

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
HALL OF FAME

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INCLUSION

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*Creating Globally
Inclusive & Culturally
Competent Workplaces*

Leading the
Charge on
Implementing
Inclusive and
Equitable
Practices

CERNER'S

ANDREA
HENDRICKS





Dr. Andrea Hendricks

Senior Executive Director—Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, Cerner

As senior executive director and chief diversity, equity, and inclusion officer, Dr. Andrea Hendricks leads Cerner's global diversity and inclusion efforts in over 26 countries and the United States. In addition, she is a member of the company's human resources leadership team. Since 2018, Hendricks has been making an impact on Cerner's culture by driving strategy and engagement initiatives that foster organizational learning and an enhanced corporate diversity and inclusion vision for Cerner associates, leadership, and community collaborative partners.

Hendricks graduated from Kansas State University with a bachelor of science in human development psychology and mass communications and a master of science in student counseling psychology and personnel services. She earned a doctorate in

educational psychology and policy analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Hendricks earned a certificate in diversity leadership from SHRM and Yale University.

She is a member of the National Women Business Collaborative, Greater Kansas City Executive Women's Leadership Council, Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Black Achievers, and the Greater Kansas City (Missouri) Links Inc. Hendricks has received numerous noteworthy recognitions over the years. In 2021, she was recognized as one of the 10 Most Empowering Women in Business by *Insights* magazine, was inducted into Women Who Mean Business in Kansas City, and was included in the Top 50 National MultiCultural Leaders by Diversity Leadership Inc. She received the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce ACE Diversity Award in 2020, and received both the Black Health Care Equity Award and Black Achiever's Society Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019.

Hendricks was a recipient of the NAACP of Kansas City community leader award in 2013. In 2012, the Women's Foundation honored her for her commitment to women's issues, and in 2011 she received a Peak Performance award for her continued commitment to leadership excellence and stellar work in the area of corporate diversity and inclusion from the National Eagle Leadership Institute.

Inclusion: How has Cerner built and engaged its workforce around DEI initiatives?

Andrea Hendricks: Since late 2018, Cerner has focused its efforts on continuing to have meaningful

impact integrating and streamlining our diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy enterprise-wide. Cerner has made demonstrated progress in all areas connected to our four lenses: workforce, workplace, marketplace, and community. More broadly, we made a wide array of investments internally and externally to strengthen our inclusion and equity practices. The conversation to include fresh perspectives related to gender and racial equity was expanded, advanced, and broadened to include more programs, partnerships, and practices. The executive leadership team is dedicated and committed to inclusion and equity initiatives through expanding diversity development programs, increasing associate engagement efforts, leveraging effective internal and external communication, and partnering more strategically with communities of color. We passionately believe that inclusive and equitable cultures foster engaged and high-performing teams and produce innovative outcomes.

IN: Much of the conversation around DEI in the workplace centers around CDOs and their work. But CHROs are just as important in building greater inclusion and equity into an organization. How do you collaborate with the CHRO division at Cerner to drive change?

AH: The Cerner Human Resources strategy, under the leadership of Tracy Platt, CHRO, laid the foundation to design and deploy organizational, talent, and culture capabilities to attract, engage, and retain a global workforce. Our CHRO has the inroads, insights, and capabilities to enhance and advance all human capital investments. It is crucial that DEI efforts are strategically aligned with those investments for success. Our DEI strategy is seamlessly connected to our human resources' strategy to cultivate sustainable change. Cerner's human resources' vision is to create an associate experience that enables all to thrive and where DEI enhances overall engagement with internal and external groups and organizations. This is further highlighted through coordinated, strategic interaction and progress sharing to enable Cerner to achieve greater diversity, equity, and inclusion results. This embodies a proactive approach and strengthens the strategic alignment with our executive committee and human capital center of excellence to bring visibility to areas where there

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are opportunities for growth as we support new investments and resources for our global workforce. In addition, the HR strategy is driving strategy and engagement initiatives that foster organizational learning for Cerner associates, leadership, and community collaborative partners.

IN: Tell us about your greatest success story in partnering with Cerner's C-suite to impact change.

AH: Since joining Cerner, there are several noteworthy stories to share related to Cerner's DEI journey. I could share my greatest success story since joining Cerner, which occurred in 2019, when Tracy Platt and I joined Cerner's executives in signing the CEO Action Pledge for Diversity and Inclusion, uniting leaders from various companies in a shared commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion in the workplace. This action was to underscore Cerner's focus on creating a work environment where associates of all cultures, backgrounds, and viewpoints are able to bring their best selves to work and unleash their full potential. This was another formal commitment to our associates, clients, and key stakeholders that Cerner is prepared

to take action to cultivate an environment [in which] diverse experiences and perspectives are valued. Organizations have to take action. This was a great opportunity where Cerner led the way.

IN: Equity is now taking center stage over diversity and even inclusion. How can an organization best ensure equity?

AH: Following the 2020 social and civil unrest in the United States, I have been consumed with a range of emotions. These events have sparked many of the demonstrations we're seeing across the globe and have brought the dynamics of racial inequality to the forefront of our attention. It's important for organizations to evaluate how they can be more equitable. At Cerner, we're considering what we can and should be doing to erase the systemic inequalities. These inequalities play out in both large and small ways in our daily lives, and they intersect in the areas of race, gender, sexual orientation, access to education and health care, and other socioeconomic factors.

Equity is a choice. Acknowledging institutional bias, condemning bigotry in all its forms, and voicing unequivocal support for all would be great starts. We must have deliberate action. After all, we aren't what we say; we are what we do. Diversity of thought breeds innovation and strong engagement with our diverse communities. No

organization is immune to the challenges connected to equity in the workplace. Organizations have to stay committed to making incremental changes toward progress. Cerner is advancing our equitable efforts in benefits and pay programs, talent pipeline programs, learning and development offerings, social determinants of health opportunities, and more.

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

AH: I attribute much of my inspiration to my mother, who was a civil rights and community leader, educator, and minister. She took us everywhere in the community. Matter of fact, I have over 25 pastors, ministers, and faith leaders in my family. They continuously instilled that it is important to always do the right thing, no matter what the circumstance. I remember during the summer months as a little girl in Texas, I loved to watch *Batman*. After each show, I would create a script for my siblings and neighborhood friends. I wanted to help eradicate injustice. We did not have all the fancy toys that children have today: we used whatever we could to have fun. Instead of scripting neighborhood playtime, I am now heading up teams and proactive efforts to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion within the workplace has positive superpower effects and efforts. In addition, by living among different cultures and communities, I was inspired to lead in a way that focuses on finding common ground with each other rather than concentrating on the differences.

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

AH: Emerging trends include the importance of racial equity, religious diversity, expanding LGBTQIA in the workplace, new global diversity workforce, intersectionality, and innovation. Until recently, diversity and inclusion were thought to be US concepts. More companies and governments outside the US have named chief diversity officers and are focusing on D&I in very intentional and strategic ways. Rapid and massive demographic shifts are a reality across

the globe. The global workforce is becoming increasingly female, younger and older, and nonwhite. The increase of global, multicultural, and virtual teams is fueling strategies that foster inclusion, collaboration, and innovation. Technology is helping to build collaboration across genders, generations, and cultures like never before. The power of diversity can only be unleashed and its benefits reaped when we recognize each other's differences and learn to respect and value each individual irrelevant of their background.

DW: Pay equity in particular has been very unbalanced. What is your organization doing to rectify this and what are some hopeful signs and trends you are seeing?

AH: Organizations are embedding equity into their DEI strategy. Since George Floyd's death, organizations are taking notice of system-level policies and institutional dynamics. Promotion pipelines and compensation fairness remain opportunities for all organizations, now more than ever. For example, Black women are at a larger disadvantage—even those with master's degrees earn \$0.64 for every \$1 earned by their white male counterparts. In addition, a 2017 survey of HR, business, and IT leaders revealed their top priority for diversity and inclusion was to improve compensation equity and succession planning. Cerner will continue to systematically review culture and talent processes across the associate life cycle from recruitment to exit. This year, we will launch unconscious bias education for all associates, commit to furthering efforts in pay parity and benefits approaches, and continue to tie leader engagement to continued improvement on the inclusion index of our annual associate survey. In addition, we deployed a redesigned performance management process aligned to market practices with DEI insight.

DW: Is Cerner making a shift from a focus on diversity and inclusion to diversity, equity, and inclusion?

AH: Our organizational practices are centered around “one office, three practices”—a diversity practice, an inclusion practice, and an equity practice. This focus is facilitating a maturation of our human capital strategy to ensure a holistic approach, inclusive of our policies, rewards, culture, and development programs. Building diversity, equity, and inclusion practices in the organization leads to an uplifting atmosphere.

Inclusion involves actively engaging associates so that everyone's thoughts, perspectives, and concepts are considered and celebrated. For example, the conversation to include fresh perspectives related to health care, gender, and racial equity was expanded, advanced, and broadened to include more programs, partnerships, and practices, and we launched eight associate business resource groups. Cerner also has invested in new talent management tools and structures to increase attraction, recruitment, and retention efforts. In addition, we expanded self-identification campaign efforts for LGBTQ+ and persons with disabilities or military experience to advance workforce inclusion practices. We passionately believe that inclusive cultures foster engaged and high-performing teams that produce innovative outcomes and lead to a more equitable environment. **IN**