

**OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO
MUSLIM AMERICAN INCLUSION**

**THE ROI
OF D&I**

**IS SYSTEMIC UNCONSCIOUS BIAS
HOLDING YOUR COMPANY BACK?**

INCLUSION

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*Creating
Globally
Inclusive &
Culturally
Competent
Workplaces*

**DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION
EXECUTIVE**

Leading the
charge on
implementing
inclusive
practices

**ANGELA
ROSEBORO**





Angela Roseboro

Cultural Transformation Expert: Diversity & Inclusion Executive

Angela Roseboro is a diversity and inclusion executive with more than 20 years of human resource experience leading diversity and inclusion, talent management, and leadership development initiatives for several Fortune 500 companies including T. Rowe Price, Jones Lang LaSalle, and Whirlpool Corporation. As a member of senior leadership teams, she has developed and implemented global diversity strategies that have resulted in increased ethnic and gender representation at both leadership and pipeline levels, boosted employee engagement, upped leadership accountability, and increased spending with diverse suppliers. She has received recognition from DiversityInc.com, Diversity Best Practices, *Black Enterprise*, and *Diversity MBA*. She was named to the *Network Journal* list of 25 Influential Black Women in Business in 2013.

Roseboro is an active member of the Teach For America advisory board and the *Diversity MBA* advisory board

of directors and is a member of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association. She earned a bachelor's degree in HR management from Roosevelt University in Illinois. In 2000, she served as an adjunct professor at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

INCLUSION: What are the biggest issues and challenges for corporate diversity and inclusion leaders right now?

Angela Roseboro: Today, there is so much going on politically that is impacting our space—and there's no doubt the current administration's agenda on immigration, the LGBTQ community, and regulatory compliance will have significant implications for our work. If we are not developing approaches to enable organizations to talk about and openly address these issues, they will set us back. Additionally, while we have made some strides when it comes to improving overall representation of women and people of color, progress in the number of women (6.4 percent) and people of color (4 percent) in CEO roles is modest at best.

IN: What brought you to do this work?

AR: I started my career as a human resources professional and took on this role as more of an assignment than a full-time role in the early 2000s. As I got into the role, I discovered that diversity had a more direct connection that extended outside human resources. I was involved in marketing strategy, cultural integration, business development, and procurement. I got to influence strategies and processes that involved both our associates and our markets, which I still find exciting.

I stay in this work for my two daughters, as well as for all those talented and motivated individuals I come across every day. I want them to be limited only by the opportunities they choose not to accept, and not by the limitations being placed on them because of their difference.

IN: Tell us about your greatest success story.

AR: I don't see this journey as one big success, but a series of smaller successes. For instance, about three years ago, I had a conversation with a leader who asked me to provide data on whether or not adding a woman to his team would ultimately be beneficial. Statistics show, of course, that having a diverse team positively impacts productivity and financial results. I could have easily given him those numbers, but at the time, I didn't think giving him data would have influenced him to hire a woman. So, instead of giving him the statistics, I simply asked him, "Is there a statistic that tells you that adding a white male would make your team better?" I wanted to shift our conversation to a talent discussion and

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make the point that talent looks very different today.

Fast-forward to a few months ago, when I was invited to speak at his department meeting. Let's just say it looked very different than it did three years ago. You can talk about metrics all day, but shifting perspectives, in my opinion, is what drives change. These types of small successes are all big wins in my book.

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

AR: They are now speaking out on social and political issues. Earlier in my career, I would never openly discuss politics, race, or even being a mom at work. But what is happening outside our office walls—whether we choose to speak about it or not—has an impact on a company's culture. We need to determine when it is appropriate to speak, what message we want to send, and which audience we need to address. More associates are looking for their organization's leaders to speak out on issues that have an impact both socially and politically—immigration, the shooting deaths of young men of color, or gender parity, to name a few.

Consultants and companies are now challenging the effectiveness of past practices. When working on D&I strategies in the past, I have relied on a couple of proven best practices such as D&I councils, training, and employee resource groups. Lately, I have been taking a candid look at those practices and reassessing them. From my perspective, I think we can all agree that while we have made progress, we are still far from our "north star." We need to be more innovative in our approach to advance our work, and I think that starts with truly understanding what outcomes we are trying to achieve and then reassessing our D&I initiatives and processes to make sure they are getting the right results.

IN: As you were employed in the financial industry for many years, what are some specific challenges facing that industry around inclusion?

AR: In the financial industry, we have challenges with issues of both diversity and inclusion. The truth is we don't have a lot of diversity to start with. To address this, we have to start reaching out at the high school level and introducing our industry so students can see these types of careers



as attractive and viable. Building these diverse pipelines needs to be more of a long-term play.

At the same time, because of the lack of diversity, I view those we do attract as pioneers. We need to surround this talent with mentors, coaches, and business resource groups, and put a greater responsibility on our organization to ensure that these people are successful.

IN: Given the change of emphasis in the current federal administration, in coming years will it be more incumbent on corporations to be at the vanguard leading the push for inclusion? And are companies well situated for that challenge?

AR: The quick answer is yes. To date, most companies recognize the competitive advantages of diversity and

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inclusion, so I am hopeful that despite any legislative changes, they stay focused and continue to view D&I as a strategic enabler of their success. As practitioners, we are well equipped to drive the necessary change needed to address these challenges, which is why I believe the relationship between the CEO and the D&I leader is so critical. The CEO must set the tone. I am also encouraged by the CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion pledge, as I see it as a great first step. You have more than 250 CEOs who are pledging to make a difference in their companies. As I think about the lack of diversity in the C-suite, imagine if those 250 CEOs decided not only to include one top female and/or person of color on their succession plan, but also to get her or him ready for the role? If this happened, we would see significant change over the next 15 to 20 years.

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

AR: We often hear millennials described as unfocused, impatient, and unwilling to pay their dues, but I see them as being very clear about what is important to them. In fact, many millennials want to feel good about their organization and what it stands for. They want to work for a company that treats all employees as equals—no matter what their race, color, gender, or religion. As organizations welcome more millennials into their workforce and more baby boomers retire, we must create opportunities to connect these two generations so we can take full advantage of all the skills, experiences, and ideas that will drive continued innovation in the coming years. Asking, listening, and being open to different points of view will be key in creating an environment where all employees can thrive.

IN: For several years, practitioners of diversity and inclusion have been making the business case for D&I. Do you think this message is sinking in? If one of your clients does not fully buy in that a culture of diversity and inclusion is a competitive advantage, how do you convince the client?

AR: In the past, phrases about D&I such as “it’s the right thing to do” or “it meets some social responsibility objective” may have been well intentioned, but they kept us from seeing D&I as the successful business strategy it really is. We need to shift the mentality from creating a “business case for diversity and inclusion” to “diversity and inclusion being the case for the business.” Because when the value of D&I is understood in the same way as a company’s marketing strategy or technology strategy—information and processes designed to make us better and more successful as a company—the conversation changes. **IN**