. workforce. In 2022, Black workers held only 7% of all AEC jobs even though they represented 13% of all workers. By contrast, white workers comprise 77% of the workforce yet hold 87% of all construction jobs and 83% of all architecture and engineering jobs.

As a nonprofit membership organization, AEC Unites seeks to increase intentional opportunities for Black talent and Black-owned businesses in all facets of the AEC industry. Through efforts ranging from partnerships with historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and other groups to mentorship, training, professional development and coaching, it will serve as a resource for Black talent. To create sustainable opportunities and support Black-owned businesses, it will offer member companies a data-

base of Black-owned AEC businesses and a playbook on how to work with them.

AEC Unites is the brainchild of Deryl McKissack, who founded McKissack & McKissack in 1990. The company is the outgrowth of a design and construction company started by her great-great-grandfather, who was freed McKissack attributes AEC's lack of

from slavery after the Civil War.



13.7M

Working Americans are employed in the AEC community

7%

Blacks and African Americans comprise just 7% of the construction workforce

7%

Only 7% of architecture and engineering professionals are Black and African American



66 Experience has taught me that Black businesses and professionals get hired for major projects in this industry mostly when it's required—and then it's usually as subcontractors rather than project leads. It's a constant struggle to be accepted as lead."

> **Deryl McKissack** founder, McKissack & McKissack

diversity and her motivation to act to systemic racism and unconscious biases, both of which she has experienced many times over as a Black female civil engineer.

"These prejudices were obvious on the first day of my first job as a field engineer for a major AEC firm. My boss had a Confederate flag hanging on the wall behind his desk," McKissack explained.

Though that was one of her earliest experiences with racism, it was far from her last. "Experience has taught me that Black businesses and professionals get hired for major projects in this industry mostly when it's required—and then it's usually as subcontractors rather than project leads," McKissack said. "It's a constant struggle to be accepted as lead."

Fighting for Equity

McKissack was moved to seek systemic change after the events of George Floyd and the reprehensible display of nooses on job

sites. Moved to action, she enlisted industry leaders as her co-founders and is serving as AEC Unites board chair and president.

Joining AEC Unites as co-founders are Turner Construction Company President and CEO Peter Davoren as board co-chair and secretary and Jacobs Executive Chair Steve Demetriou as board co-chair and treasurer. Members of the founding board of directors include Hensel Phelps President and CEO Mike Choutka, WSP USA CEO Lou Cornell, Gensler co-CEO Diane Hoskins, Stantec EVP

and COO Stuart Lerner, Moody Nolan CEO Jonathan Moody, Clark Construction Group CEO Robert D. Moser, Jr., H.J. Russell CEO Michael Russell and former HOK Chairman and CEO Bill Helmuth, who passed away earlier this year, posthumously.

After a national search, AEC Unites' leadership team hired Tia Perry, an award-winning AEC leader with a proven 17-year track record in fostering equity and inclusion and driving membership growth, as executive director.

AEC will be specifically working

to diversify their fields, promote the importance of DEI, and improve their industries as a whole.

"With building and construction so important to our nation's strength, AEC is fundamental to the success of every other industry and contributes so much to our GDP that it must become more inclusive." Jacobs Executive Chair Steve Demetriou said. "Given the tight costs and returns that apply to building projects today and the changing nature of the nation's populace, it takes diverse project teams to be attuned to the perspectives and cultural requirements of projects' end users. They offer teams fresh new perspectives and creative solutions—input that is critical to avoiding costly mistakes that will compromise usability or occupancy rates and impact profitability."

For more information on AEC Unites and how to get involved, visit aecunites.org.

Sources: AEC Unites, McKissack & McKissack





The business voice of the LGBT community



Women's Rights Icon Narges Mohammadi Receives Nobel Peace Prize



he Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2023 to Narges Mohammadi for her fight against the oppression of women in Iran and her fight to promote human rights and freedom for all. Her brave struggle has come with tremendous personal costs. Altogether, the regime has arrested her 13 times, convicted her five times and sentenced her to a total of 31 years in prison and 154 lashes. Mohammadi is still in prison.

In September 2022, a young Kurdish woman, Mahsa Jina Amini, was killed while in the custody of the Iranian morality police. Her killing triggered the largest political demonstrations against Iran's theocratic regime since it came to power in 1979. Under the slogan "Woman - Life - Freedom," hundreds of thousands of Iranians took part in peaceful protests against the authorities' brutality and oppression of women. The regime cracked down hard on the protests: more than 500 demonstrators were killed. Thousands were injured, including

many who were blinded by rubber bullets fired by the police. At least 20,000 people were arrested and held in regime custody.

The motto adopted by the demonstrators "Woman - Life - Freedom"—suitably expresses the dedication and work of Mohammadi:

Woman. She fights for women against systematic discrimination and oppression.

Life. She supports the right for women to live full and dignified lives. This struggle across Iran has been met with persecution, imprisonment, torture and even death.

Freedom. She fights for freedom of expression and the right to independence and against rules requiring women to remain out of sight and to cover their bodies. The freedom demands expressed by demonstrators apply not only to women but to the entire population.

In the 1990s, as a young physics student, Mohammadi was already distinguishing herself as an advocate for equality and women's rights. After concluding her studies, she worked as an engineer as well as a

columnist in various reform-minded newspapers. In 2003, she became involved with the Defenders of Human Rights Center in Tehran, an organization founded by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi. In 2011. Mohammadi was arrested for the first time and sentenced to many years of imprisonment for her efforts to assist incarcerated activists and their families.

Two years later, after her release on bail, Mohammadi immersed herself in a campaign against the use of the death penalty. Iran has long been among the countries that execute the highest proportion of their inhabitants annually. Since January 2022, more than 860 prisoners have been punished by death in Iran.

Her activism against the death penalty led to the re-arrest of Mohammadi in 2015 and a sentence of additional years behind walls. Upon her return to prison, she began opposing the regime's systematic use of torture and sexualized violence against political prisoners, especially women, that is practiced in Iranian prisons.

Last year's wave of protests became known to the political prisoners held inside the notorious Evin prison in Tehran. Once again,

Mohammadi assumed leadership. From prison,

she expressed support for the demonstrators and organized solidarity actions among her fellow inmates. The prison authorities responded by imposing even stricter conditions. Moham-

madi was prohibited from receiving calls and visitors. She nevertheless managed to smuggle out an article that the New York Times published on the first anniversary of Amini's killing. The message was: "The more of us they lock up, the stronger we become." From captivity, Mohammadi has helped to ensure that the protests have not ebbed out.

Mohammadi is a woman, a human rights advocate and a freedom fighter. In awarding her this year's Nobel Peace Prize, the Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes to honor her courageous fight for human rights, freedom and democracy in Iran. This year's Peace Prize also recognizes the hundreds of thousands of people who, in the preceding year, have demonstrated against the theocratic regime's policies of discrimination and oppression targeting women. Only by embracing equal rights for all can the world achieve the fraternity between nations that Alfred Nobel sought to promote. The award to Mohammadi follows a long tradition in which the Norwegian Nobel Committee has awarded the Peace Prize to those working to advance social justice, human rights and democracy. These are important preconditions for lasting peace.

Source: Nobel Prize



Partnering with diverse suppliers

Through Supplier Diversity Development, Lilly aspires to work with more small and diverse-owned businesses to be more reflective of the diverse business community. Our Supplier Diversity Development program is focused on three key areas:

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- » Community engagement
- » Meeting annual compliance goals as a federal government contractor and achieving our annual small business spend goals.

To learn about Lilly's commitment to diverse suppliers and the services we purchase, visit www.lilly.com/suppliers/ supplier-diversity.



WGA East Unanimously Votes Lisa Takeuchi Cullen First AAPI President

By Natalie Rodgers



midst the various Hollywood strikes during the last year, you may have become acquainted with the Writers Guild of America (WGA) East. This union organization has represented the needs of television, film and digital media writers for nearly 70 years. After a five-month strike, the union secured the desired negotiations for their members and elected a new president to their organization.

A writer and longtime WGA member, Lisa Takeuchi Cullen was unanimously elected president of the WGA East, making her the first

person of color to hold the position. She came into the position on the tail end of the writers' strikes and is moving up from her former position as the guild's vice president. While Takeuchi Cullen's presidency has been celebrated, especially amongst the AAPI communities, Takeuchi Cullen is using her "first" to speak on the need for diversity.

"Our guild has existed for 69 years, and I'm only the third woman to be the president? And I'm the first person of color? That is nonsense to me," Takeuchi Cullen told NBC News. "The fact that it took this

long does say a lot, not necessarily about our guild, but really about our industry and how it continues to remain dominated by a certain demographic."

Born and raised in Japan before coming to the United States, Takeuchi Cullen has primarily worked as a writer in just about every capacity and is best known for creating numerous television pilots for big-name studios such as Universal Studios, Netflix, Warner Brothers and CBS. She is also known for her work on the CBS pilot turned television movie The

Ordained and the NBC action series The Endgame. Besides writing for television, Takeuchi Cullen also holds experience in writing for news outlets and as a novelist. She

> worked for TIME Magazine as a staff writer and foreign correspondent and has authored two books with the renowned publishing industries, Penguin and HarperCollins. Takeuchi Cullen has also served in a producing capacity on many of the projects she has written. She was the co-executive producer on her written work The Endgame and The Ordained and

as a consulting producer on Law & Order: SVU.

Along with her work in the industry, Takeuchi Cullen is an established advocate for diversity and inclusion in Hollywood. Under her former position as vice president of WGA East, she was co-chair for the union's committee for Inclusion & Equity and the creator of its various affinity groups. In 2020, her commitment to DEI initiatives within the guild earned her the coveted Richard B. Jablow Award, recognizing extraordinary individuals serving at WGA East.

As she comes into her new role with a new set of negotiations in hand, Takeuchi Cullen hopes to continue efforts for inclusivity in Hollywood and remains hopeful for the inclusion of diverse writers. On this subject, she stated to NBC News:

"The more of us there are, the more we will create our own networks and our own support systems...until our generation, our peers, achieve those things, then we can do those things for future generations. I think that there's hope in that."

Sources: NBC News, IMDb

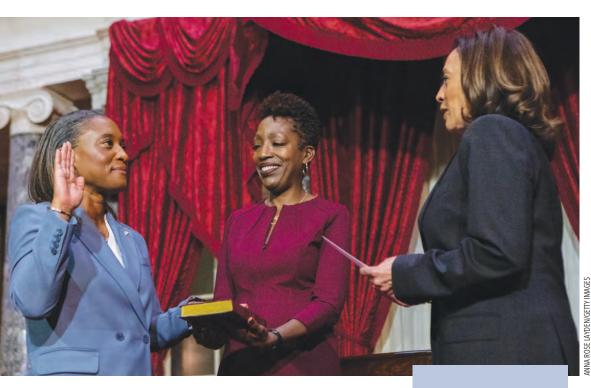


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Laphonza Butler: The First Queer Black Woman in Congress



his last fall, Senator Dianne Feinstein passed away at the age of 90. The first woman to represent the state of California, Feinstein's seat was filled a week later by another woman making some firsts of her own. Labor leader, political strategist and advocate Laphonza Butler was appointed to fill Feinstein's seat about a week af-

ter her passing. She is now the sole Black woman serving in Congress as a U.S. Senator, the first openly nia in the Senate, and the first Black lesbian to openly serve in Congress of the few Black women to repre-Vice President Kamala Harris.

LGBTQ person to represent Califorin American history. She is also one sent the state of California following

As the first openly lesbian Black woman to serve in Congress, her presence in the Senate has been widely celebrated. especially amongst the LGBTQ+ community.



Sen. Laphonza Butler (D-CA) is sworn in by Vice President Kamala Harris in the Old Senate Chamber at the U.S. Capitol on Oct. 3. 2023. Governor Gavin Newsom appointed Butler to the vacant Senate seat representing California following the passing of Dianne Feinstein.

Born and raised in Mississippi, Butler is a prominent figure in the labor movement and an advocate for women's rights. After moving to California in 2009, Butler became the president of the biggest union in California and the largest homecare workers union, SEIU Local 2015. She was elected to this position at just 30 years old, one of the youngest to take on the role, and was responsible for raising the minimum wage rate to \$15 an hour in the first state to do so. Including her experiences with SEIU, Butler now holds nearly 20 years of experience working within the labor movement.

Butler has also become a highly

regarded strategist for electoral campaigns with the Democratic party. In 2018, she became a partner at SCRB Strategies. At this political consulting firm, she served as the senior advisor to Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign in California during the primary and general elections. A longtime supporter of Kamala Harris, Butler has also advocated for many of Harris' elections, acting as the senior advisor to her presidential campaign before Harris became the vice president. Most recently, Butler was a campaign operative behind the campaign to make the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors all women for the first time in its history with the election of Holly Mitchell.

Before coming to the Senate, Butler became the third president of EMILYs List, the nation's largest resource for women in politics. She also served as the director of public policy and campaigns for Airbnb in North America. Butler has been a member of the University of California Board of Regents and the board of directors for the Children's Defense Fund and BLACK PAC.

As the first openly lesbian Black woman to serve in Congress, her presence in the Senate has been widely celebrated, especially amongst the LGBTQ+ community. As California is the home to a large percentage of the country's LGBTQ+ community, Butler's presence in the Senate is expected to bring a louder voice to issues concerning the rights of the LGBTQ+ community on a state and national level.

"I am honored to accept Gov. Newsom's nomination to be a U.S. Senator for a state I have long called home," Butler stated in a press release with EMILYs List. "I will do my best to honor her by devoting my time and energy to serving the people of California and the people of this great nation."

Sources: EMILYs List, NBC News, Legal Defense Fund, Wikipedia



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Washington is First State to Guarantee Income for Indigenous Families



ashington's Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services (IFS), in partnership with the technology platform AidKit, has launched the first guaranteed income program in the United States exclusively serving Indigenous communities.

The program, known as The Nest, is providing \$1,250 monthly payments to up to 150 Indigenous pregnant people until their child's third birthday, delivering as much as \$45,000 per family. The Nest is set to run for the next five years in King

and Pierce counties in Washington

Hummingbird IFS was founded with the mission of healthy Indigenous babies born into healthy Indigenous families supported by healthy Indigenous communities. It primarily provides direct services to families during pregnancy and early childhood. This includes prenatal care, home visiting, labor and birth support, postpartum care, lactation counseling and counseling for abortion, pregnancy loss and family planning. As a community-based

organization, all of these services are imbued with the goal of not only providing this essential care but also wrapping families with cultural reclamation and traditional care. This includes language revitalization, providing traditional meals, community building and making regalia.

"Abundance is a traditional cultural value that has been lost due to relocation and genocide," said Tia Yazzie, Abundance Auntie with Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services. "The Nest supports families in reclaiming abundance

for Indigenous families. Our relatives know that they are cherished, supported and entitled to a future filled with health and well-being. By providing guaranteed income, we are telling them that they are enough, that they are valuable by their very nature."

Indigenous people, especially in the Seattle area, experience disproportionately high rates of poverty, housing insecurity, infant mortality and sexual and intimate partner violence. A recent report by the Maternal Mortality Review shows that



"The Nest supports families in reclaiming abundance for Indigenous families. **Our relatives** know that they are cherished, supported and entitled to a future filled with health and well-being."

-Tia Yazzie, Abundance **Auntie with Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services**



in Washington State, Native women experience seven times the maternal mortality rate when compared to their non-Hispanic white counterparts. This is not due to any intrinsic qualities of these birthing people but rather systemic inequities and lack of access to basic social necessities and health care. Through The Nest and its other programs, Hummingbird IFS aims to disrupt this by promoting healing, health and equity for the communities it serves.

"Guaranteed income is transformative not only because it is associated with decreased perinatal mood disorders, increased self-efficacy and improved birth outcomes, but also because it demonstrates an inherent trust and value in communities whose humanity is consistently devalued by mainstream society," said Camie Goldhammer, founding executive director of Hummingbird IFS. "It's a testament to the profound love and care we have

for our communities that we are able to provide such an impactful program to give financial stability to people at such a critical point in their lives."

AidKit serves as the technology partner for The Nest, a role it has played in other guaranteed income programs such as Cook County Promise, the nation's largest guarsupports a wide range of payment options, including debit cards and direct deposit.

"The Nest is a powerful program providing not just life-changing, but generation-changing, support to Indigenous families," said Brittany Christenson, CEO of AidKit. "Aid-Kit is working to help Hummingbird IFS make running the program



Native women experience seven times the maternal mortality rate when compared to their non-Hispanic white counterparts.

anteed income program, and Rise Up Cambridge, the first citywide program in the United States. Aid-Kit's direct-aid platform provides mobile-friendly application forms, convenient document upload and an in-app tool for determining tribal association and lineage. AidKit

manageable and secure so that their team has more time to spend serving their community, not fighting with spreadsheets."

For more information on The Nest, visit the website at hummingbird-ifs.org.

Source: AidKit



Top 20 Cities for Veteran Entrepreneurs

Intrepreneurship is an excellent option for veterans looking to be their own boss and share their innovations with the world. However, certain cities have been found to be more beneficial to veteran startups than others.

In their annual study, the PenFed Foundation has compiled a list of the top 20 cities for veteran entrepreneurs. The foundation's Veteran Entrepreneur Investment Program (VEIP), which supports veteran-owned startups and businesses through education, preparation and network access, conducted the study in partnership with Edelman Intelligence.

"The military community's resilience and entrepreneurial spirit is invaluable for our nation's business sector. That's why the PenFed Foundation is proud to commission this study for the fourth year in a row, highlighting the cities that are

making strides to support veteran businesses," said PenFed Foundation President Andrea McCarren. "We want to help cities across the United States understand which environments are best suited for military veterans to start and grow businesses and inspire city leaders to take the actions needed to support veteran entrepreneurs."

The study analyzed four main categories for each city: livability, economic growth, support for veterans and ability to start a business. This year's edition put less emphasis on COVID-related factors and increased focus on livability and economic factors.

The study used a custom scoring algorithm based on a robust set of quantitative data from existing Pen-Fed partners and openly available data sources to paint the complete picture of veteran support, city characteristics and entrepreneurship

ability across the U.S. The cities were evaluated based on 390 metropolitan statistical areas.

2023 Top 20 Cities for Veteran Entrepreneurs:

- 1. Raleigh, North Carolina
- 2. Austin-Round Rock, Texas
- 3. Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, Wisconsin
- 4. Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, Washington
- 5. Madison, Wisconsin
- 6. Cleveland-Elyria, Ohio
- 7. Rapid City, South Dakota
- 8. Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Arkansas
- 9. Kansas City, Missouri
- 10. New York-Newark-Jersey City, New York and New Jersey
- 11. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, Virginia
- 12. Cincinnati, Ohio
- **13**. Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Florida

- 14. Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, Texas
- 15. McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, Texas
- 16. Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, Georgia
- 18. Columbus, Ohio
- 19. San Antonio-New Braunfels, Texas
- 20. Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, Illinois

"Veteran-owned businesses often hire more veterans, so supporting veteran entrepreneurs provides more jobs and opportunities for the greater military community, who have served as PenFed's core field of membership since 1935," said PenFed Credit Union President/ CEO and PenFed Foundation CEO James Schenck.

Source: PenFed Foundation







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Almost \$200 Million Given to Improve Opportunities for Students with Disabilities

hanks to significant funding, opportunities for people with disabilities may begin to expand. The Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) announced that it would award nearly \$199 million to 20 model demonstration projects across the country. All 20 projects are dedicated to the economic self-sufficiency of children and youth with disabilities by creating systemic approaches to enhance post-school outcomes.

The funding will go to the Pathways to Partnerships innovative model demonstration project, an initiative that supports collaborative partnerships between state vocational rehabilitation agencies, state and local educational agencies, and federally funded centers for independent living. These programs help individuals with disabilities seamlessly transition to life after high school, preparing them for independent living, competitive integrated employment and community integration. Pathways to Partnerships is the largest discretionary grant ever administered by RSA.

"The Department is committed to providing children and youth with disabilities the support they need to access self-advocacy training, career pathways and independent living," said Glenna Wright-Gallo, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), which oversees RSA. "The Pathways to Partnerships will bridge gaps from school to adult life, independent living and career success... This investment will not only require state and local agencies to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities by finding innovative ways of working together, but it will also look to unlock post-school and career success for those individuals."

The Department awarded recipients of the Pathways to Partnership grants the full funding for a five-year project period-meaning







"The Department is committed to providing children and youth with disabilities the support they need to access self-advocacy training, career pathways and independent living."

> -- Glenna Wright-Gallo, assistant secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)

successful applicants receive all project funds at the beginning of year one. Award recipients will pilot, refine and implement their proposed projects through the fiveyear project period while collecting and analyzing project data.

The funding was dispersed as follows:

- Alaska Department of Education and Early Development: \$10,000,000
- Arkansas Department of Education/Division of Elementary and Secondary Education: \$9,913,236
- Colorado Labor & Employment, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation: \$14,116,234 Connecticut
- Department of Aging and Disability Services/Bureau of Rehabilitation Services: \$10,000,000
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency: \$10,588,912
- Idaho State Department of

- Education/Special Education: \$9,798,372
- Illinois Department of Human Services/Division of Rehabilitation Services: \$10,000,000
- Kansas Department of Education/Division of Learning Services: \$8,442,103
- Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Early Learning: \$9,942,934
- Louisiana Department of Education: \$10,000,000
- Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation: \$7,632,256
- Maryland State Department of Education/Rehabilitation Services: \$9,989,423
- New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education: \$8,667,855
- New Mexico Public Education Department, Office of Inclusive Education: \$9,943,500
- Nevada Department of Educa-

- tion/Office of Inclusive Education: \$9,964,894
- Oklahoma State Department of Education: \$9,992,898
- Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry/Office of Vocational Rehabilitation: \$9,990,688
- South Carolina Department of Education: \$9,992,013
- Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living/Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired: \$10,000,000
- Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation: \$10,000,000

Additionally, this announcement builds on a key component of the Department's Raise the Bar: Lead the World initiative to support individuals from underserved communities, ensure every student has a pathway to college or a career, and improve transition services for students with disabilities.

Source: Department of Education



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— Geno Rojas

Risk Analytics Sr., Enterprise Risk Management HOLA business resource group member





Frank Rubio Sets U.S. Record for the Single Longest Space Journey

n Sept. 27, 2023, Frank Rubio returned from the International Space Station (ISS). Like many astronauts before him, he came back with critical information on the many experiments and tests NASA conducts in orbit. But unlike any other astronaut before him, he had just broken the record for the longest stay in low-Earth orbit.

Rubio arrived aboard the ISS on Sept. 21, 2022, and returned home on Sept. 27, 2023, after spending 371 days among the stars. His mission breaks the previous record, held by NASA astronaut Mark Vande Hei, by 16 days. It also marks the

first time a U.S. astronaut has spent more than one year in space on a single mission. Rubio was originally slated to spend six months in space before his mission was extended to more than a year.

Throughout his record-breaking mission, Rubio contributed to several science experiments, including six studies geared toward understanding how spaceflight affects human physiology and psychology.

"Every day we spend up here, we know a little more about how the human body fares in space," Rubio explained in a Sept. 26 episode of the Spanish podcast, Universo Curioso de la NASA. "We continue

to do studies on the station that will help us when we continue exploring deeper and deeper into our solar system."

Rubio is the first astronaut to participate in a study examining how exercising with limited gym equipment affects the human body. Recognizing that crew members traveling to the Moon and elsewhere will not have enough room in their spacecraft for a treadmill, researchers are eager to determine whether other exercise regimens could keep crews healthy on long missions. So rather than running on the space station's treadmill, Rubio exercised only on the space station's bicycle

and weightlifting machine.

He is also one of a handful of astronauts to help researchers test whether an enhanced spaceflight diet can help humans better adapt to life in space. For this study, Rubio met with a specialist to create a customized diet loaded with nutrients, with an emphasis on fruits, vegetables and fish. Scientists will evaluate whether consuming this diet boosted his immunity and improved how his gut microbe functioned.

For another experiment, Rubio helped nurture and monitor vegetables produced in the space station's Vegetable Production System, or Veggie. Future deep space missions

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NASA astronaut and Expedition 68 flight engineer Frank Rubio is carried to a medical tent shortly after he and Roscosmos cosmonauts Dmitri Petelin and Sergey Prokopyev landed in their Soyuz MS-23 spacecraft near Kazakhstan on Sept. 27, 2023. The trio returned to Earth after logging 371 days in space as members of Expeditions 68-69 aboard the International Space Station.

will require astronauts to grow fresh food in space as an alternative to prepackaged food. This Veggie study evaluates protocols for growing produce in space, and whether plants grown in microgravity can help satisfy the dietary needs of astronauts on more distant spaceflight missions.

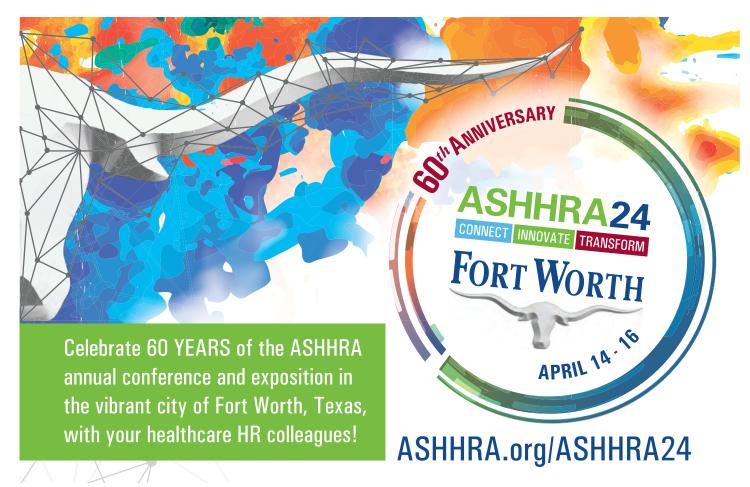
Rubio also provided biological samples, completed surveys and performed tests for a study collecting a core set of measurements from astronauts, called Spaceflight Standard Measures. The measurements serve as a baseline for how multiple systems in the body react to spaceflight, from human cognition to the immune system. Other biological samples will be frozen and archived for future life science studies.

Researchers will also take a look at any injuries, like bruises, that Rubio may have acquired due to the forces of landing in the Soyuz spacecraft. His feedback will provide insight into whether extended

spaceflight missions make people more vulnerable to injuries. Such insight will be used to improve the design and landing systems of future spacecraft.

"Our understanding of how spaceflight affects the human body is mostly limited to astronauts on short-duration missions during the shuttle days and crew members on six-month missions aboard the space station," said Steven H. Platts, chief scientist of NASA's Human Research Program, which seeks to understand how the human body adapts to long-duration space

When needed, the program also develops strategies that prevent or treat potential spaceflight health problems. "Rubio's contributions," Platts noted, "provide valuable information that will be used to help keep astronauts as healthy as possible on increasingly longer missions to the Moon, Mars and beyond." Source: NASA



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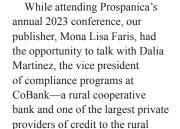






CoBank's Dalia Martinez

ompanies who put diversity first aren't only improving their own business plans; they're creating a more inclusive, understanding environment for people of all backgrounds. This month, DiversityComm Magazine's Best of the Best list is recognizing Top Hispanic Employers—businesses that go the extra mile to create an inclusive workplace for the



Hispanic community and put their

needs at the forefront.

economy—about the importance of diversity and how it has affected their company.



Dalia Martinez (DM): I have been with them for five years.



numerous different ERGs to our associates (employees). We have resource groups for the Hispanic, Black, AAPI and LGBTQ+ communities amongst many others. I'm part of the Hispanic research group and the women's research group.



Mona Lisa Faris, publisher of *DiversityComm Magazine*, with Dalia Martinez, vice president of compliance programs at CoBank, at Prospanica's 2023 conference.



growing your diversity organi-

DM: At CoBank, we offer

MF: So how do these ERGs

assist your growth in diversity?

DM: These groups really help us to connect with nonprofit organizations like Prospanica and instill a sense of family at our company. With our Hispanic resource group, for example, we partner with Prospanica and other organizations to bring diverse talent. The ERG groups also support one another at our company. We attend each other's events and that helps us to grow internally and to get our name out there externally.

MF: How important is it to be on a top employer list like our Best of the Best list?

DM: It is very important. We want to create a diverse community at CoBank and being recognized by lists like the Best of the Best helps everyone to see us as the top employer that we are. We've received several awards for our work in employment and we are striving to diversify even further.

MF: Do you think being recognized as a top employer for the Hispanic community helps you to find diverse quality talent for your company?

DM: Yes, definitely. I feel like

we have created a diverse family at CoBank. I've found my niche and I want to retire here. Family is very important to the Hispanic community and having that extended family at work is extra special to Hispanic employees. It is definitely very important to us to be a top Latino employer.

MF: Why should someone work at CoBank?

DM: We have amazing, top of the line benefits; we've built a great family-like community in the workplace and I just think we're amazing overall.

CoBank is a Top 2024 Hispanic Employer on our Best of the Best List. View here: diversitycomm.net/ hispanic-community/ top-hispanic-employers

What is CoBank?

CoBank, part of the U.S. Farm Credit System, provides loans and financial services to cooperatives, agribusinesses, rural public utilities and other farm credit associations who collectively own CoBank. It is also an agricultural export credit agency, exclusive among banks of the Farm Credit System. Source: Wikipedia

Dalia Martinez



We believe cultivating inclusion and diversity is fundamental to how we hire, retain and inspire the best people. Our consumers are as diverse as the entire world, and so are SC Johnson people – which is why we recognize and support the unique backgrounds, talents and abilities of SC Johnson team members around the world.

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CYBERSECURITY SPECIALIST

As technology advances and improves, so do cyber-attacks; leaving important and private digital information in danger. Cybersecurity special ists are in charge of securing this critical information and creating programs that will protect it from digital threats. These specialists may also create an organization's disaster recovery plan-a procedure that IT employees follow in case of emergency. People who enter this field normally hold a degree in computer science and have extensive knowledge in information technology and cybersecurity.

Cybersecurity specialists earn an average yearly salary of about \$94,742. While the Bureau of Labor Statistics doesn't have an outlook statistic on this specific career, information security analysts—who perform very similar tasks—are expected to grow by 32% over the next 10 years.



AI SPECIALIST

A common tool in medical, scientific and business fields, artificial intelligence (AI) is now crucial to numerous industries. Especially with the advances and popularity of AI in the last year, it is no wonder why it is one of the hottest jobs of 2024. AI specialists are in charge of developing, imple menting and maintaining AI and machine learning algorithms and models across many industries. These specialists allow for top industries to continue using the technology they need in an effective and ethical way. Because of the rising reliance on AI, the need for AI specialists is also rising. Currently, AI specialists average about \$100,768 per year, with many of the job oppor tunities available in California, New York and Washington.



DATA SCIENTIST

A popular career for the last several years, data science is continuing to thrive. As a data scientist, you would be responsible for using analytical tools and techniques to extract and create meaningful insights from data. As data scientists usually utilize AI and machine learning technologies to collect their research, many data scientists have a background in mathematics, statistics and computer science. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, data scientists average a salary of about \$103,500 per year, with a job outlook rate of 35%.



SOFTWARE DEVELOPER

Without the actual software to utilize, many of the jobs in the tech world would be useless. Software developers create and maintain the computer applications that allow users to do specific tasks, as well as the underlying systems that run the devices or control networks. They're responsible for cre ating programs that are effective, protected and user-friendly. Many software developers hold a degree or expertise in computer programming or informa tion technology and may even dabble in areas of graphic design. Their yearly salary currently sits at about \$124,200 per year, with a job outlook rate of a whopping 25%.

DIGITAL MARKETING

As long as business is thriving, so is the world of marketingnow more than ever before. Digital marketers specifically focus on creating and implement ing effective online marketing campaigns. This may include social media posting, online ad



vertisements and working with SEO optimization. Those in digital marketing usually have marketing and/or sales experience and are comfortable with the more complex methods of advertising in the digital world. Currently, digital marketers have an average salary of about \$60,331 a year, with many of the job opportunities located in California.

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Medium, ZipRecruiter



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A Guide to CVs & Resumes: What's the Difference?

By Natalie Rodgers

ost people already have a resume, a short one-totwo-page document that lists pertinent professional experience and skills. Still, sometimes, an interviewing company may ask for your CV. But what is a CV, and how is it different than a resume? And what do you need to craft both? Here's what you need to know:

experiences you've had that make you the most qualified to be the manager of a construction company. However, your CV would include your food industry experiences as it's still a part of your professional experience.

When applying for work, CVs are usually used for jobs that require extensive knowledge in a specif-

- Your contact information
- Your resume objective
- Pertinent work experience
- Relevant licenses, certifications and skills
- Educational background

Conversely, a CV will include all of the information your resume has in addition to the rest of your professional experiences. In addition to ■ References

Additional items found on your CV may be able to be included on your resume, but most will only be shared when requested by an employer or if they will better showcase your application.

Formatting

For a resume, your work experience should be listed chronologically, beginning with your current or most recent job. A CV tends to be



The difference

Simply put, a CV is a longer, more detailed version of a resume. While resumes are meant to be concise, CVs are larger documents that detail all of your professional experience. They are usually used for academic purposes but can also serve as a master list that you can use to help you create your resume. This is especially helpful if you tailor your resume to stand out for specific job openings. For example, suppose you are applying for a managerial position at a construction company. In that case, you'll likely not include the details of a food industry job you had over 20 years ago. Your resume would only highlight the

ic field. This often includes jobs in academic, legal, medical and science fields. If you're applying for work outside of the United States, it's important to know that the two documents are synonymous. In Europe, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, a CV is the same as an American resume, while in South Asia, they have the same meaning as in the United States.

What to include

Again, it's important to remember that resumes are shorter than CVs. While you will want to tailor your resume to what's most applicable to the job application, all resumes should include:

all of your previous jobs, your CV should also include:

- A complete educational background
- All licenses and certifications
- All published works (books, chapters, peer-reviewed publications, etc.)
- Research, lab and fieldwork experience
- Grants, scholarships and fellowships received
- Awards received
- Volunteer and internship expe-
- Non-academic activities
- Languages spoken
- Memberships
- Conferences

in chronological order but can start with your oldest position and end with your current experiences.

Many people choose to showcase their job and work experiences as the first section of their document, but the order in which they are listed is up to you. It is recommended that resumes present the most interesting information at the top of their document to catch the attention of their hiring managers.

CVs and resumes should be submitted via PDF or a Word document if you are emailing it.

Which document is needed?

Usually, the job description will let you know if they want to see your CV or resume. If the job you are applying for isn't in a field that generally requires a CV, it's usually safe to assume that a resume will suffice. If anything makes you question which document is needed, you can always reach out to your point of contact and ask which they prefer.

Sources: myperfectresume.com, Zety



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Job security in a stable industry

SOFT SKILLS Employers Hire For

hich skills will give you a competitive edge in the job market? Are there specific attributes you should emphasize on your resume or in job interviews? What proficiencies should you focus on developing to build your career? To answer these questions, it's essential to understand the importance of soft skills.

While job candidates need to possess essential qualifications and technical capabilities, having these additional skills can help move them to the top of the hiring list. These competencies indicate that a candidate is likely to possess qualities such as being capable of handling a wide variety of situations, working through challenges and conflicts, being trustworthy and honest in communications, and being reliable and easy to work with.

5 Top Soft Skills

- Communication (verbal and written)
- Critical Thinking
- Teamwork
- Enthusiasm
- Professionalism

Let's explore these skills in the workplace.

Communication

Communication frequently tops the list of employers' most wanted skills. Solid communication means active listening, tracking what's being said, clarifying when information is unclear, and providing appropriate feedback. Giving your full attention to listening is imperative without preparing what you will say.

Communication also involves speaking clearly and expressing yourself accurately. In the workplace, trust is built on communication. Hence, making eye contact with those you are talking to, using an appropriate tone of voice and volume, and speaking at a rate that you will be understood are all aspects of effective verbal communication. Remember that most supervisors expect you to bring up something if you have a question or concern.

Written communication needs vary quite a bit, depending on the type of job. Clarity, simplicity and accuracy are all valuable aspects of written communication in any work context.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking involves taking in information, asking for missing information, analyzing a situation or problem and identifying what may be needed or any appropriate steps. Effective critical thinking includes keeping an open mind and leading with curiosity rather than judgment or assuming you already know enough or have the answers. It's also important to stay open to others' perspectives with a flexible mindset

If you have ideas about improving work processes or how your job is done, such as saving time or effort, most employers would be open to hearing this. However, when you're new, you may not have the complete picture of why a job is executed a certain way. Observing, learning and understanding how your job relates to the organization's overall goals is a good idea.

Teamwork

What makes a strong team? Teamwork includes positive, courteous interactions with each other, mutual respect and collaboration. Teamwork involves tolerance for mistakes and learning from those experiences as a team.

Strong team members need to be able to hear constructive criticism; self-awareness helps people on a team to listen without defensiveness or anger. It can be helpful to recognize if someone has a better way of handling a task, suggestions about relating to customers or has feedback about your performance. It's to your benefit to grow professionally.

Great team members also bring empathy and support for each other while maintaining healthy work-place boundaries, i.e., not necessarily trying to be close friends with everyone on the team. Flexibility about leading when needed and following when appropriate also supports a strong team.

Enthusiasm

A positive attitude is essential to success. This attribute can be demonstrated in the workplace by showing openness to whatever tasks you are asked to do. Look for opportunities that allow you to serve, such as organizational committees and special projects.

Complete the tasks you are asked to do with energy and without

complaining, taking the initiative when you see something that needs to be done. This might include recognizing when tasks need to be done and doing them before being asked or thinking about how you can contribute to the organization's success; for example, if you have an idea for the company, suggest it to your supervisor.

Professionalism

There are many ways to define professionalism. However, appropriate behavior in the workplace and a strong work ethic go hand in hand with professionals. Some tips for professional workplace behavior include:

- Be accountable for your work; if you have an assignment, complete the assignment or communicate any obstacles to a supervisor.
- Arrive on time for work, meetings and assignments.
- Dress appropriately for the work setting
- Take responsibility for maintaining your workspace.
- Be honest and respectful with customers, co-workers and supervisors.
- Use work computers only for work-related tasks.
- Use your personal cell phone only on breaks and keep the ringer off.
- Aim to be as effective and productive in your job as you can.

These soft skills can be the key to securing your next position.

Source: CareerOneStop

create and prosper



Join a team that values

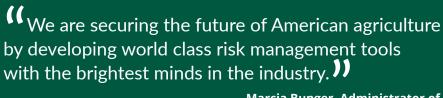
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USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) serves America's agricultural producers through effective, market-based risk management tools to strengthen the economic stability of farmers, ranchers, and rural communities. We are committed to increasing the availability and effectiveness of Federal crop insurance as a risk management tool.





 Marcia Bunger, Administrator of USDA's Risk Management Agency

USDA's Risk Management
Agency, along with the Farm
Service Agency and the Natural
Resources and Conservation
Service, serves America's farmers
and ranchers with pro ducts,
programs, and training that
provides economic opportunity,
helps rural America thrive and
nourish the nation, and preserves
natural resources.

More than 22,000 employees working throughout the country share data, analysis, IT systems, real property, other resources, and implementation roles and responsibilities that are designed to support the programs benefiting our customers.

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We pride ourselves on ensuring our workplace is an accessible and fully inclusive environment that provides equal opportunities for all to excel and succeed.

Read more about the Risk Management Agency by scanning the QR Code on this page. For a list of current vacancies for USDA jobs, visit https://usda.usajobs.gov/.



Pictured: RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger with faculty of the University of Arkansas







Working for the **USDA Risk Management Agency**

Jaime Valdovinos, **Risk Management Specialist**

I was born and raised on a small farm in Michoacán, Mexico with 14 siblings. Growing up I was helping my family grow corn, sorghum, and raising cattle, which sparked my passion for agriculture at a young age. I moved to California at the age of 17 to pursue my education; I followed my interest in agriculture and obtained a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Business. Shortly after, I found this great opportunity with RMA at a career fair at Chico State University. I applied without hesitation. I was fortunate to get an interview and finally an offer for the position. I joined the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) as a Management Analyst and managed a national internship program for 2 years, then began my career with the Risk Management Agency (RMA) as a Risk Management Specialist.

As a Risk Management Specialist in RMA's Regional Office located in Davis, California, I oversee various insurance programs for unique specialty crops. The role of our regional office is to know and understand our diverse agricultural crops and to ensure that our RMA programs adequately serve the needs of our farmers and ranchers. We work closely with farmers, agents, Extension personnel, and other stakeholders to ensure crop insurance programs work properly at the local level.

Agriculture is susceptible to so many different naturally occurring perils, from ravaging wildfires in California to hurricanes in Florida. Farmers must be best prepared because in many cases, an insurance policy could be the difference between staying or going out of business. RMA's mission is providing a safety net through effective, market-based risk management tools such as crop insurance to strengthen our agricultural producers' economic stability. Mitigating these risks is one of the reasons I joined USDA.

USDA is the ideal place to work because the environment allows me to use my knowledge and background in agriculture while providing me opportunities for career development. I feel fulfilled knowing that my work is valued and that it contributes directly to the agency's mission. Every year, RMA funds partnerships with nonprofits, universities, industry groups and others to deliver risk management education across the country.

I'm proud to be part of a collaborative, high-performing team that is constantly improving our insurance programs to better serve our producers. We've expanded our insurance programs, adding new producing counties and new practices to better manage risk, and approved new insurance programs for specialty crops. We utilize outreach as an essential component of our work, attending conferences and events for farmers from underserved communities to ensure they have access to our programs.

Our team in the Davis Regional Office is diverse, professional and

has a strong work ethic. We all have a background in agriculture, whether it is growing up on a farm or through a college education. We're team players and assist one another when needed. It makes a difference being part of a team that shares the same goal of providing outstanding public service. I'm proud to be part of such a wonderful team.

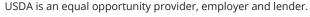
Jaime Valdovinos

RMA is a small agency with a great positive impact. Working for this agency is rewarding because we're all working toward a common goal. Learning new aspects of ever-changing agriculture is interesting. The work can be challenging in different ways, allowing me to improve upon my critical thinking and problemsolving skills. Also, RMA offers training opportunities for personal and professional growth in addition to remote positions, which play an important role in our work-life balance.

Read more about the Risk Management Agency by scanning the QR Code on this page. For a list of current vacancies for USDA jobs, visit https://usda.usajobs.gov/.











Crafting a LinkedIn Profile for Career Success

inkedIn is a leading tool in jobs whether you're looking to start your career, keep and foster connections or seek a new line of work. But having a LinkedIn profile that stands out takes more than creating an account. Here are some simple tips to improve your presence to co-workers, networking connections, hiring managers and potential bosses.

Get the Headline Right

Let's be honest: your LinkedIn headline does a lot of heavy lifting for you. As one of the first things people can see when they visit your profile, it must highlight your industry or career, your skills and what you can offer to an employer. It doesn't need to be cute or attention-grabbing. But since it's the one piece of your profile that most people will read, you want to ensure it conveys information about you. Put yourself in the mind of a recruiter for your dream job, and make sure your headline has some keywords that will identify you as a good fit for that position. For example, if you're looking for a career in something as specific as accounting or database management, you want to make sure that's obvious.

To start brainstorming your headline, go back to your Work Experience information. You should find a story somewhere in your summary statements and your bullet points. Once you land on a headline, you might even want to tweak your Work Experience section to verify it works well with and flows from your headline.

Upload Your Resume

You will want to upload your resume, especially if you're looking for work. This will make it easier to apply for jobs and provide an organized way for recruiters and connections to see if you're the right candidate for a business connection. LinkedIn allows you to create a resume directly on their website

or easily upload your pre-written resume to your profile. You can even download a PDF copy of your resume that LinkedIn generates if you need it for purposes offsite. Note: if you are uploading your resume, you'll want to double-check for grammatical and formatting errors before publishing it.

The Headshot

This little image is the mostviewed part of your profile-in fact, recruiters and employers see it before they even click through to look at the rest of your profile. You don't need to hire a professional photographer for your headshot but having access to one can make the process easier. Have someone photograph you in front of a neutral background and crop it to show your head and the top of your shoulders. A good trick is to wear what you would wear to your dream job (even though only the top of your shoulders will be visible). You want to look professional and friendly. Employers are looking for someone who will get along well with colleagues, so smiling or having an approachable look is important.

Recommendations

Having even a few recommendations on your LinkedIn profile can make a difference in whether a recruiter pauses and takes a closer look. Recommendations can be quite short—even two to three sentences-so asking someone to write one for you does not have to be a huge burden to them.

Regarding whom you should ask, you can consider almost anyone you've known in a professional setting. That can include people more senior than you, more junior than you or colleagues at your level. It can also include current or former colleagues, bosses or employees.

Stay Active Online

No matter where you are in your career, LinkedIn's primary function

is to help you form and keep networking connections. You'll need to stay active on the site to do this best. This doesn't mean you have to check in as frequently as you might on other social media platforms, but going online at least a few times a week can show that you are committed to your career plans and care about the connections you keep.

One easy way to stay active is to post informative and relevant content. Sharing articles about important issues surrounding your current or desired field of work can help you to form new bonds, initiate a conversation and show your expertise in your field.

Sources: CareerOneStop, Top Resume



Actively participate in discussions, share insights, and contribute your expertise. By building a strong professional network, you increase the visibility of your profile and open doors to new opportunities. Remember, optimizing your LinkedIn profile is not a one-time task.



Pharrell Williams Donates \$3.2 Million to Black and Hispanic Entrepreneurs

By Natalie Rodgers

ven in a world where advancements in diversity are improving, we still have a long way to go before equity can be achieved. Luckily, companies and celebrities are coming together to push diverse entrepreneurs in the right direction.

In 2020, singer and activist Pharrell Williams founded Black Ambition, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs. As part of this initiative, the group created the Demo Day competition, where innovators can pitch their innovations in the hopes of receiving one of the grand prizes. In 2023, the organization gave one of its largest donations yet, dispersing \$3.2 million to 36 diverse entrepreneurs.

"Demo Day is a powerful testament to the transformative potential of the Black Ambition Prize," Felecia Hatcher, CEO of Black Ambition, expressed in a press release. "The support of our brand partners...as well as the dedication of our esteemed judges, underscores our commitment to nurturing Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs. Our impact, illustrated by the 36 top finalists, is a testament to the tangible change we're creating for underserved communities."

This last year, over 2,000 applicants participated in the contest. Participating founders represented companies in five categories: Consumer Products and Services, Healthcare, Media and Entertainment, Technology and Web 3.0. The nationwide competition was narrowed down to 50 finalists and condensed even further to the top 36. This year, the 36 top finalists received prize awards ranging from \$20,000 to \$250,000. Eight finalists were then picked to pitch for the \$1,000,000 prize, which ultimately went to CEO Antoinette Banks. Her app, Expert IEP, was created to optimize existing Individualized Education Plans with predictive AI for children diagnosed with a disability.



Felecia Hatcher, CEO of Black Ambition; Leo Creer, co-founder and CTO of Expert IEP; grand prize winner Antoinette Banks, CEO and founder of Expert IEP; and Pharrell Williams, founder of Black Ambition.

Other top prize winners include ECOMSPACES, a one-stop-shop for e-commerce solutions, and Monocle, a social e-reader that focuses on a community-centered reading experience. They were awarded with \$250,000 and \$200,000, respectively.

"Black Ambition is a feeling; it's an overwhelming drive to show up consistently in excellence to create lasting, unapologetic impact," Banks stated in a press release. "For so long, Black and Brown kids with learning differences have been underestimated and forgotten. Earning this \$1 million prize puts our kids back in the forefront; it gets people thinking deeply about solving the problems in special education. I am deeply grateful to Black Ambition for believing in me, holding space for me and breaking down barriers. It's clear that Black Ambition is more than a prize award; it's a shift in expectation for our culture."

But the Black Ambition prize, much like the group's overall

mission, isn't just about monetary benefits. In addition to mentorship, prize winners will receive resources and connections to additional investors and funding. Awardees will also receive bi-weekly office hours with leaders in marketing, PR and brand building with global brands such as Heineken, Snapchat, Netflix and other participating companies.

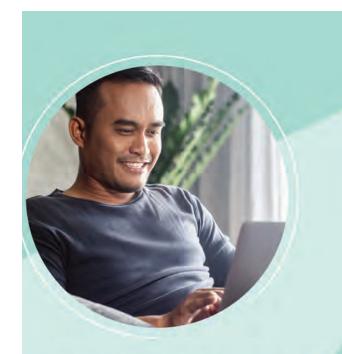
Resources like these are also publicly available to Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs. Through its extensive virtual training initiatives and events, the organization has provided invaluable support to over 5,000 founders since launching and has helped them navigate the challenges of building successful businesses. To date, Black Ambition has awarded funding and resources to 101 prize winners and supported an additional 750 entrepreneurs with mentorship to strengthen their ventures. Approximately \$10 million has been awarded to finalists since its founding.

"We felt like if we could make

"Black Ambition is a feeling; it's an overwhelming drive to show up consistently in excellence to create lasting, unapologetic impact."

> -Antoinette Banks, CEO and founder of Expert IEP

life in the business world more equitable for African Americans, then certainly, we will have the voice and more of an influence on culture," Williams said of the organization in an interview with Vanity Fair. "It's more moral than corporate...nurturing the next generation of business leaders through mentorship allows them a chance to garner an unprecedented insight [into] the success of building a business."



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When we create a place where everyone belongs, we win together.

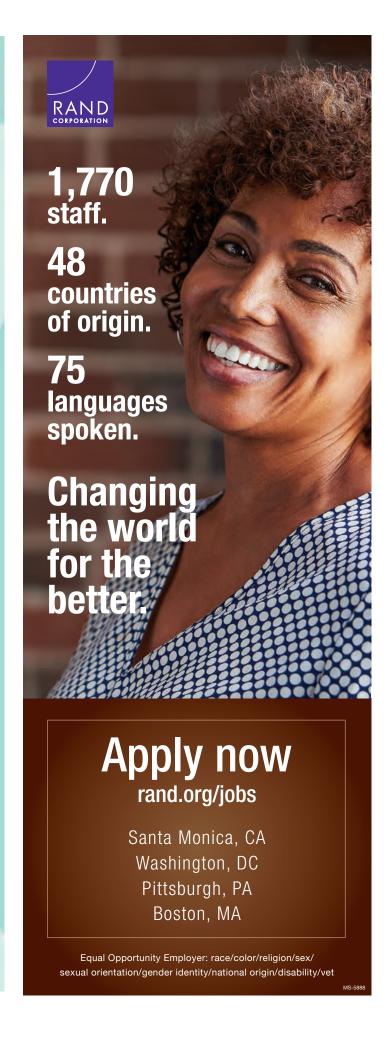
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Planning for DEI in 2024

Implementing a DEI plan is one of the best strategies you can take as a boss, manager or business owner. Increased diversity efforts improve workplace morale, productivity and diverse ideas, and can also increase your company's profits. If you're looking to put inclusion at the forefront in 2024, here are some methods to implement:

others that your company promotes an inclusive culture. Some ways to support these organizations may include:

- Working together on advertising campaigns.
- Exhibiting at DEI-centered conferences and career fairs.
- Attending diversity-centered conferences and career fairs.
- Including resources (with permission) from these organizations for your employees.

- Providing prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of harassment complaints.
- Taking timely, effective, corrective and preventative action when necessary.

For a complete list of harassment definitions, consequences and protocols, visit EEOC.gov.

Do the Little Things

Sometimes, the smallest actions have the most impact in showing employees and customers alike that diversity and inclusion are important at your company. If your company is persistently present in diversity spheres and stays up-to-date with the biggest issues in social justice, this alone can increase diverse audiences. Some simple ideas include:



Get Everyone Involved

To know where to start with your DEI initiatives, you must communicate goals to your employees. Ask them what changes they would like to see in the workplace and keep an open mind to their feedback. Consistently expressing your DEI goals and taking action to make a change will show your company's dedication to the cause and could inspire your current employees to hold these principles to the same standards.

Work with Diverse Organizations

Many organizations are dedicated to the education, hiring, retention and training of diverse talent in just about any field. By working with these organizations, your company will be directly and publicly supporting the groups they represent. You'll make a difference within diverse communities and show

Take Harassment Seriously

Hopefully, this issue won't arise, but an essential part of enforcing workplace inclusion is ensuring that harassment cases are addressed seriously and correctly. In other words, your workplace must understand that any form of harassment, including that tied to identity, will not be tolerated. Proper protocols for preventing and delivering consequences for harassment include:

- Offering definitions, examples and training on recognizing harassment.
- Stating that you will protect the confidentiality of employees who report harassment or participate in a harassment investigation to the greatest possible
- Requiring managers and other employees with HR responsibilities to respond appropriately to harassment or report it to authorized individuals.

Start an ERG

Forming employee resource groups (ERGs) is a fantastic way to promote inclusion within your company. ERGs are groups of people with a shared affinity that come together to support one another, talk about their experiences and bond outside of work hours. For example, ERGs can be helpful for veteran employees to come together to talk about their unique shared experiences and the common struggles they may face transitioning into the workplace. The ERG becomes a safe space for employees to feel heard and supported. Typical groups that come together in an ERG include:

- Race/Ethnicity Specific
- Women
- Veterans
- Disability/Neurodivergence
- LGBTO+
- Single Parents
- Caregivers

- Involving diverse individuals in your advertising campaigns.
- Having your employees include their pronouns in their email signatures.
- Using proper and inclusive language in the workplace.

Implementation

Despite the conferences you attend, the organizations you support or what your advertising may look like, it will all be in vain if you aren't actually implementing what you learn. Creating a more inclusive company is good for your business's success, but it's also important in making your employees feel seen and safe while they're at work.

Be open to new ideas, implement helpful diversity initiatives, keep up-to-date on the latest news and trends, and continue the conversation with your employees. Every aspect of your workplace will be positively impacted.

Sources: Together Platform, EEOC

Why DEI Demands Data

Data-Driven Diversity Shapes Inclusive Futures

By Karen Pavlin

n the face of macroeconomic challenges that have disproportionately impacted marginalized groups, the commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is no longer an option; it's a strategic imperative. Companies are finally realizing something crucial: having a diverse team not only promotes social equity but also drives innovation, creativity and business success. In fact, according to a recent Boston Consulting Group study, organizations that were above average in diversity had 19% more revenue from innovation compared to organizations that were below average in diversity.

So, how can we achieve wins like

this for a more inclusive future? It needs to start with data.

As the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer at ServiceNow, I have experienced firsthand the transformative power of data in reshaping how companies approach DEI. This integration of data is critical as organizations everywhere face increased scrutiny and pressure to demonstrate ROI for initiatives. Data builds credibility, moves emotion and keeps us accountable on how we create real, meaningful change.

The Role of Data

You can't manage what you don't measure, and when measured properly, data can be a force multiplier for DEI. Many companies tend to stick to the basics when it comes to diversity data, like measuring gender representation, ethnicity and age distribution. Yet collecting data such as LGBTQ+ representation, disability status and socioeconomic background provides leaders with a much better understanding of an organization. This comprehensive approach allows leaders to identify areas where disparities exist.

By understanding our workforce inside and out, we can also spot areas where we can do better. It helps us identify process gaps that determine where we can improve our hiring practices and diagnose

other issues so we can identify effective solutions.

We are putting this into practice at ServiceNow: everything we do is anchored in data, such as employee voice surveys, demographics, equity, inclusion, performance and more. We gain insights demonstrating impact, measuring progress and driving clear action and decision-making.

This commitment goes way beyond just checking a box; it's about creating an environment where everyone has an equal chance to thrive. Plus, in the long run, it sets the stage for our organization's ongoing success and resilience.



Turning Data into Action

Our data doesn't just provide a snapshot of where we are today; it sparks ideas for how to get where we want to be. As an example, through data analysis, we recognized the need to improve gender diversity and empower women in leadership. This insight was the catalyst for the development of programs like Power of 10, enabling nearly 1,000 women to sign up for the 2022-2023 cohort. The result? Steady growth in women's representation and women in leadership positions globally within Service-Now.

Similarly, our data highlighted the need to enhance career development opportunities for our Black and Latinx employee population. Born out of this, we developed Strive, a nine-month leadership development program for early-in-career and mid-level Black and Latinx employees. This program transformed insights into tangible progress through 360-degree assessments, customized learning experiences and individual executive coaching

sessions. Participants not only exhibited a lower attrition rate but also experienced higher promotion rates compared to the broader Black and Latinx employee base.

The value of data lies in its ability to transform insights into action, creating targeted, meaningful programs that foster inclusivity and equal opportunities for all. By diving into data, we can ensure every employee has the opportunity

Data-Driven Recruitment

Consider a hiring example: If we ask ourselves, are we not getting enough diverse candidates into our pipeline? We would want to understand if it is a pass-through problem, indicating issues in the interview and hiring stages, or if there is a trend that candidates are not accepting our job offers. If our data reveals a sudden drop in diverse candidates at a particular stage, for example, we don't just see it as a setback. Instead, we treat it as an opportunity to delve deeper into our processes. Are there new biases creeping in?

Is our outreach losing its effectiveness? Through meticulous data analysis, we can identify and rectify the specific issues hindering diversity in our workforce.

The beauty of data-driven recruitment strategies is their ability to evolve with the changing business landscape. Our approach doesn't stop at rectifying immediate issues; it extends into the realm of continuous improvement. By constantly monitoring the effectiveness of our DEI efforts, we ensure that our initiatives remain relevant and impactful.

Essentially, our data isn't just about troubleshooting; it's our tool for staying ahead of the game. Our commitment to DEI isn't just a short-term effort but a lasting part of our organizational culture.

The Path Forward

On the path to real diversity, equity and inclusion, data serves as our compass that shows us the way forward. By making data-driven decisions, we are building a culture where "belonging" becomes a

natural part of our company DNA. We can ensure that the important work we do as DEI practitioners continues to be recognized as the strategic business imperative that we, as experts in our field, have long advocated for.



Karen Pavlin is chief equity and inclusion officer at ServiceNow, the digital workflow company making the world work better for everyone. In this role, Paylin leads ServiceNow's global efforts to strengthen the inclusive culture, ensure employees are treated equitably and create an even deeper sense of belonging.

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Meet 2023's Hispanic Business Person of the Year

he United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) announced that Jose L. Flores, the distinguished CEO of Troy, Michigan-based Ancor Automotive, has been named the 2023 Hispanic Business Person of the Year (male category). This prestigious national award, presented annually, recognizes business leaders who exemplify outstanding leadership, a pioneering spirit and remarkable contributions to the Hispanic business community.

Upon receiving this well-deserved honor, Flores expressed his heartfelt gratitude, stating, "I am deeply honored to receive the 2023 Hispanic Business Person of the Year award from the USHCC. This accolade reflects the collective efforts of our dedicated team at Ancor Automotive and underscores the significance of entrepreneurship within the Hispanic community. I am genuinely humbled and eagerly anticipate celebrating this achievement with fellow entrepreneurs and advocates at the USHCC Awards Gala."

Flores is an esteemed luminary in the automotive industry, currently holding the position of CEO at Ancor Automotive, a globally recognized Tier 1 supplier specializing in data management and automotive label solutions, with its headquarters in Michigan. Flores, a 2023 recipient of the prestigious DBusiness Magazine's 30 in Their Thirties award, has spearheaded the launch of the Ancor Automotive Software Innovation Hub. This visionary ini-

tiative aims to attract top-tier talent in software design while simultaneously modernizing tracking and mobility capabilities for automotive companies across North America.

Prior to his tenure at Ancor, Flores held significant executive roles at the London Consulting Group, where he showcased his operational expertise in diverse industries spanning five countries. Flores actively participates in the MICHauto advocacy committee, where he plays a pivotal role in shaping automotive policy issues specific to Michigan. Additionally, he is an engaged member of the Detroit Regional Chamber, actively contributing to the community. Flores's philanthropic endeavors include involvement with the Michigan Science Center, where he strives to inspire and empower the next generation of leaders.

Jake Serwer, a media representative for Flores, noted that national recognition was inevitable for the entrepreneur due to his exceptional business and volunteer contributions. "Locally, Flores actively contributes to the Greater Detroit community through a range of nonprofit, volunteer and educational activities," said Serwer. "As an entrepreneur, Flores is a constant innovator."

The USHCC, which actively promotes the growth, development and interests of nearly five million Hispanic-owned businesses and advocates on behalf of 260 major American corporations, serves as the umbrella organization for over



250 local chambers and business associations nationwide. Their pivotal role in advancing the collective interests of the Hispanic business community is widely recognized.

This accolade not only celebrates Flores's exceptional achievements but also serves as a beacon of

inspiration for aspiring business leaders, reinforcing the USHCC's unwavering commitment to cultivating a thriving environment for Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States.

Source: United States Hispanic Chamber of



Chambers



OUR MISSION

To be the leading and most recognized organization in enabling digital leadership preparedness for aspiring diverse professionals

OUR VISION

To build a pipeline of diverse professionals and aspiring students in the STEM and digital technology fields

OUR BELIEFS

Our purpose is to serve and elevate students and young professionals of today for leadership tomorrow. That a talented and diverse group of innovative workforce.



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ABOUT US

Founded in Philadelphia, PA in 1975, BDPA is the premier organization focused on nurturing and developing diverse working professionals and future IT leaders in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and all digital technology fields. For almost 50 years, BDPA has enabled the upward mobility of African-Americans and other minorities in the Information Technology (IT) and STEM fields.

WHAT WE OFFER

BDPA offers a wide range of opportunities including leadership development, our annual national conference, over 30 chapters in the US, various student programs, IT training and workshops, and much more.



BDPACON23

https://bdpa.org/bdapcon-23-recap/

Details for BDPACON24 coming soon!



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Honoring the Life of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor

By Natalie Rodgers

The first woman Supreme Court Justice in the United States, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, passed away on December 1, 2023, at her home in Phoenix, Arizona, at 93 years old. Not only was Justice O'Connor the first woman to serve in the capacity, but her presence on the court changed the course of history.

Growing up on a cattle ranch in Arizona, O'Connor was independent at a young age. When she was just 16 years old, O'Connor enrolled at Stanford University and graduated magna cum laude with her bachelor's degree in economics. She attended the school's law program, graduating in the top 10% of her class in 1952 at 22 years old.

Upon graduation, O'Connor had difficulty securing a job due to her gender. She secured a position as a deputy county attorney with no pay in San Mateo, California, where she climbed the ladder before moving to Germany and taking a position as a civilian attorney for the Army's Quartermaster Corps. When she returned, O'Connor spent much of her time volunteering with political organizations and for campaigns. During this time, she began working with the Attorney General of Arizona before being appointed to Arizona's Senate, the Maricopa County Superior Court, the Arizona State Court of Appeals and the Court of Appeals-Division One.

In 1981, former president Ronald Reagan appointed her to the Supreme Court, where she became the first woman ever to serve on the esteemed jury. She served from 1981 to 2006 and saw the appointment of the second woman on the Supreme Court, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg. While some argue that O'Connor held more Republican values, her views on political issues varied greatly, with some calling her a "wild card" when it came to predicting her votes. O'Connor also established some changes to the Su-





preme Court, such as the inclusion of a women's restroom and paving the way for the five other women who have joined the court in the years since.

During and following her time on

the Supreme Court, O'Connor wrote five books, most centered around her upbringing and experiences in the Supreme Court. She also went on to found iCivics, one of the leading civics education platforms

in use today.

For the road she paved for women in federal positions, O'Connor was remembered by former colleagues, family and the public. Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., said of Justice O'Connor: "A daughter of the American Southwest, Sandra Day O'Connor blazed an historic trail as our nation's first female justice. She met that challenge with undaunted determination, indisputable ability and engaging candor. We at the Supreme Court mourn the loss of a beloved colleague, a fiercely independent defender of the rule of law and an eloquent advocate for civics education. And we celebrate her enduring legacy as a true public servant and patriot."



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Learn more at accenture.com/equality



Good Decisions About Funding Builds Strong Companies

By Sonia Guzman, founder, Carson Life, Inc.

've made thousands of important decisions in the 10 years since I founded Carson Life, Inc., the company that's experienced explosive growth as a provider of natural health and beauty products focused on the Hispanic market.

But none of those decisions, I recognize now, has been more important than the ones involving the sources of capital to finance the rapid expansion of Carson Life. Because of the decisions I made over the past decade, I'm now in a strong position as I meet with a steady stream of investors who are interested in buying a piece—or all—of Carson Life.

In Carson Life, investors see a Latina-owned company that's serving Hispanics, the fastest-growing market in the United States. They see a company with a strong retail presence in 12,000 stores across the nation; a company selected by Walmart for 1,500 coveted end-cap positions during Hispanic Heritage Month. (Target, meanwhile, selected us for 279 end caps).

They see a Spanish-first company that advertises almost exclusively in Spanish and provides Spanish-first customer service. They see a lean company, one with only 10 employees and a strong outsourced team that's built an enviable cadre of top influencers in social media.

When they come to meet with me, however, those investors quickly learn that they're not looking at a company that's dealing from a position of weakness. Our capital structure, in combination with continued profitability even as we double our revenues from year to year, provides us with a strong position to build our future on our own terms.

I launched Carson Life in 2014 with my heart. I'd built a successful career with multi-national brands, and I was working as a top international sales executive for CNN when I was injured in a vehicle accident. After that accident, I



realized I want to make a difference in the world, meeting the needs of underserved consumers.

I'd won a business plan competition at Babson College, the famed school for entrepreneurs, and I thought I knew how to build a business. I was right about building the business. I recognized that Latina consumers were a dramatically underserved health and beauty market, especially with the growing interest in organic and natural ingredients. Within a few months after its launch, Carson Life's products were in dozens of stores, then hundreds of stores. Consumers were seeking out our website (carsonlife.com), and orders were pouring in.

All those orders required capital. I'd launched Carson Life with my personal savings and the financial support of some family and friends. I never worried about losing my savings. I expected success; I didn't expect this level of success.

Soon, I found myself with the equivalent of two full-time jobs.

I was managing Carson Life and I was raising capital to support growth. It's not easy to raise money, especially for Latinas. Between that initial startup funding, a \$1.5 million seed round from early investors and a first-round funding with a maximum of \$10 million, I'm sure that my company has raised as much venture money as just about any Latina-owned business in America.

Those early investors provided important support. They stepped up when Carson Life required funding to fulfill rapidly growing orders. They believed in our mission; they recognized our potential and they treated us fairly. In return, we made sure we didn't let them down.

Carson Life delivered profitability. We've been profitable since 2019 and continued our profitable growth even through the COVID-19 pandemic. A profitable company isn't forced to accept onerous terms from investors just to stay in business. At first, I focused on growing revenue. Now, I focus even harder

on profitability.

Carson Life just completed an even-larger financing. This time, we worked with Decathlon Capital Partners, a provider of revenue-based financing. We'll use the fresh capital to fuel further growth—including Carson Life's second brand family, Eva+Avo haircare. We'll be winning more shelf space and building the direct-to-consumer business that currently accounts for 13% of our sales.

Decathlon Capital Partners didn't receive any equity in Carson Life in exchange for the financing. Instead, Carson Life will simply repay the financing through a percentage of its sales each month.

That's critically important to me. I've had meetings recently with investors who offered to put \$30 million into the company—in exchange for a 30% ownership. I'm not willing to give up that much. As Carson Life grows, I want to control as much of the company as possible. I've worked hard; I want to control my future and reap the rewards I've earned.

It was important, too, that Decathlon Capital Partners provided a streamlined decision-making process. Carson Life needs to move quickly to take advantage of opportunities, and time we might spend waiting for decisions from slow-moving financial partners would cost us. I want them, too, to be in a strong position to enjoy the rewards of their success.

Nearly everyone recognizes that the Hispanic market is the new powerhouse in American commerce. Success in this market demands more than great products and hard work. Careful consideration of financing alternatives is equally important.

Sonia Guzman is the CEO and founder of Carson Life, a natural health and beauty products company specifically geared towards the Hispanic community. Guzman founded Carson Life in 2013 after a successful career in digital sales and marketing at companies like CNN and Time Warner.



It's why we believe in empowering Hispanic-owned businesses with tools and resources to succeed within our Supplier Diversity Program.

From our supplier workshops and scholarships, to business development opportunities and our **CHAMPIONS Initiative**, the companies of AmFam Group are proud to build innovative and equitable collaborations with diverse-owned businesses like yours.

The **CHAMPIONS Initiative** offers a unique opportunity for diverse business owners to develop relationships with AmFam Group companies to focus on specific challenges and achieve defined goals. This initiative also supports the National Minority Supplier Development Council and its mission to advance economic equity and achieve \$1 trillion in annual MBE revenues.

For more information about The CHAMPIONS Initiative, please visit AmFam.com/SupplierDiversity

AMERICAN FAMILY'S SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM IS GROWING QUICKLY. WE'D LOVE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESS.











Success Secrets of Hispanicand Latin-Owned Businesses

By Pam O'Brien

There are approximately five million Hispanic- and Latin-owned businesses in the U.S.

And those businesses are booming, according to Lantern by SoFi's recent survey of 1,000 U.S. Hispanic and Latin business owners. In fact, more than two-thirds of survey respondents report that their companies are doing the same or even better than they did before the pandemic.

But even as Hispanic- and Latin-owned businesses thrive, respondents report that some roadblocks remain. For instance, half of the Hispanic business owners surveyed say they face prejudice from their customers and from other business owners. Some 40% need a second job in order to make ends meet.

Yet despite the obstacles, Hispanic business owners say they would still encourage their peers to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. So, how do Hispanic- and Latin-owned businesses flourish even in tough times? The data below speaks for itself.

Candidates from all kinds of businesses were interviewed, but the top business types owned were:

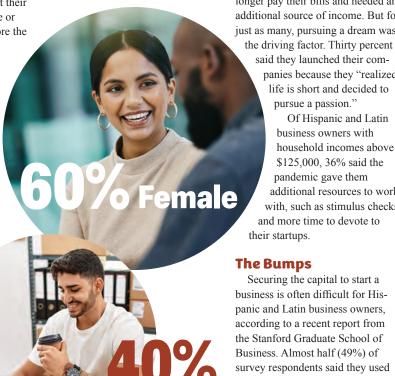
- Retail: 22%
- Fee-for-service: 17%
- Manufacturing: 11%
- Food Industry: 7%
- Subscription: 6%

in-owned businesses launched during that time. In fact, one-third of the Hispanic and Latin business owners surveyed started a business during or after the pandemic.

For some of the one-third of respondents who chose this answer, it was a necessity: 30% took the plunge because they could no longer pay their bills and needed an additional source of income. But for just as many, pursuing a dream was

> said they launched their companies because they "realized life is short and decided to pursue a passion."

Of Hispanic and Latin business owners with household incomes above \$125,000, 36% said the pandemic gave them additional resources to work with, such as stimulus checks and more time to devote to their startups.



The Bumps

Securing the capital to start a business is often difficult for Hispanic and Latin business owners, according to a recent report from the Stanford Graduate School of Business. Almost half (49%) of survey respondents said they used their personal savings to help start or acquire their businesses. And 29% used family savings to help get their business off the ground.

For a significant number of survey respondents, owning a business doesn't generate enough incomealmost 40% have a second job. That includes 44% of Hispanic and Latin business owners who are 24 and younger.

Seizing the Opportunity Despite difficulties posed by

the pandemic, Latin- and Hispanic-owned businesses are thriving. Seventy-two percent of survey respondents say their business is doing the same or even better than it did before COVID-19.

While some companies shuttered during the pandemic, a significant number of Hispanic- and Lat-

Social Media Makes a Difference

Promoting their business was the most challenging aspect of starting it, survey respondents report. So how do they get the word out?









The Participants

Before diving into the data, here's some information on the 1.000 interviewed candidates:

- 60% identified as female, 40% as male
- 62% founded their own busi-
- 56% are sole proprietors with 44% of them having at least one partner

Innovation driven by supplier diversity

One of the best ways to benefit our customers and communities is to expand the diversity of our suppliers. This not only fosters an environment of inclusion but also drives economic empowerment and opportunity.

Learn more about our commitment to increasing opportunities in our community and beyond at rtx.com/supplier-diversity





Most Hispanic and Latin business owners (57%) say they use social media to publicize their business. Thirty-seven percent have a website and 31% rely on listings on online marketplaces to help draw customers in.

Pauing it Forward

Supporting their community, culture and heritage is a priority for Hispanic and Latin business owners. As a bonus, doing good work often allows them to promote their companies at the same time.

How they give back:

- 34% encourage other businesses to work with Hispanic and Latin businesses and communities.
- 33% try to educate their customers and the public about Hispanic and Latin heritage.
- 33% sponsor or participate in

Hispanic and Latin community events or groups.

- 29% contribute to Hispanic and Latin programs or causes.
- 22% seek out other Hispanicand Latin-owned businesses to work with.

Their Best Business Advice

Despite the challenges they may face as business owners, survey respondents encourage others to pursue entrepreneurship. These are the words of wisdom they would pass along to those hoping to start Hispanic- and Latin-owned businesses:

Rise above prejudice and racism:

- "Don't be afraid and don't let racism discourage you."
- "If you can, go for it. You will

face racism, but don't let that deter you from chasing your dreams."

Be proud of your heritage and promote it:

- "Admire your heritage, no matter what people say. Be proud of what you do and who you are."
- "Embrace your cultural heritage and leverage it as a unique selling point in your business."
- "Do what you love and express your culture."

The Takeaway

Despite some challenges, many Hispanic- and Latin-owned businesses are flourishing post-pandemic. Most are doing the same or even better than they did before, according to our survey. Hispanic and Latin business owners take



great pride in their heritage and they use their businesses to give back to their communities and raise awareness of their culture.

To view the full report, visit lanterncredit.com/small-business/ survey-of-hispanic-owned-businesses.

Source: Lantern by SoFi



Dates subject to change slightly. Please share this invitation with your colleagues.



What Certification Can Do for You

f you're an entrepreneur or a small business owner, you've already seen the perks. You get to be our own boss, set your own hours and see your ideas come to life. But chances are, you've also seen the many obstacles that come with business ownership. A lack of funding, the struggle to form partnerships and growing your clientele are just some of the everyday challenges you can face when you work for yourself. If you're looking to expand your business in every avenue, you may want to consider becoming a certified minority-owned business owner.

The Perks of Certification

A certification is a special title vour business can earn that will give you access to resources and opportunities that are otherwise hard to acquire. For certified minority-owned businesses, this means you can gain access to workshops, conferences mentoring, partnerships and funding opportunities that would otherwise not be available to you. Your official certified title could also introduce you to opportunities to enter supplier diversity partnerships with Fortune 500 companies and big-name corporations.

The Types of **Certifications**

There are different certifications available depending on your business needs and qualifications. For example, if you want to work with federal agencies and earn government contracts, you'll want to look into earning a certification with one of the programs offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). If you want to work in a more private capacity, with opportunities to form supplier diversity partnerships with Fortune 500 companies, you'll want to look into independent certification groups that can help you make those connections.

It's also important to remember that you can hold several certifications at once, so you might not necessarily have to choose just one agency to work with.

SBA Certifications

For businesses wanting to work with federal agencies, the SBA offers several programs that may be helpful to you. Two of the most popular programs are the SBA 8(a) Business Development program and the HUBZone Certification program.

The 8(a) Business Development program is designed to help socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses grow by limiting competition for certain contracts to participating businesses, allowing them to become solid competitors in the federal marketplace. The program is available to business owners that have been in the market for at least two years and are interested in expanding their footprint in the federal marketplace.

8(a) businesses can also:

- Compete for set-aside and solesource contracts in the program.
- Get a business opportunity specialist to help navigate federal contracting.
- Form joint ventures with established businesses through the SBA's Mentor-Protégé program.
- Receive management and technical assistance, including business training, counseling, marketing assistance and high-level executive development.
- Compete for contract awards under multiple socio-economic programs, as they apply.

To participate in this program, you need to be a first-time participant of the 8(a) program, be at least 51% owned and controlled by a U.S. citizen who is socially and economically disadvantaged. Participants must also demonstrate good character and have a personal net worth \$750,000 or less, adjusted gross income of \$350,000 or less

and assets totaling \$6 million or

The HUBZone program, on the other hand, is dedicated to businesses located in historically underutilized business zones, like Native American lands and rural areas. Joining the HUBZone program makes your business eligible to compete for the program's set-aside contracts and gives preferential consideration to businesses in full and open competition. HUBZone-certified businesses also get a 10% price evaluation preference in full and open contract competitions.

To qualify for HUBZone, your business must:

- Be a small business according to SBA size standards.
- Be at least 51% owned and controlled by U.S. citizens, a Community Development Corporation, an agricultural cooperative, an Alaska Native corporation, a Native Hawaiian organization or a Native American tribe.
- Have its principal office located in a HUBZone.
- Have at least 35% of its employees living in a HUBZone.

Veteran-Owned **Programs**

The SBA also offers special certifications for veterans and service-disabled veteran business owners. To qualify as a Veteran-Owned Small Business (VOSB), a business must be at least 51% owned by one or more eligible veterans; or, in the case of any publicly-owned business, at least 51% of the stock is owned by one or more veterans, and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by such veterans. There is no certification program for VOSBs.

The Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) program requires that federal contracting agencies establish and achieve a participation goal of 3% of the total value of all prime contract and sub-contract awards for

each fiscal year for small businesses owned and controlled by veterans with service-connected disabilities. There is no federal SDVOSB certification program. The service-disabled veteran business owner represents their service-disabled and small business status in the contract representations and certifications.

Private Certifications

For those looking to work within a non-government capacity, you'll want to take a look at the different certifications available through agencies such as National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC), the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), among others. As mentioned before, these organizations allow small businesses to apply for specialty grants and scholarships, gain access to conferences and workshops among other certified businesses and networking opportunities with Fortune 500 companies. You can hold several of these certifications simultaneously.

Some organizations you may want to consider for certification include:

- NMSDC: For racial and ethnic minorities
- WBENC: For women-owned
- Disability:IN: For business owners with disabilities.
- The National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC): For the LGBTO+ community.
- National Veteran Business Development Council (NVBDC): For veterans.
- National Veteran-Owned Business Association (NVOBA): For veterans.

Whatever certification you decide to choose, remember that it doesn't end with a title. Take hold of the opportunities given to you and success for your business may be right around the corner.

Sources: SBA, Department of Transportation, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

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At Hilton, we understand that when our guests travel, they want to fully experience the cultural destinations they visit. In addition, Hilton is committed to being a global brand that is more representative of the world at large and to partnerships that reflect the communities in which we all live, work and travel. As Hilton's procurement arm, Hilton Supply Management encourages the growth and development of a diverse range of suppliers, including Hispanic owned businesses. Through intentional and inclusive efforts to partner with diverse suppliers, HSM is helping Hilton hotels better achieve their goals of providing guests culturally authentic hospitality of the highest quality.

To learn more about our industry leading Supplier Diversity Program, visit mysupplymanagement.com.



Carmen Vergara

Director of Brand Engagement



A Conversation with HSM's Director of Brand Engagement

With over 12 years' experience spearheading Brand Engagement for HSM, Carmen Vergara has directed the procurement strategy for nine newly launched brands across the Hilton enterprise. A hospitality enthusiast from an early age, Carmen's expertise in Culinary Arts and Hospitality/Business Administration supports her in her ongoing mission to develop processes that help property-level teams succeed in their day-to-day operations. She has also served as primary Brand Engagement support for several major categories and global brands, and she guides the prioritization of inclusive product selections that align with Hilton's DEI objectives.

How are you contributing to supplier diversity at HSM?

Throughout my tenure at Hilton, I have been an advocate for supplier diversity, working closely with our brand teams to advise on product selections and sourcing that align with Hilton's commitment to diversity and inclusion. I've also been instrumental in initiating inclusive product lines and partnerships, recommending diverse suppliers for relevant opportunities, and supporting diverse suppliers who are looking to partner with our organization.

What advice would you give to diverse suppliers who want to partner with Hilton?

My 12 years with Hilton have provided me with some invaluable insights for prospective supplier partners. One of my foremost suggestions for diverse suppliers seeking to do business with Hilton is to be authentic when presenting your product or service. And, for hospitality in particular, to demonstrate an understanding of the challenges and complexities a global supply chain presents. Last but not least, my advice is to never underestimate the power of consistent networking and meeting as many people as you can!

How is HSM's Supplier Diversity Program creating opportunities for Hispanic-owned businesses?

HSM's overarching commitment to our suppliers is that we want to help them succeed and for small, diverse and disadvantaged businesses, meeting these suppliers where they are is often integral to their success. That's why our Supplier Diversity Program is specifically structured to bolster the financial, educational, technological and social reach of these businesses, including those owned by women, minorities, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ community, individuals with disabilities and other traditionally underrepresented groups. HSM has been working to build a more diverse and inclusive supply chain for over a decade, and we are continually seeking out new partnerships with Hispanic owned businesses and actively engaging with enterprises that contribute to a more equitable future. Learn more about our mission by visiting the "Supplier Diversity" page at mysupplymanagement.com.



How to Create Effective Workplace Policies

hether you own a business that employs hundreds of employees or are running a company with one other person, it's important to establish workplace policies. Though it's not required for some small businesses to have written procedures on these policies, having them in place can provide a sense of protection for workers' rights and serve as a reminder for what is and isn't appropriate in the workplace. From discrimination and harassment to accommodations and beyond, here is what you need to include when drafting your workplace policies:

General Non-Discrimination Policy

Under the Equal Employment
Opportunity Commission (EEOC),
it is illegal to discriminate against
applicants and employees based off
of certain characteristics. Creating a
general, non-discrimination policy
outlines what is required of leadership and the consequences that will
follow should these rules be
broken. Some

icies in your writeup should include the following facts:

- That discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation or gender identity), national origin, disability, age (40 or older) or genetic information (including family medical history) is illegal and will not be tolerated. Provide definitions and examples of prohibited conduct as needed.
- How employees can report discrimination.
- How managers and other employees with human resource responsibilities must respond appropriately to discrimination claims.
- The consequences for violating the non-discrimination policy.
- Protection for those that report discrimination or participate in the discrimination investigation, to the greatest possible extent.

Harassment Policy

The harassment policy should cover the same rules, protections

consequences as the general non-discrimination policy, but with more emphasis on workplace harassment. Harassment is defined by the EEOC as unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetic information. To be unlawful, the conduct must create a work environment that would be intimidating, hostile or offensive to reasonable people. Offensive conduct may include, but is not limited to: offensive jokes, slurs, epithets or name-calling, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures and interference with work performance.

Reasonable Accommodation Policy

A reasonable accommodation policy outlines the requirements for employers to provide reasonable accommodations to employees or applicants with disabilities, medical needs or religious needs. There are a number of possible reasonable accommodations that an employer may have to provide in connection with modifications to the work environment or adjustments in how and when a job is performed, such as modified work schedules, accessible facilities, modifications in training and policies, and acquiring and

modifying equipment. Matters of importance in this policy should include:

- Specifying that your business provides reasonable accommodations (changes to the way things are normally done at work) to applicants and employees who need them for medical or religious reasons, as required by law.
- Identifying and providing contact information for the individual(s) responsible for

- handling reasonable accommodation requests.
- The requirement for managers to respond to such requests promptly and effectively.
- How managers might legally deny an accommodation or provide an alternate accommodation if one is seen as unreasonable.
- The privacy involved in documentation of medical files or additional information related to a needed accommodation.
- How employees can report discrimination based on reasonable accommodations.

Leave Policy Tips

This policy describes the legalities for how employees must conduct themselves in case they need to take a leave of absence from work due to medical or religious reasons. Guidelines in your leave policy should include:

- Clarifying that you will provide leave to employees who need it for medical or religious reasons, as required by law.
- The required documents to request leave.
- Require managers to respond promptly to leave requests.
- If a prompt response is not possible, consider periodically updating the employee on the status of their request.
- To prevent misunderstandings, consider recommending that decisions to modify or deny leave requests be explained to the employee.
- Requiring that managers keep genetic information or medical information received as a result of a leave request confidential and in a separate medical file.

For more information on these policies and the rights of employees and managers alike, visit eeoc.gov for more information.

Source: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission





We are committed to providing business opportunities to diverse suppliers. We support local and national agencies that provide certification, mentoring programs and business development education.

For more information visit aflac.com/supplierdiversity



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Licenses & Permits: Everything You Need to Know

ost small businesses need a combination of licenses and permits from both federal and state agencies. The requirements—and fees—vary based on your business activities, location and government rules. Here are the basics of what you need to know:

Federal Licenses and Permits

You'll need to get a federal license or permit if your business activities are regulated by a federal agency. If your business deals with the transport, production, sales or dealings of any of the following products, you will have to obtain a specific permit from a specific federal agency. This includes business activities such as:

- Agriculture: Business practices that deal with the import or transport animals, animal products, biologics, biotechnology or plants across state line. Issuing Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Alcoholic Beverages: Business practices that deal with the manufacture, wholesale, import and/or sales of alcoholic beverages at a retail location.

 Issuing Agency: Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Local Alcohol Beverage Control Board
- Aviation: Business practices involving the operation of aircraft, transportation of goods or people via air or aircraft maintenance. Issuing Agency: Federal







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Find out more:



IN PERSON & VIRTUAL CAREER FAIRS

& Roundtables

30+ Diversity Career Fairs & New Career Board



City Career Fair salutes its over 5,000 satisfied corporate. government, and non-profit clients for **ACTIVELY** supporting their Diversity Recruitment Initiatives.

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FEATURING

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Sept. 4

Sept. 11

Sept. 19

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Oct. 9

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2	024
Jan. 24	Portland 1 - In Person
Feb. 7	Bay Area 1 - In Person
Feb. 22	Seattle 1 - In Person
Mar. 6	Los Angeles 1 - In Person
Mar. 20	Denver 1 - In Person
Mar. 22	HEALTHCARE/ALLIED/NURSING VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR
Mar. 27	Phoenix - In Person
Apr. 3	DC / Virginia - In Person
Apr. 10	San Francisco - In Person
Apr. 24	Chicago 1 - In Person
May 8	Boston - In Person
May 17	LAW ENFORCEMENT & VETERANS VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR
May 29	New York - In Person
June 5	Sacramento - In Person
June 12	Atlanta - In Person
June 21	HIGH TECH & ENGINEERING VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR
June 26	Silicon Valley - In Person
July 10	West Hollywood - In Person
July 17	Dallas - In Person
July 25	Seattle 2 - In Person
July 31	Orange County - In Person
Aug. 7	Denver 2 - In Person
Aug. 21	Portland 2 - In Person
Aug. 28	Inland Empire - In Person

Chicago 2 - In Person

Bay Area 2 - In Person

Milwaukee - In Person

San Diego - In Person

Long Beach - In Person

San Fernando Valley - In Person

Sept. 25 Los Angeles 2 - In Person

Aviation Administration

- Commercial Fisheries: For businesses engaged in commercial fishing of any kind. Issuing Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service
- Fish and Wildlife: For businesses engaged in any wildlife-related activity, including the import or export of wildlife and derivative products. Issuing Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Maritime Transportation:

For businesses providing ocean transportation or facilitating the shipment of cargo by sea. Issuing Agency: Federal Maritime Commission

- Mining and Drilling: For businesses engaged in drilling for natural gas, oil or other mineral resources on federal lands. Issuing Agency: Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
- Nuclear Energy: For businesses that are a fuel cycle facility, producing commercial nuclear energy or are involved in the distribution and disposal of nuclear materials. Issuing Agency: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- Radio and Television Broadcasting: For businesses dealing in broadcasting information by radio, television, wire, satellite or cable. Issuing Agency: Federal Communications Commission
- Transportation and Logistics: For businesses operating oversize or overweight vehicles. Issuing Agency: State government and U.S. Department of Transportation

State Licenses and **Permits**

The licenses and permits you need from the state, county or city will depend on your business activities and business location. Your business license fees will also vary. States tend to regulate a broader range of activities than the federal government. For example, business activities that are commonly regulated locally include auctions, construction, dry cleaning, farming,



plumbing, restaurants, retail and vending machines.

Some licenses and permits expire after a set period of time. Keep track of when you need to renew themit's often easier to renew than it is to apply for a new one.

What You'll Need

Depending on the licensing you need, your license qualifications will differ. However, just about every license and/or permit requires that you have the following documen-

- Your business description or business plan that includes:
 - Employee numbers
 - Annual sales
 - Job description
 - Contact information for the business owner
 - Other pertinent business information
- Government ID, including your Social Security Number or Federal Employment Identification Number.
- Fees (varies by state).
- LLC registration for businesses of one. Having your LLC is not the same as having your business license, although they often complement one another.

For more information on what you need for your specific business license, visit sba.gov/business-guide/launch-your-business.

Sources: Small Business Administration, Collective.com



Diversifying your supplier base is good for business.

Supplier inclusion is not just good for businesses, it's also good for our communities. At Walmart, we understand the importance of working with Hispanic-owned businesses to help create economic opportunity for a more inclusive and equitable marketplace.





Mark Consuelos: A Latino Storyteller

By Sarah Mosqueda

ark Consuelos didn't set out to be an actor. "It was all kind of by happenstance.

The entertainer, talk show host, producer, father and philanthropist actually graduated from the University of South Florida in 1994 with a degree in marketing.

"I had just transferred from the University of Notre Dame to the University of South Florida and my dad said, 'go get a business degree," said Consuelos. "I met with the counselor and said, 'what's the easiest track in business?""

But when he found out a friend was taking an acting class off campus, he was intrigued.

"I thought it was hilarious that he was taking it," said Consuelos. "It was outside of the university, like a local theater group, and he said you should just come with me and see if you like it. So, I went and fell in love."

Consuelos came from an academic family with an older brother who became a doctor and a sister who became a lawyer, but he couldn't picture himself working in such a traditional

environment. He followed an unconventional path and, with hard work and support from his family, found success in the enter tainment industry.

Now, he is working to push forward narratives that showcase Latino stories beyond stereotypi-

"I knew that I really didn't want to wear a suit every day to work, that I wanted to kind of be in the circus, and acting seemed like the closest thing to it," he said.

The Role That Started It All

Mark Andrew Consuelos was born in Zaragoza, Spain, on March 30, 1971 to an Italian mother, Camilla, and Mexican father, Saul. The family spent time in Italy, Lebanon, Illinois and Florida. Among his earliest acting credits is a production of Hello, Dolly! at the Looking Glass Playhouse in Illinois.

Consuelos said education was very important to his family, but they supported his choice to pursue acting professionally. "For me to tell them that I'm not going to use my degree but go into this

crazy field that nobody in my family was in or knew anything about, other than going to the movies, they were so supportive," he said. "They're like, go for it."

After catching the acting bug post-graduation, Consuelos got a headshot and an agent.

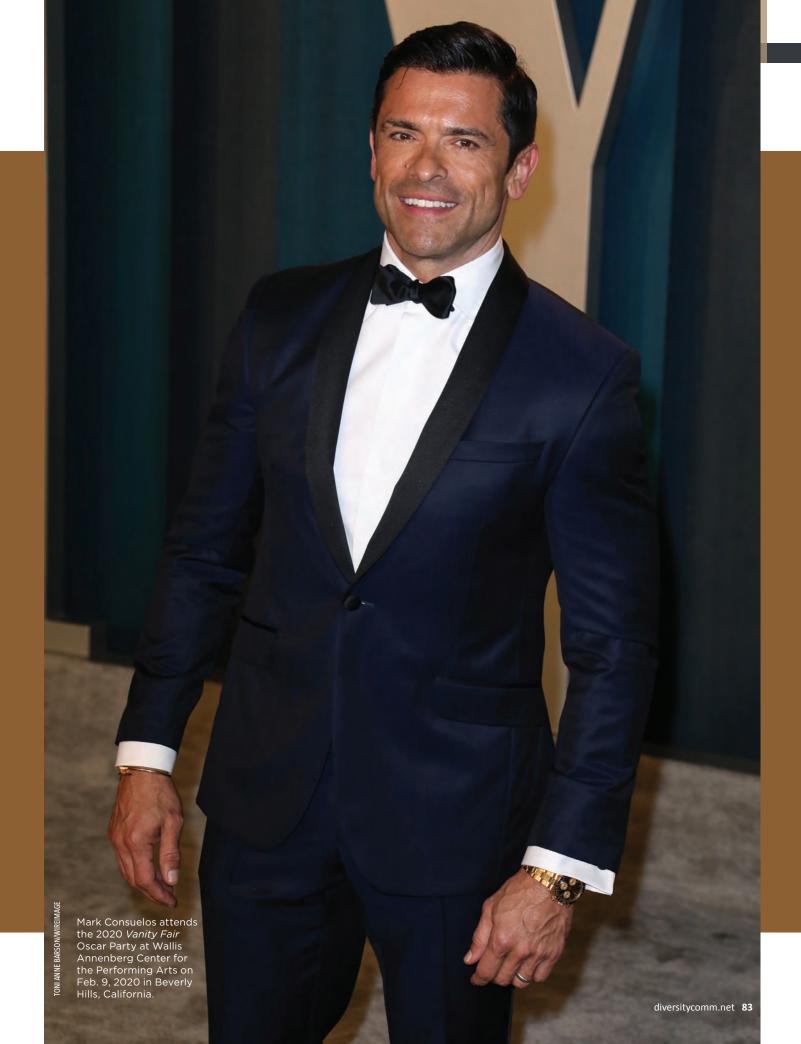
"I graduated college and my plan was to move to New York City to go study, like really for mally study, acting," he said.

Mark's agent submitted him for a role on the ABC soap opera, All My Children.

The show liked his audition tape and a couple weeks later, he was on a plane to New York to screen test for the job. "I flew to New York and I slept on my buddy's couch, and I went in and got the job," said Consuelos.

He joined the cast of All My Children in February 1995 as Mateo Santos, one of his best-known roles. He played Santos until 2002 and even returned to the role in 2010 for the 40th anniversary

In 1998 and 1999, Consue los was awarded the American Latino Media Arts Award for "Outstanding Actor in a Daytime Soap Opera."



Feature

Cover Story

The award-winning actor says he enjoyed the role and appreciated the depth head writer and show creator, Agnes Nixon, gave his character.

"Even with All My Children, I was part of a major storyline on daytime TV that centered around a Latino family from Texas," said Consuelos. "It wasn't like we were waiters or cops or drug dealers, or you know, whatever stereotypical roles that we as a community have been fighting against... I think [Nixon] was always on the forefront of telling these stories that truly represented what's actually happening."

Telling Latino Stories

While Consuelos says he's seen changes in representation and diversity in entertainment since the start of his career, he admits the changes are not always easy to spot.

"I think sometimes it feels kind of glacial and there's small changes," he said. "I know for me personally, I've had a unique experience...I've played a senator, a doctor, a lawyer, the general manager of a professional baseball team; I've always had these very professional elevated roles that I've played."

But even more than the roles he's played, Consuelos sees himself making a difference in representation behind the scenes.

"I think the most effective I can be as a producer and a Latino is to find those stories and find those collaborations with other Latinos or with other showrunners that are supportive of our community," he says. "I think it's through really smart partnerships and collaborations with other people that are thinking about doing the same thing and have power, that we will get to that place."

For example, Consuelos optioned a book called *Mexican Gothic* a few years ago. The story is a historical horror noir by Mexican-Canadian author, Silvia Moreno-Garcia, and a *New York Times* bestseller.

The actors strike put the project on hold, but at press time as the strike nears its end, Consuelos said he is looking forward to getting it back on track. "We have it set up at Hulu," he said. "I'm really excited about telling that story."

A Family Affair

After All My Children, Consuelos went on to play Steve Velard in the 2006 movie, My Super Ex-Girlfriend, and landed more television roles on popular shows like Ugly Betty, Law & Order: Special Victims Unit, American Horror Story: Asylum and Only Murders in the Building.

His breakout role on *All My Children* not only jumpstarted his career, but also led to a strong romantic relationship with wife, well-known television personality Kelly Ripa.

In 1995, he met Ripa on the soap opera set and the two eloped a year later. The couple shares three children together—Michael, Lola









1: Hosts Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos speak onstage at the Los Angeles LGBT Center's 49th Anniversary Gala Vanguard Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Sept. 22, 2018 in Beverly Hills, California. 2: (L-R) Kelly Ripa, Maureen Reidy and Mark Consuelos attend *LIVE with Kelly and Mark* at PaleyFest NY 2023 at the Paley Museum on Oct. 11, 2023 in New York City. 3: (L-R) Kelly Ripa, Mark Consuelos and Lena Dunham attend Lincoln Center's American Songbook Gala at Alice Tully Hall on May 29, 2018 in New York City. 4: Jenny Mollen and Mark Consuelos are seen on the set of *LIVE with Kelly and Mark* on July 13, 2023 in New York City.





1: Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos attend the 90th Annual Academy Awards at Hollywood & Highland Center on March 4, 2018 in Hollywood, California. 2: Kelly Ripa, Mark Consuelos and their children attend the ceremony honoring Kelly Ripa's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame held on Oct. 12, 2015 in Hollywood, California.

Things You Probably Didn't Know About Mark Consuelos

- 1. Although he was born in Spain, he does not speak Spanish. He speaks Italian.
- 2. He is an ordained minister.
- 3. Mark and Kelly eloped in Las Vegas in 1996 instead of having a formal wedding.
- 4. He learned English as a child by watching American television.
- 5. His and Kelly's production company is called MiLoJo Productions after their three children, Michael, Lola and Joaquin.

Source: imdb.com









and Joaquin—and remains happily married to this day.

"We met each other on a soap and that's how we spent the first seven years of our marriage," said Consuelos. "On a soap together, with our storylines together, working 12-hour days and commuting with small children."

The time the pair has spent working together and the bond they've built laid the groundwork for their current roles as co-hosts on *LIVE with Kelly and Mark*.

On working with his wife, Consuelos says, "She's the best in the business at what she does; she is so good and she makes it so easy for the person that she's working with. It's an absolute no-brainer."

Consuelos has also had the opportunity work with another family member on screen: his son Michael.

On the CW drama *Riverdale*, Consuelos played Hiram Lodge, father to protagonist Veronica Lodge, from 2017 until the show's end in 2023. The role earned him a Teen Choice Award for Choice TV Villain in 2018.

In a flashback episode, showrunners were looking for a high school version of Consuelos.

"I remember talking to Roberto [Aguirre-Sacasa], who created the show, and he said, 'your son Michael looks so much like you, it's a shame he doesn't have a SAG card," Consuelos said. "I said, 'you know, he does have one because he did some voiceover work as a little kid for some

shows."

Michael Consuelos played young Hiram Lodge in the flashback episode and returned to the show alongside his father for an episode depicting Hiram Lodge's origin story.

Being onscreen with his son was an unforgettable moment for Consuelos. "I have to tell you, I'm just so proud. We will always have that together; it will live on forever and his kids will be able to see it, which would be my grandchildren, and I don't know—I think it's just another blessing I am so grateful for."

Looking Forward

Consuelos has proudly used his platform to advocate for philanthropic causes, including





1: April Donelson and Mark Consuelos attend as Haute Living celebrates Kelly Ripa and the release of Live Wire with Parfums de Marly and Telmont Champagne at Scarpetta on Sept. 27, 2022 in New York City.

2: Mark Consuelos and Kelly Ripa are seen in Manhattan on July 21, 2022 in New York City. 3: Actors Skeet Ulrich, Marisol Nichols, Mark Consuelos and Molly Ringwald at Build Studio on Oct. 7, 2019 in New York City.

4: (L-R) Damian Holbrook, Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, Mark Consuelos, Marisol Nichols, Skeet Ulrich, Madchen Amick and Molly Ringwald speak on stage during the Riverdale special video panel during New York Comic Con 2019-Day 4 at Hulu Theater at Madison Square Garden on Oct. 6, 2019 in New York City. 5: Actors Lochlyn Munro, Skeet Ulrich, Martin Cummins, Robin Givens, Luke Perry, (bottom L-R) Nathalie Boltt, Marisol Nichols, Mädchen Amick and Mark Consuelos of CW's Riverdale pose for a portrait during the 2018 Summer TCA press tour at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Aug. 5, 2018 in Beverly Hills, California. 6: Mark Consuelos and daughter Lola Grace Consuelos arrive at the premiere of EuropaCorp's Nine Lives at TCL Chinese Theatre on Aug. 1, 2016 in Hollywood, California. 7: Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos attend the 92nd Annual Academy Awards at Hollywood & Highland Center on Feb. 9, 2020 in Hollywood, California.

support for the unhoused through the New York charity, the WIN (Women in Need) Foundation.

"The WIN Foundation was something that I was exposed to early on, gosh, almost close to 30 years ago, when I was on All My Children and someone in the cast was involved," said

The foundation initially specialized in abuse recovery for women, but now offers programs of emotional empowerment for women around the

Consuelos fondly remembers bringing holiday gifts for the kids and connecting with the foundation through WIN's chief executive officer, Christine Quinn.

"We got to do work with them, especially

over the holidays. They were big fans of All My Children, and I remember one of the houses was not too far away from our studio on the Upper West Side," said Consuelos. "It was a cause that Kelly and I found close to our hearts."

In 2023, Consuelos was asked to be Grand Marshal in Los Angeles' Mexican Independence Day Parade—something he considered a great honor

"Man, what a gift it was," he said. "I got to go to the Mexican consulate and meet all the people that were responsible for the parade. That was really great. And you know, in some way, I got to honor my father, who came to this country when he was a teenager from Mexico."

Now, anchored back in New York with LIVE

with Kelly and Mark for the first time in roughly seven years, Consuelos is setting his sights on a new endeavor.

"Now that I'm here, I would love to do some theater," he says. "It doesn't have to be Broadway-I would just absolutely love to get back on stage."

Consuelos has continued to forge his own path and hopes that other Latino entertainers will follow. He's been successful in avoiding a conventional life and a job that required him to

For the most part, anyway. "What's ironic is that for the past 10 years, every role that I've landed, I've had to wear a suit every day," laughs Consuelos.

A Conversation with U.S. Assistant Secretary Alejandra Castillo

A lejandra Castillo was sworn in as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development on Aug. 13, 2021—becoming the first woman of color to hold this position. Leading the only federal agency focused exclusively on economic development, Castillo guides the implementation of over \$5 billion in funding, powering the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and its mission to make transformational investments in America.

DiversityComm Magazine was honored to sit down with Castillo to learn more about her esteemed career in public service as a Hispanic woman, her accomplishments and her own embodiment of the American dream.

DiversityComm Magazine (DCM): What inspired you to pursue a career in public service?

Alejandra Castillo (AC): Well, I didn't start out necessarily thinking about public service. I started out thinking, "how do I solve problems that I witnessed growing up in my community?" But I also witnessed so much that needed fixing-when you open the newspaper, when you travel and you see people who, as I say, are hurt. My career started out more as an agent desiring to problem solve. But I realize that government plays a huge role and may not be the solution to everything. But it does have the levers to actually execute change, and that was very attractive to me.

DCM: You've said previously that you consider yourself to be an embodiment of the American dream. Please tell us more about that.

AC: The American dream comes in various iterations. For my family, the American dream was not having the house with the white picket fence. It was building a business. Why was that the American dream?

Because that allowed us to build new jobs and hire our entire family. That let me be a part of making a difference for everyone I knew and loved.

My whole life I've sought to build bridges and help others. I'm the first in my family to learn English, thanks to the help of PBS shows like Sesame Street and The Electric Company. Like many immigrant children, I was tapped to help her family and community navigate life in America. I accompanied non-English speakers to appointments and helped neighbors translate letters from landlords or the Social Security Administration. The American dream made a better life possible for my family; and put me on a path to a lifetime of service that has been the most incredible. rewarding experience.

DCM: You've had an esteemed career spanning more than two decades, serving in leadership positions under three presidential administrations. What is one of your proudest accomplishments?

AC: Oh, so many. Some of those accomplishments are hugely visible, while many are very quiet and even silent. Back in the 90s, I worked on a policy change for the federal government's health plan. At that time, it did not include mental health services or drug treatment. I was on the team that really helped incorporate both. It's an accomplishment that has helped millions of people because the federal government was the first one to do it and now other insurance companies followed our model.

Most people are aware of the "big wins" that make the newspaper, like Tech Hubs. Or like the Build Back Better Regional Challenge or Good Jobs Challenge, or the Inclusive Innovation Initiative that I started when I was at MBDA. There are many accomplishments, but at the end of the day, these accomplish-

"There's a pressure of being the first, but I know so many take the responsibility seriously to ensure we're not the last. We have to be role models and door openers. I often tell young women, especially young women of color, that you're going to have to work three times as hard because all eyes are

very mindful of the potential stereotypes that come with it. My name is Alejandra Castillo. I'm not Lisa Smith. So, before I walk in the room, my Latin culture is there before I even step into the door. I take pride in being able to show the most beautiful sides of my culture and what it means to bring all of who I am and represent to my work.

ments are done with good teams, with people who believe in service and are relentless in that pursuit.

on you to get it right."

DCM: What impact did you feel you made as the first Hispanic woman to lead the Commerce Department's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)?

AC: Clearly, there's excitement and pride being on the journey. But at times it feels sad that even in 2023, I'm still the first to hold several roles in my career. It reminds us that the work of diversity, equity and inclusion is never ending.

There's a pressure of being the first, but I know so many take the responsibility seriously to ensure we're not the last. We have to be role models and door openers. I often tell young women, especially young women of color, that you're going to have to work three times as hard because all eyes are on you to get it right. You have to ignore that and do what you were hired to do, and shine because you're the right and best person for the opportunity.

And sometimes it's also being

DCM: What is one key piece of advice you would give to a diverse entrepreneur or minority business starting out today?

AC: If your dreams don't scare you, you're not dreaming big enough. And it's ok to realize that breaking up the elements that make up your dreams into more digestible morsels isn't cheating yourself of your ambition. Because sometimes when it's a big idea, our investors, partners and teams can find it hard to wrap their head around it.

But if you can break it down into sizeable, digestible action, then you can get the buy in that you need to journey through it. Slow and steady—with the right help along the way—is the way to win the race.





New online MBA programs are popping up seemingly every day, thanks to technological advancements and the unprecedented flexibility they offer—it was a trend undoubtedly accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. But not all online programs are created equal.

So we asked Tawnya Means, Chief Learning Officer at the University of Illinois' Gies College of Business, how you can discern which online program is right for you.

Gies' online MBA program—the iMBA—was recently named the 2022 MBA Program of the Year by *Poets&Quants*. Priced just under \$24,000, the iMBA is designed and delivered by the top faculty and online learning experts at the University of Illinois, and it can be completed in 18-60 months. That's a big reason why the iMBA has seen record demand and a 96% student satisfaction rate.

Means gave us four questions you should be asking before you pick an online program.

1. What am I going to do?

A program may have great faculty, highquality videos, and a strong sequence of courses—but if you're not engaged, then you're going to have a solitary experience. At Gies, the online programs are career-curated; students take what they learn in highly interactive live sessions and apply it at their job the next day. In fact 95% of iMBA students apply what they learn in the program to their job.

"For learning to be transformative, it has to be experiential," said Means, who joined Gies Business this fall after 20 years of furthering the teaching and learning goals of colleges and universities across the country. "I can provide you information, but if you don't explore what that information means when applied in realistic and authentic situations, you haven't really learned anything. As an example, being able to go into a simulation and apply what you've learned is key."

2. What kind of meaningful interactions will I have with other people?

Engagement is key, and the best online programs offer opportunities to develop genuine connections with peers and faculty. At Gies, students participate in live class sessions with the College's top faculty. Those sessions include breakout rooms and indepth group work where learners can delve deeper into a topic with classmates from a variety of industries all around the world. Those personal connections are a big reason why the Gies iMBA has a 93% retention rate—a number almost unheard of among online programs.

"There's a big difference between being asked to post a certain number of times on a forum versus making real connections with people," Means said. "At Gies, we want students to feel part of an active community. Interacting with others is an extremely valuable piece of learning. We learn best when we have to explain an idea to someone else, when we defend an idea, or when we hear how others have applied an idea. Those elements are active in the best courses."

3. Do I have options?

Many students care about the flexibility an online program can provide, and rightfully so, but often students think about that flexibility in terms of being able to view or attend a lecture whenever they want. The important question, according to Means, should go deeper than that.

"Online MBA programs, like the iMBA program here at Gies, appeal to working professionals because they offer unmatched flexibility, so you can integrate the program into your busy life," said Means. "The best online programs, though, offer flexibility in the sequence of classes and elective tracks

For learning to be transformative, it has to be experiential.

TAWNYA MEANS, CHIEF LEARNING
OFFICER GIES COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

or concentrations. They also offer flexibility and choice in small ways, such as how you complete your assignments. Does the instructor require you to conduct a SWOT analysis on a pre-selected fictitious firm, or are you allowed to run that same exercise on your current employer?"

4. Will my MBA still be relevant for my next job?

At Gies College of Business, 56% of iMBA graduates say they received a promotion, job offer, or accepted a new position during their time in the program. And, the average pay increase during the iMBA program is 26%. Not only do they realize an immediate ROI, but they're also thinking ahead to their next position. That's why Means emphasizes the importance of making sure your degree will fit your future needs.

"Some programs were put 'in the can' three years ago, and the content doesn't stay fresh," she said. "From a program perspective, it's a lot of work to keep material fresh—but it's critical. There should be core pieces that never change—concepts like time value of money; in contrast, FinTech is changing every week. Make sure the program you choose is adaptable. You should make sure you're asking good questions about how frequently content is refreshed."



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61%

of learners attained a promotion, got a job offer, or accepted a new position during the program 22%

average pay increase

24-60

months to complete



f you're looking to enroll in higher education this year, there's a lot to consider when choosing a school. But along with degree programs and financial incentives, you'll want to add "inclusion" to your list of factors.

Whether you're spending every day on campus or logging into online classes once a week, attending a university that cares about your well-being, inclusion and safety on campus can make all the difference.

Some of the best schools you can attend that prioritize these efforts are HBCUs and HSIs. But what are these schools? And why should you consider them? Here's what you need to know:

What Are They?

Also known as minority-serving institutions, these schools are dedicated to certain diverse populations.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are institutions of higher education in the United States that were established before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the intention of primarily serving Black Americans. HBCUs offer all students, regardless of race, an opportunity to develop their skills and talents. These institutions train young people who go on to serve domestically and

internationally as entrepreneurs and professionals in both the public and private sector.

HSIs (Hispanic-Serving Institutions) are similar in description, except they are more geared towards the Hispanic and Latinx communities. Established many years later by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), they are defined as an accredited, degree-granting, public or private nonprofit institution of higher education, with 25% or higher total undergraduate Hispanic or Latino full-time equivalent student enrollment.

Schools with one or both of these labels are in no way exclusive to those who do not identify as Black or Hispanic, allowing anyone to attend.

The Statistics

As of 2023, there are currently 107 HBCUs in the United States, collectively enrolling more than 228,000 students. Over 60% of HBCUs are public institutions, with an even higher percentage identifying as a four-year program. While HBCUs are scattered across the country, most of them can be found on the eastern side of the nation.

Concerning HSIs, there are currently over 570 designated

schools across the United States. In Fall 2021, about 4.6 million were enrolled at HSIs, with half of those students identifying as Hispanic or Latinx. While many of the schools are located across the nation, with a third of HSIs existing in California; they can also be found in Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico.

Why You Should Attend

As mentioned before, HBCUs and HSIs tend to have higher populations of Black and Hispanic/Latinx populations than other schools. Usually, this means that the staff and student populations at these schools are more aware of the experiences, needs and issues surrounding these communities. As these schools accept students of all races, it also may lead to an increase of diverse students, allowing for a higher influx of differing ideas and experiences to be shared amongst

Additionally, HBCUs and HSIs are more likely to provide resources that are specifically beneficial to Black and Hispanic students. These resources may include scholarship opportunities, specialty clubs and extracurricular activities and classes that focus on more specific cultural and racial topics. Schools who pri-

oritize diversity might also be more prone to handling matters of racial bias and discrimination to a higher standard.

The Top Colleges to Consider

According to BestColleges, here are the top-rated HBCUs and HSIs in the country for you to consider:

HBCUs:

- Spelman College: Atlanta, GA
- Howard University: Washington, D.C.
- Florida A&M University: Tallahassee, FL
- Tuskegee University: Tuskegee,
- Morehouse College: Atlanta,

HSIs:

- University of Texas-Austin: Austin, TX
- University of California-Irvine: Irvine, CA
- Texas A&M University: College Station, TX
- University of California-Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, CA
- University of Central Florida: Orlando, FL

Sources: Department of Education, Wikipedia, CalPoly Pomona, BestColleges, USNews.com, Niche



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Doctor of Social Work

Mechatronics Engineering (BS)

Musical Theatre (BFA)

Transportation Systems Engineering (BS)

*Partial Listing

College of Interdisciplinary & Continuing Studies

College of Liberal Arts

School of Architecture & Planning

School of Business & Management

School of Community Health & Policy

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School of Education & Urban Studies

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School of Graduate Studies
School of Social Work





How to Spot & Avoid Student Loan Scams

tudent loan payments are stressful enough, but throw fraudulent companies and scammers into the mix, and it creates a whole new problem. As we un-pause the stall of student loan repayments, here are some tips on how to spot student loan scams:

They want money for free services

Commercial financial aid advice services can cost well over \$1,000. Of course, simply charging for help or information that's available for free elsewhere is not fraudulent. However, if a company doesn't deliver what it promises, it's scamming you.

If you're unsure whether to pay a company for help finding financial aid, stop and think for a minute: What's being offered? Is the service going to be worth your money? Do the claims seem too good to be true?

Receiving help on your FAFSA form and repayment options is also a cost-free service provided by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Any company requesting funds in exchange for this service is a scam. You don't have to pay for help with the FAFSA form. If you are asked for your credit card information while filling out the FAFSA form online, you are not at the official government site. Remember, the FAFSA site address has .gov in it!

They use these phrases

Borrowers have reported receiving phone calls, emails, letters and/or texts offering them relief from their federal student loans or warning them that student loan forgiveness programs would end soon. Usually, the so-called student loan debt relief companies offering these types of services don't offer any relief at all. Often, they're just fraudsters who are after your money.

Here are some examples of the false claims made in these communications:

"Act immediately to qualify for student loan forgiveness before

- the program is discontinued." "You are now eligible to
- receive benefits from a recent law that has passed regarding federal student loans, including total forgiveness in some circumstances. Federal student loan programs may change. Please call within 30 days of receiving this notice."
- "Your student loans may qualify for complete discharge. Enrollments are first come, first serve."
- "Student alert: Your student loan is flagged for forgiveness pending verification. Call now!"

Communications using this type of aggressive advertising to lure

WHAT WE'RE READING:

The National Utilities Diversity Council is starting the year off with some books and reports by some of our favorite authors!

Inclusive Leadership: Transforming Diverse Lives, Workplaces, and Societies, edited by Bernardo Ferdman, Jeanine Prime, and Ronald E. Riggio

Leading Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Rohini Anand

Mentoring Diverse Leaders: Creating Change for People, Processes and Paradigms, Audrey Murrell and Stacey Blake-Beard

The Prepared Leader: Emerge from Any Crisis More Resilient Than Before, Erika H. James and Lynn Perry Wooten

Unmasking AI, Joy Buolamwini

US Latino Gross Domestic Product Report Dan Hamilton and Matthew Fineup, David Hayes-Bautista and Paul Hsu



NUDC Mission

The National Utilities Diversity Council educates, develops best practices and guides efforts that will promote diversity in the utilities and communications industries in the areas of governance, employment, procurement, language access/customer service, and philanthropy.

We do this through: Webinars & Virtual Panels Interactive Diversity Toolkit **Annual Conference** Trends & Best Practices Research Connecting our constituency to a community of thought leaders and doers throughout the year.

NUDC is a non-profit organization funded by contributions. To join us visit www.nudc.com/membership Contact Us: Laurie Dowling, Executive Director

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borrowers are NOT coming from ED or its partners.

They require you to pay up-front or monthly fees for help

If a company requires a fee before they actually do anything, that's a huge red flag-especially if they try to get your credit card number or bank account information. In some cases, they may even step in and ask you to pay them directly, promising to pay your servicer each month when your bill comes due. Free assistance is available through your federal loan servicer.

They promise immediate and total loan forgiveness or cancellation

No one can promise immediate and total loan forgiveness or cancellation. Most government forgiveness programs require many years of qualifying payments and/or employment in certain fields before your loans can be forgiven. Also, student loan debt relief companies do not have the ability to negotiate with your federal loan servicer for a "special deal" under the federal student loan program. Payment levels under income-driven payment plans are set by federal law.

They ask for your **FSA ID username** and password

ED or its partners will never ask you for your FSA ID password. Your FSA ID is used to sign legally binding documents electronically. It has the same legal status as a written signature. Do not give your FSA ID password to anyone or allow anyone to create an FSA ID for you. If a company has access to your FSA ID information, they can make changes to your account without your permission.

They ask you to sign and submit a third-party authorization form or a power of attorney

These are written agreements giving the third party legal permission to talk directly to your federal loan servicer and make decisions on your behalf. Debt relief companies often want these authorizations so that they can change your account and contact information, so you don't realize that they aren't actually paying your monthly student loan bill.

They claim their offer is limited and encourage you to act immediatelu

Student loan debt relief companies often try to instill a sense of urgency by citing 'new laws' or discontinuing programs as a way to encourage borrowers to contact them immediately. While there are some deadlines you need to meet regarding your student loans-for instance, if you're paying under an income-driven repayment plan, you need to recertify annually-our programs are limited only by the eligibility requirements.

Their communications contain errors

While many of the communications sent out by these companies look very formal (for example, fold-and-tear letters with safety patterns), they often contain spelling and grammatical errors. If you notice unusual capitalization, improper grammar or incomplete sentences in the communication you receive, that's likely a red flag that the company is not affiliated with

Source: studentaid.gov





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Caring for Your Mental Health in 2024

Ithough it can be harder to see its tangible effects, mental health is essential to our overall health and quality of life. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It not only affects how we think, feel, act, relate and handle stress, but also how we make healthy choices.

For example, depression increases the risk for many types of physical health problems, particularly long-lasting conditions like diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Similarly, the presence of chronic conditions can increase the risk for mental illness.

So, how can we make sure our mental health receives the same attention as our physical health? Here are some things to implement into your 2024 health resolutions:

Self-Care

A term that become popular and even misused over the years, self-care means taking the time to do the things that will help you live well and improve all aspects of your health. When it comes to your mental health, self-care can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness and increase your energy. Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a big impact.

Self-care often includes regular exercise, balanced meals, hydration and ensuring you get plenty of rest. These same aspects are also crucial to maintaining great physical health.

Remember to:

- Get about 30 minutes of exercise each day, even if it's in increments
- Drink water and avoid caffeinated beverages (which can cause feelings of anxiety in certain individuals).
- Stick to a sleep schedule that works for you. Most professionals recommend that adults get at least 7-9 hours of sleep per night.

In addition to caring for your physical health, self-care also includes more non-traditional ideas



surrounding health. For example, doing a relaxing activity such as meditation, breathing exercises, coloring and journaling can have a significant positive impact on your mental health.

Other important self-care tips also include:

- Setting goals and priorities:
 - Decide what must get done now and what can wait. Learn to say "no" to new tasks if you start to feel like you're taking on too much. Try to be mindful of what you have accomplished at the end of the day, not what you have been unable to do.
- Practicing gratitude: Remind yourself daily of things you are grateful for. Be specific. Write them down at night or replay them in your mind.
- Staying connected: Reach out to your friends or family members who can provide emotional support and practical help.

When to Seek Professional Help

There is no shame in seeking help for your emotional and mental health. In fact, wanting help for your mental health is more common than you may think. More than one in five Americans live with a mental illness, with one in 25 identifying with a more serious condition, such

as schizophrenia or major depression. And even then, experiencing severe mental health issues doesn't mean you have a more serious problem to worry about.

Seek professional help if you are experiencing severe or distressing symptoms lasting two weeks or more, such as:

- Difficulty sleeping.
- Appetite changes that result in unwanted weight changes.
- Struggling to get out of bed in the morning because of mood.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Loss of interest in things you usually find enjoyable.
- Inability to perform usual daily functions and responsibilities.

Don't wait until your symptoms are overwhelming. Talk about your concerns with your primary care provider, who can refer you to a mental health professional if needed. You can also find help with trusted individuals who can assist you in finding the care you need.

Remember, if you are struggling with your mental health, your condition isn't permanent, treatment can help and there is always someone ready to help you with love and understanding.

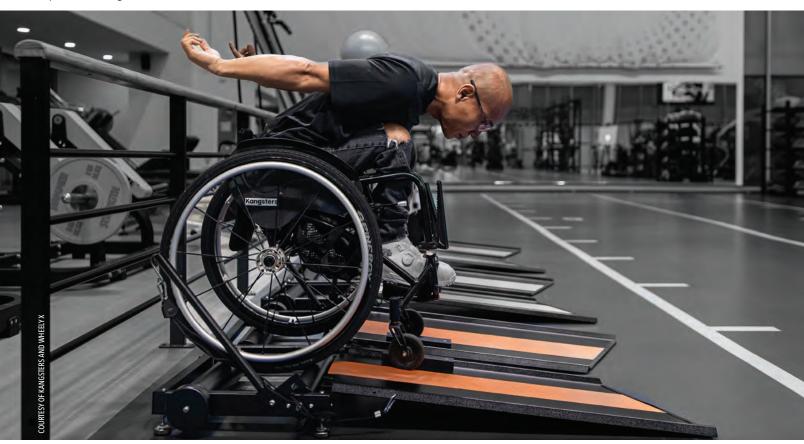
For more information on mental health and resources you can use, visit nimh.nih.gov.

Sources: National Institute of Mental Health, CDC



Unlocking Accessible Gaming for Wheelchair Users

By Natalie Rodgers



n 2006, Nintendo's newest console, Wii, debuted to the public and almost instantly caused a worldwide craze. Unlike other video games of the past that required players to sit down with wired controllers, Wii was one of the first non-portable video game systems that required players to jump, walk, throw, dance and use their entire bodies to control their devices. From there, advancements in motion-controlled gaming and virtual reality took off, furthering the marriage between physical interaction and gaming

But while these methods were popular and encouraged among able-bodied players, they weren't always inclusive for video game lovers with certain disabilities. While players in wheelchairs, for example, could participate in some of the Wii's physical tasks, participating in many of these games' features proved to be exclusive at the least. But thanks to a startup company in



South Korea, inaccessible physical gaming may soon become a distant memory.

In late 2023, the tech venture Kangsters, which exclusively specializes in accessible technology, announced Wheely-X. This innovation strives to make an all-inclusive mobile gaming experience for players who use a wheelchair. Using a treadmill equipped with advanced sensors, players can easily connect

their chair to the platform and use real-time motions to control the game. They even have a mobile app that works with the device so players can set their speed and control settings to what works best for their mobility levels.

To date, Wheely-X can only adapt to the games specially designed for the console, which are mostly sports-centered. Kangsters' ultimate goal is that an easy-to-use, accessible gaming platform for wheelchair users will build the foundation for a future where wheelchair gaming becomes a mainstream phenomenon that promotes diversity and inclusion in the gaming sphere. The console also hopes to encourage that same inclusive mindset, specifically in e-sports. The device was created by three of Kangsters' founding members alongside para-athletes and a rehabilitation doctor at the Upper Seoul Hospital Rehab Center.

The device additionally received recognition for its unique innovation at CES 2024, one of the world's most popular annual technology showcases and is currently being sold on their website. For future presentations, the system will undergo advancements, improvements and continued product testing to be as accessible and inclusive to its users as possible. In the future, Kangsters will develop other forms of inclusive technology within and outside the gaming sphere.

Corbin Carroll's Rookie Status to Change the Game

By Natalie Rodgers

player dreams of being Rookie of the Year. Since the 1940s, baseball players recently introduced into the Major Leagues are recognized for impeccable talent and contributions to the game. This award is not only prestigious, having been held by baseball greats like Jackie Robinson and Willie Mays, but it is also awarded to two players (one from the American League and one from the National League) each year.

For 2023, one of the awardees was Corbin Carroll, a National League player for the Arizona Diamondbacks. At only 23 years old, Carroll became the first Asian American player in MLB history to win the title. He joins last year's winner, Japanese baseball player Shohei Ohtani, as one of the only people of Asian descent to earn the Rookie of the Year title. The Baseball Writers' Association of America unanimously voted Carroll as the award winner.

"Not too many Asian Americans in this circumstance," *NBC* reported Carroll as saying. "I think that's another piece of it—that I hope to inspire."

After graduating high school in 2019, Carroll committed to play baseball at UCLA before being selected as the 16th overall pick in the first round of the 2019 Major League Baseball draft. He was assigned to the Arizona League Diamondbacks, a minor league team, to make his professional game debut. Despite the cancellation of games due to COVID-19 in 2020 and a shoulder injury in 2021, Carroll thrived with several minor league teams before being promoted to the major leagues in August 2022. He joined the Philadelphia Phillies



Arizona Diamondback player Corbin Carroll hits the ball during the first inning of the Spring Training game against the Colorado Rockies at Salt River Fields at Talking Stick on March 12, 2023 in Scottsdale, Arizona.

the same day and hit his first career home run a week and a half after joining the team.

In March of 2023, Carroll signed with the Arizona Diamondbacks. In this last season alone, Carroll became the first rookie player to hit 25 home runs and secure 50 stolen bases in a single season. His efforts helped to get his team to the World Series in October of 2023, where he became the first player of Taiwanese descent to ever play in the game.

Carroll is biracial: Irish American on his father's side, and Taiwanese American on his mother's side. Though Carroll was born and raised in the United States, his mother lived in Taiwan until she was four years old before her family moved to Louisiana and eventually Seattle, where the rookie grew up. Carroll takes great pride in his identity and loves being able to share both his professional accomplishments and his heritage.

"My grandparents lived over there, and my mom was born there," Carroll told MLB.com of his Taiwanese heritage, "just bringing some pride and attention to Taiwanese baseball and that side of my heritage, I take a lot of pride in that."

In addition to his coveted Rookie of the Year award, Carroll's outstanding performances have earned him the National League Players Choice Award: Outstanding Rookie, and he is a contender for the National League's MVP award at the time of writing. He is also the second youngest player in MLB history to have three hits and two steals during a playoff game, joining Ty Cobb, who earned the same accomplishment in 1908.

Sources: NBC News, Wikipedia, MLB



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'You Need to See it to Be it'

A Conversation with SHPE Executives: Leading Hispanics in STEM

By Mona Lisa Faris, publisher, Diversity Comm Magazine

I attended the 2023 SHPE convention in Salt Lake City, Utah, and I had the pleasure of interviewing two of SHPE's amazing executives—Monique Herrera, Chief External Relations Officer for SHPE, and Miguel Alemañy, SHPE CEO. We want to thank them on behalf of *DiversityComm Magazine*; we're excited to feature them and we're looking forward to the 50th anniversary of SHPE being celebrated across the U.S. throughout 2024.

things because I had to do it myself my entire career.

MF: Is that part of your motivation for being on the board?

MA: My motivation is to help this organization move forward and help kids because nobody helped me. If can create an environment where kids don't have to go through that and can actually focus more on studying and working, they'll get ahead faster. And that to me is

number one barrier in getting more Hispanic students and professionals interested in pursuing careers in STEM?

Monique Herrera (MH): I would say from my perspective, it's that you need to see it to be it. And so, having more role models and mentors out there that others are able to really connect and relate with. We have a mission that's based on access, awareness and development. And so, that awareness and

we're very enthusiastic about that and those will continue to grow as our membership grows.

MF: And it's kind of like, when they don't see somebody who's like them, it's hard to break the barrier. And I think when they see what SHPE is doing, they say, oh I can see myself there. Can you expand on that a little bit more?

MH: Absolutely. It's important to be able to bring those messages to the community. And, as the SHPE membership has grown, we've been able to create more opportunities and avenues for our professionals and our students. We have a large population of first-generation college students. So, as Miguel mentioned, when we're graduating 87% of those, those are families that for generations will continue to be moving forward from an economic standpoint.

MA: If I may add, the general population of engineering has a fairly low percentage of females. SHPE is much higher because we focus on Latinas. We have a scholarship fund that is designed specifically for Latinas to help them financially. Additionally, we work with the parents in their extended family because many times, and this is well-intended by the way, women are pushed into home making or anything other than math or engineering-because that's for the boys. We tell the parents, let us show you some examples. You know, our vice chair, she used to work for Boeing and she managed to put astronauts in space. So, there is a tremendous number of opportunities for Latinas.

MF: And that was my next question, how do you impact the students that should be involved in either STEM or with SHPE in the community? Do you start at the elementary level and then go to high school?



Mona Lisa Faris, publisher of *DiversityComm Magazine*, interviews Monique Herrera, Chief External Relations Officer for SHPE, and Miguel Alemany, SHPE CEO.

Mona Lisa Faris (MF): How has your background helped you in taking on the challenges of being on the board of directors for SHPE?

Miguel Alemañy (MA): Well, I would tell you that I've always been the only Hispanic anywhere I am. In fact, there was no SHPE when I went to college. I went to college in 1973 and SHPE started in 1974 and it was only in Los Angeles. I went to school in Puerto Rico. When I started my employment—I worked for Procter & Gamble for 40 years—I was the only Hispanic. In fact, they didn't know what to do with me. I had a long career trying to break some of the barriers that has shown me what kids go through. So, I can honestly say I know how to fix these rewarding.

MF: I think what you're doing is working for quite a few. I interviewed nine students yesterday who told me why they joined SHPE and how they got to know it. And part of it is the mentorship, guidance and the support. It's absolutely amazing how much SHPE has helped them.

MA: Let me give you one statistic: Hispanics that graduate from college, in engineering specifically, is about 50%. There's another 50% that don't graduate or drop out. For SHPE members, the rate rises to 87%. So, 37% more if you're a SHPE member because of the support we give.

MF: What do you see as the

access is where we put a lot of our efforts to ensure we're going out into the communities. To be able to share the message that STEM is available for everyone.

What we find, especially in young girls, is that by the third grade, if they feel like they're not good at math, then they just stop pursuing those types of careers. We're there to be able to go into those communities and continue to educate and equip everyone from the educators to the parents. We have a parent program, Equipando Padres, that helps support them so their student can be successful through high school graduation, college and beyond. We're here to break those barriers, whatever they may be. We've given close to \$2 million dollars in scholarships;

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MH: There's an entire pipeline. Although we are one SHPE familia, we have over 300 chapters on U.S. campuses as well as in big and small metropolitan cities across the nation. And so those are our boots on the ground. We have our Futuro STEM program, which we recently launched, where we do mail order kits that we send so access is no longer a barrier. There's no cost to students to be able to register and receive these kits. Students are able to log in virtually, so no matter where they are in the world, they're able to connect with us. We also bring professionals and college students in to mentor them in the virtual rooms and support them with the projects they're doing.

MF: So, what's one piece of advice vou wish someone would have shared with you upon entering the STEM field?

MA: I've always wanted to be an engineer. But what I didn't know, however, was how powerful that is. You know, when I went to school, graduated and went to work; that's when I realized that my personal work can actually change the world. I think I would have tried twice as hard to be an engineer if I had known that early on. When we're young, we don't see the impact of our field. STEM is everywhere in our society. It is the basis of our growth, our innovation and our future. And as a kid, you don't understand that.

MF: What do you see as SHPE's main priority moving forward in the future?

MA: Right now, I would say getting the right structure to continue our growth. There are about 85,000 Hispanic engineering students in school each year. We have 18,000 members. That's more than 60,000 potential members that we haven't helped because we don't have the structure in place yet, but we're working on it. We're a nonprofit organization but it takes people to do the work. It takes a lot of people to help 18,000; it's going to take even more to help 80,000. So, it's critical that we expand the footprint of what we're doing in society.

MH: I would agree. Our growth is dependent on allies and individ-

uals across corporate America in Fortune 500 companies who believe that diversity in STEM is important, and that what Latinos bring to STEM is important to the industry.

MA: I have two thoughts I'd like to add. Allies are very important to our community. I'm the first Hispanic in my company, but a Hispanic didn't hire me. The first woman in my company that became upper management wasn't promoted by a woman. So, allies are very important in every aspect.

And if a company doesn't have diversity in their workforce, they're leaving money on the table. Because they have a one-track mind on everything they do, they never get the best solutions, the best products or the best ideas. Good companies, powerful companies, companies that want to make money—they understand and will continue coming here to look for Hispanic engineers.

MF: Is there anything else that you would like to add about yourself, the organization or the future of SHPE?



Monique Herrera, chief external relations officer for SHPE, poses with Miguel Alemany, SHPE CEO.

MH: I have two things. One, whether it's a parent, a student or an attendee, I would like for them to know they are not alone. They may look around their classroom or workplace and not see anyone that looks like them, talks like them or enjoys the same food as them. But we have a family here—a familia as we like to call it-and we can connect with you virtually or in person through one of our chapters. We just want to let them know they're not alone.

Second, for corporate America, for those who feel like, well, I just don't know where to find the talent. It's here—they are eager and waiting for you.

MA: I would say we believe in our mission. We believe that we're having an impact on society. We believe that we're helping our domestic workforce be stronger, make the country stronger. We need donations, we need membership and we need people to help us help others.

How a Nurse Became a Chemical Engineer...

Miguel Alemany (MA): We have something called Noche de Ciencias, Science Nights where we show the kids how exciting science can be. I'll give you one example: we were doing one of those events in Los Angeles many years ago. I talked to this young girl who said she was going to be a nurse. Which, by the way, is part of STEM. But she said, however, I really want to be a



chemical engineer. I said, well, why don't you become a chemical engineer? She said, because my dad said I had to be a nurse because if I'm a chemical engineer, I'll never get married. I went and talked to her parents and her dad was really dead set on her being a nurse. So, we actually introduced him to many female engineers that got married and have families and kids. That little girl is a chemical engineer today.

Mona Lisa Faris (MF): What a great story!

Monique Herrera (MH): It's an 'and,' not a period, right? We get to do this, and we get to do that.

Puerto Rico, New York & the Stars:

SHPE Engineer Elio Morillo

At the recent SHPE conference, Diversity Comm Magazine sat down with Elio Morillo, an engineer, artist and author who aims to push the boundaries of inclusion and representation. Having just released his new memoir, The Boy Who Reached for the Stars, Morillo shared his life experiences and journey with us below.

DiversityComm Magazine

going to go to college. My mom always told me that was going to be the case. We were going to figure it out in some way or form. So, it was always just a matter of I'm going to get there and I'll figure out how.

DCM: I couldn't help but notice that you mentioned the arts, especially with the dilemma of whether STEM should be called

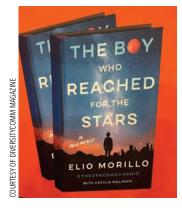


Elio Morillo, engineer, artist and author, with Mona Lisa Faris, publisher of *DiversityComm Magazine*, at the recent SHPE conference in Salt Lake City, Utah.

(DCM): What made you ultimately decide to pursue a career in space exploration and how old were you when you first started?

Elio Morillo (EM): I think I've always thought of space as fascinating and incredibly cool. When I was young, I didn't have any role models in my immediate vicinity by any means. But I grew up watching a lot of PBS and the History Channel, and it was always so clear that there were people behind these machines on TV; there were people designing, building and testing these incredible inventions. I learned that the folks building these machines were engineers. I never saw myself as different to those people. I was like, "Oh this is achievable."

I also did a lot of drawing and painting growing up and that's what you essentially do as an engineer: you're always creating new things and solving complex problems. My mother was also a teacher who put an emphasis on getting good grades. That was a non-negotiable and it lined up with my passions for science and math. I knew that I was



STEAM, and you're obviously a product of STEAM.

EM: Oh, 100%. I agree that you need the arts. I recently worked on the Mars mission and this is new stuff that no one's working on. So, you literally have to come up with ways of solving problems that no one's ever thought about. And truly, you do that with creativity.

I talk about them in my book, but I had two different art teachers growing up. One was named Artemio Rivera, and he was a very eccentric, stereotypical artist. I had another teacher, Rosa Solivan, and she was very disciplined. So, learning the rigor and freedom from these two individuals—all of that absolutely has to do with the way I am as an engineer. I always tell people if they love engineering to also practice their creativity.

DCM: Tell me more about your work with the Perseverance and its significance. How did you feel watching it take off?

EM: Oh man, watching it take off in particular, it was one of the most special moments of my life and will forever be for a variety of reasons. I joined that team when we were in the middle of starting the testing program, so as you integrate the vehicle, you're also building an Earth equivalent so that you can test everything that might go wrong in the real flight. I led a variety of testing campaigns and integrations of a lot of the different subsystems across the rover and also on the Ingenuity helicopter. I was part of the operations team that eventually flew it for the first time and the engineering operation teams that focused on the mechanism's daily behaviors. I was also the one who wrote the command that woke the rover up. It was the honor of a lifetime.

DCM: What's your background and where is your family from?

EM: I was born in Ecuador. My family's Ecuadorian. I grew up between New York City and Puerto Rico. We left Ecuador because of the economic crisis there in the late nineties, and to leave an abusive relationship my mother had with my father. Fortunately, we had some family to turn to in New York City.

My mom came here without knowing the English language and had to find odd jobs to make ends meet. She was a lifelong teacher, but was working jobs in cleaning, factories and food packaging. My brother then got married to a woman in Puerto Rico and moved out there. On a trip when we were visiting him, my mom ended up giving her resume to a few schools out there and got a job, so we decided to stay there. My Spanish is completely Puerto Rican so it throws people off when I tell them I'm from Ecuador.



Elio Morillo, engineer, artist and author of *The Boy Who Reached* for the Stars, poses with a SHPE staff member

DCM: Where did you study and what is your experience in the industry?

EM: I ended up going to the University of Michigan for both my undergrad and graduate degrees while working at companies like SpaceX, GE Aviation and Boeing. I ultimately went to NASA JPL, where I worked on the Mars missions and now, I'm working at Blue Origin, working on the next lunar lander for the Artemis probe.

DCM: What is the one message from your memoir that you'd like readers to take away and any advice you'd like to give for others walking in the same footsteps?

EM: I think the examples of community are what have driven me to where I am today. I always tell people that it truly does matter who you surround yourself with. There's a saying in Spanish, "quien andas, te diré quien eres," which means "tell me who you surround yourself with, and then I will tell you who you are."

Although I did face a lot of adversity throughout my life, I always surrounded myself with love and support. I was always with these ambitious individuals trying to push themselves to the best of their abilities in whatever their passions were. I think you feed off that and it encourages you to do the same. I would also say that you should never be afraid to ask for help. Continue learning and never stop!

HACR Takes New York: Highlights from Hispanic Heritage Month

The Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR) finished Hispanic Heritage Month with a week of engagements in New York City designed to highlight the underrepresentation of Hispanics at all echelons of the corporate sector, and celebrate those who have made a demonstrable impact.

Within the six days beginning Friday, Oct. 6, the nonprofit Hispanic DEI organization rang the closing bell of the New York Stock Exchange, released its annual benchmark research report, engaged as a featured guest of CNBC at their Exec Connect gathering, hosted a two-and-a-half-day conference focused on DEI practices at the country's largest companies, and honored leaders in corporate inclusion at a gala.

The HACR staff stood on the dais as HACR president and CEO, Cid Wilson, gaveled in the close of trading at the conclusion of the second-to-last business week of Hispanic Heritage Month. Dozens of partners and supporters from HACR member companies and allied organizations were on hand to cheer on the closing. Within the following hour, Wilson appeared as a guest on CNBC's Closing Bell Overtime to comment on September's employment numbers released that morning by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The activations continued at the beginning of the following week with CNBC's Equity & Opportunity: Exec Connect, a gathering of the country's most influential Latino leaders at the Hard Rock Hotel in Times Square. Wilson took the event stage with CNBC Correspondent Bertha Coombs to discuss the findings of the 2023 HACR Corporate Inclusion Index Report, which was released early the next morning.

HACR simultaneously opened its 31st Annual HACR Symposium: The Power of Hispanic Inclusion, just a few blocks away at the New York Marriott Marquis Times Square, with a stunning reception in the venue's cavernous center hall.



Bertha Coombs and Cid Wilson at CNBC's Equity & Opportunity: Exec Connect event on Oct. 9, 2023.



Cid Wilson interviewing Wade Davis in a fireside chat during the 31st Annual HACR Symposium: The Power of Hispanic Inclusion on Oct. 10, 2023.



HACR staff and board members on the dais of the New York Stock Exchange on Oct. 6, 2023 during the closing ceremony.



Session moderator Bertha Coombs, Christopher Swift, Martine Ferland and Cid Wilson after the HACR CEO Roundtable during the 31st Annual HACR Symposium: The Power of Hispanic Inclusion.

What followed over the next two days was a conference on Hispanic diversity, equity and inclusion best practices, with more than 40 speakers, including three corporate CEOs.

Martine Ferland, president and CEO at Mercer, and Christopher Swift, chairman and CEO at The Hartford, participated in the organization's flagship HACR CEO Roundtable discussion with Coombs as moderator. Wade Davis, CEO of TelevisaUnivision, engaged in a fireside chat with Wilson-his first appearance before a large Latino gathering since beginning the position in 2021.

The nonprofit Hispanic advocacy organization also debuted its Inaugural HACR Inclusión Gala on Oct. 11 to honor excellence in Hispanic inclusion in corporate America.



The 2023 Honorees at the Inaugural HACR Inclusión Gala: Cesar Conde, Cid Wilson, Yvonne Garcia, Monica C. Lozano and Roy Weathers

The three individual honorees were Monica C. Lozano, a board member on three corporate boards: Apple, Bank of America and Target Corporation; Cesar Conde, chairman of NBCUniversal News Group; and Yvonne Garcia, chief of staff to chairman and CEO, global head

of internal communications and global head of the CEO experience program, State Street. PwC was the corporate honoree.

For more information on all upcoming HACR events, visit hacr. org.

'Great Leaders Create Great Cultures' Headlines the Disability: IN North Carolina Fall Conference

isability:IN North Carolina (DI-NC) celebrated October's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) by holding their annual Fall Conference at Trane Technologies in Davidson, North Carolina. The theme, 'Great Leaders Create Great Cultures,' resonated with the more than 100 attendees from across the state of North Carolina.

Keynote speaker Laurie Henneborn from Accenture shared the financial benefits of companies who include disability inclusion as part of their strategy. Jamie Dean from Microsoft touched on the necessity of accessibility in the workforce in reference to Microsoft products. John Robinson from Our Abilities demonstrated how artificial intelligence (AI) is moving the dial on employment for individuals with a disability, while Holly Riddle from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services shared

how her father promoted disability inclusion throughout the state of North Carolina.

A record 14 member companies were recognized as a Best Place to Work for Disability Inclusion in North Carolina. Trane Technologies, Lowe's, Wells Fargo, Equitable, EY, TIAA, Novant Health, Pfizer, Atrium Health, SAS, Biogen, MetLife, Sodexo and Ally were all recognized.

Chauncy Barnhill from Wells Fargo was the recipient of the Steve LaBour Leadership Award, recognizing his accomplishments and vision opening doors for people with disabilities. Lee Anne Tourigny received the Joseph T. Brown Memorial Award for Outstanding Young Leadership for her contributions in advancing inclusion at UNC Charlotte.

Attendees enjoyed breakout sessions highlighting several of DI-NC's signature programs. These programs included the expansion of the CommunAbility: DI-NC Mentoring program, supporting North Carolina HBCUs by connecting students with disabilities to business mentors; the Healthy Blue Apprenticeship initiative, designed to promote disability inclusive apprenticeship programs; and the STAR Pre-ETS program in partnership with the Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC), delivering virtual pre-employment training services to high school students with disabilities while offering a business mentoring opportunity. The conference finale included the first-ever CommunAbility: DI-NC Mixer, allowing students from HBCUs and other NC-based universities to meet and network with member companies and other employers from around the state.

"Disability: IN North Carolina's Fall Conference is the place where business leaders and stakeholders

from across NC come together to listen and learn from each other. challenge each other to be innovative and advance disability inclusion and equality," said Beth Butler Fadel, executive director of DI-NC.

DI-NC serves as the collective voice for North Carolina businesses and other stakeholders committed to the full inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace, supply chain and marketplace. DI-NC empowers businesses to achieve disability inclusion and equality by offering innovative education and training, building business networks and providing strategic consultation, support and resources. The organization continues to be one of the largest and most active of Disability:IN's 24-member Global Affiliate Network and was recognized as the 2020 Disability:IN Affiliate of the Year. To learn more, visit di-nc.org.



Welcome table hosted by Trane Technology volunteers.



John Robinson from Our Ability shares about his Jobs Ability Portal via livestream.



Chauncy Barnhill from Wells Fargo receiving the Steve LaBour Leadership Award.



Laurie Henneborn from Accenture talks about the Disability Advantage.



HBCU student Jaquan Blanks enjoying the conference.



Tevin Price addressing the crowd during the CommunAbility: DI-NC Panel.

SHPE National Convention 2023: A Beehive of Industry, Innovation & Inclusivity

hat do you get when 12,000 Hispanic STEM leaders (present and future!) descend on Salt Lake City for inspiring keynotes, expert workshops and a life-changing Career Fair? The SHPE National Convention, of course! Every year it's the largest gathering of Hispanics in STEM.

It was a busy four days in the Beehive State last November. Thousands of promising engineers, scientists, technologists, and mathematicians gathered at the Salt Lake Convention Center under a theme inspired by the impressive insect credited for Utah's nickname—the bee. *Industrious. Innovative.*Inclusive.—the theme embodied the spirit of bees and the attendees themselves.

The first day kicked-off with a heart-pumping, drum-beating opening ceremony that truly set the tone for the days to come. The feeling in the air was electric as students, professionals and potential employers celebrated the resilience, strength and talent that make Hispanics a force to be reckoned with in the STEM field.

The second day was the first full day of educational offerings. This year, over 150 workshops took place over the course of the convention, giving attendees the practical skills and knowledge needed to start and grow their careers in STEM.

Midway through the day, the initial round of STAR Award winners were honored at the Excellence in STEM luncheon. People left the event energized after learning about the incredible accomplishments made by these leading Latinos and Latinas! The evening ended with SHPE's National Meeting, which reviewed the "state of the organization." Interim CEO Miguel Alemañy and Board Chair Will Davis boasted record-breaking membership numbers, solid financial gains and a future full of consistent support and new opportunities for Hispanics in STEM.

The last two days held the main



Celebrating the diversity of our unique Latino heritage at SHPE.



First day of the Career Fair.



SHPEtinas at the 'Bee Powerful' Activation.



A SHPE attendee talking to a recruiter at the Career Fair



Thousands line up to get into the Career Fair.



University of Puerto Rico's Mayaguez Student Chapter at SHPE.

event of the convention—the Career Fair and Graduate School Expo.

More than 300 companies, organizations and universities showcased their employment opportunities, interviewed thousands of prospective employees and made thousands of job offers on the spot. This is where the industry's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is on full display. This is where they walk the walk. This is where potential turns into a promise fulfilled.

But Friday and Saturday weren't

all work. There was definitely time to play! On Friday night, everyone dressed to the nines and attended the highly anticipated STAR Awards Gala, where they toasted another group of extraordinary STEM leaders. And Saturday evening wrapped up the entire event with the closing party—Snowfest! Attendees salsa-ed the night away and congratulated each other on another successful convention.

While it was sad to see everyone go, participants were comforted

with the fact that a year of fun, familia and festivities awaits them. This year marks SHPE's 50th anniversary and the organization is going all out with a Golden Anniversary Extravaganza! There will be a 10-city fiesta tour, 50 member stories, a museum and a gala all culminating with the National Convention in Anaheim, California. It's a celebration you won't want to miss! Please join us and learn more at shpe.org/50years.

COURIESY OF SHPE

'Together We Can' – Prospanica Celebrates 35 Years

In the dazzling setting of Las Vegas, the 2023 Prospanica Conference & Career Expo emerged as an influential platform dedicated to the progress of Hispanic professionals. Embracing the theme "Together We Can," the conference also marked the remarkable 35th anniversary of Prospanica, serving as a pivotal hub for networking, career advancement and corporate engagement within the Hispanic community.

Kicking off with energetic buzz, the conference set the stage in the premier Horseshoe Las Vegas, inviting attendees to connect with a plethora of companies earnestly seeking to diversify their talent pools. Prospanica, a pivotal organization dedicated to Hispanic professional empowerment, orchestrated a week of transformative experiences beginning with a ceremonious Welcome Reception, graciously sponsored by Constellation Brands. This opening event saw Prospanica's national board members, corporate leaders and attendees converge with a shared vision for a more inclusive corporate America.



Brillante Awards keynote speaker, Kat Lazo, shares the stage with Prospanica CEO Thomas Savino.

At the heart of conference, the Career Expo emerged as a bustling nexus of opportunity, with an array of exhibitors from Fortune 500 companies to innovative startups. Each booth became a gateway for talented Hispanic professionals to leap into careers that promise growth and recognition. The fair was not just a job market but a testament to the shifting corporate landscapes that

increasingly acknowledge the value of Hispanic contributions.

The conference's pinnacle was undoubtedly the keynote session, the Luncheon of Champions, where attendees gathered in anticipation of absorbing the insights of Diana Flores, the esteemed quarterback and captain of the Mexican national flag football team. Her address soared beyond a mere speech,

serving as a powerful call to action and advocacy, which stirred the audience profoundly. Those present saw in Flores not just a sports leader but a symbol of their own capacity to drive change, her words echoing the ethos of determination and empowerment.

As the conference progressed, it transformed into a powerful movement. The Prospanica Brillante Awards Gala, an embodiment of grace and sophistication, acknowledged the exceptional contributions of individuals and companies towards Hispanic inclusion. This illustrious evening was further elevated by the presence of director, producer and host Kat Lazo, who served as the keynote speaker, infusing the gala with her vibrant energy. It was an evening filled with pride and inspiration, paying tribute to the trailblazers shaping the path for the next generation of leaders.

The 2023 Prospanica Conference & Career Expo culminated as a significant chapter in the narrative of Hispanic corporate excellence. It was a testament to the strides being made towards inclusivity and the unyielding spirit of a community poised to redefine the corporate echelons.

For more information on all upcoming Prospanica events, visit prospanica.org.



Diana Flores, keynote for the Luncheon of Champions, and moderator Kevin Greene, captivate attendees with their inspiring dialogue.

January 2024

SVA Conference

January 4-6 Nashville, TN studentveterans.org

CES 2024

January 9-12 Nashville, TN ces.tech

NAWBO Leadership Academy

January 28-30 Charlotte, NC nawbo.org

CCME Symposium

January 29 Aurora, CO ccmeonline.org/symposium

NVTSI REBOOT

Virtual Workshop

Multiple Events See Calendar nvtsi.org

Hire GI

Multiple Events See Calendar hiregi.com

City Career Fair

Diversity Employment Day

Multiple Events See Calendar citycareerfair.com

NCRF Black College Expo

Virtual Event

Multiple Events See Calendar thecollegeexpo.org

February 2024

ASALH - Black History Month

Virtual Event

February 1-29 asalh.org

CA Steam Symposium

February 9-10 Long Beach, CA cdefoundation.org

GEO Week Conference

February 11-13 Denver, CO geo-week.com

USPAACC Innovation

Symposium

February 15-16 Washington, D.C. uspaacc.com

BEYA Stem

February 15-17 Baltimore, MD intouch.ccmag.com

NAAAS

Virtual Event

February 15-17 Austin, TX naaas.org

VIVE Event

February 25-28 Los Angeles, CA viveevent.com

Value of a Veteran Conference

February 27-29 San Diego, CA veteranrecruitingconference.com

Ultimate Corporate Communications Conference

CCOs Driving Results

February 29 New York, NY conference-board.org

City Career Fair

Diversity Employment Day

Multiple Events See Calendar citycareerfair.com

From Day One Forum

Multiple Events See Calendar fromdayone.com

NCRF Black College Expo

Virtual Event

Multiple Events See Calendar thecollegeexpo.org

Small Business Expo

Multiple Events See Calendar thesmallbusinessexpo.com

Hire GI

Multiple Events See Calendar hiregi.com

March 2024

San Diego Festival of Science & Engineering

March 2 San Diego, CA usasciencefestival.org

UNIDOS Changemakers Summit

March 4-6 Washington, D.C. unidosus.org

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Conference

March 5-6 Atlanta, GA conference-board.org/conferences

NAACP Image Awards

March 6 Los Angeles, CA naacp.org

NOBLE 2024 William R. Bracey Symposium

March 7-9 Atlanta, GA noblenational.org

SHPE - Regional Leadership Development Conferences

March 7-9 Costa Mesa, CA & Indianapolis, IN shpe.org

Prospanica Leadership Summit

March 7-9 Dallas, TX prospanica.org

Out Women in Business (ROMBA)

March 8 Los Angeles, CA reachingoutmba.org

HACR Latina Empow(h)er Summit

March 11-13 Dallas, TX hacr.org

SHPE - Regional Leadership Development Conferences

March 14-16 San Antonio, TX shpe.org

Abilities Expo

March 15-17 Los Angeles, CA abilities.com

CSUN

Virtual Event

March 18-22 Anaheim, CA csun.edu

2024 Annual Employee Health Care Conference

March 19-20 San Diego, CA conference-board.org

WBENC

March 19-22 Denver, CO wbenc.org

Veteran EDGE

March 20-22 Addison, TX ivmf.syracuse.edu

NSBE 50 Convention

March 20-24 Atlanta, GA nsbe.org

City Career Fair

Diversity Employment Day

Multiple Events See Calendar citycareerfair.com

NCRF Black College Expo

Virtual Event

Multiple Events See Calendar thecollegeexpo.org

Hire GI

Multiple Events See Calendar hiregi.com

From Day One Forum

Multiple Events See Calendar fromdayone.co

Small Business Expo

Multiple Events See Calendar thesmallbusinessexpo.com





NMSDC ANNUAL Conference & Exchange



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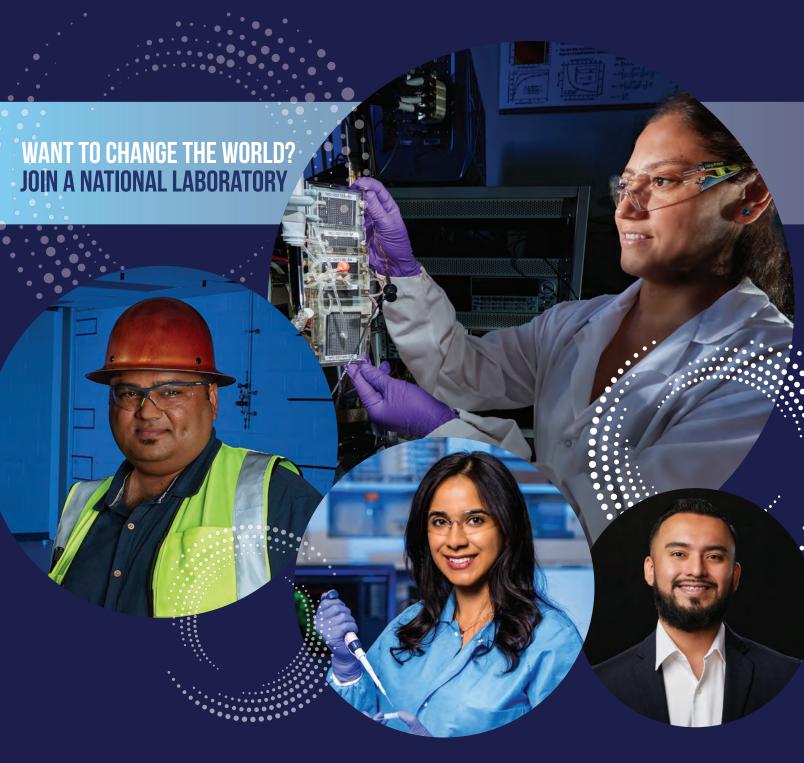
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