

THE WORDS WE CHOOSE:  
LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

THE SECRET POWERS OF  
NEURODIVERGENT TEAMS

PUSHING FOR GENDER  
PAY EQUITY

# INCLUSION

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*Creating Globally Inclusive & Culturally Competent Workplaces*



## *Inclusion* **HALL OF FAME 12** Extraordinary Diversity Champions



# Welcome to the HALL OF FAME

***Inclusion magazine celebrates 12 extraordinary DEI executives who have made an indelible mark on their respective industries and beyond.***

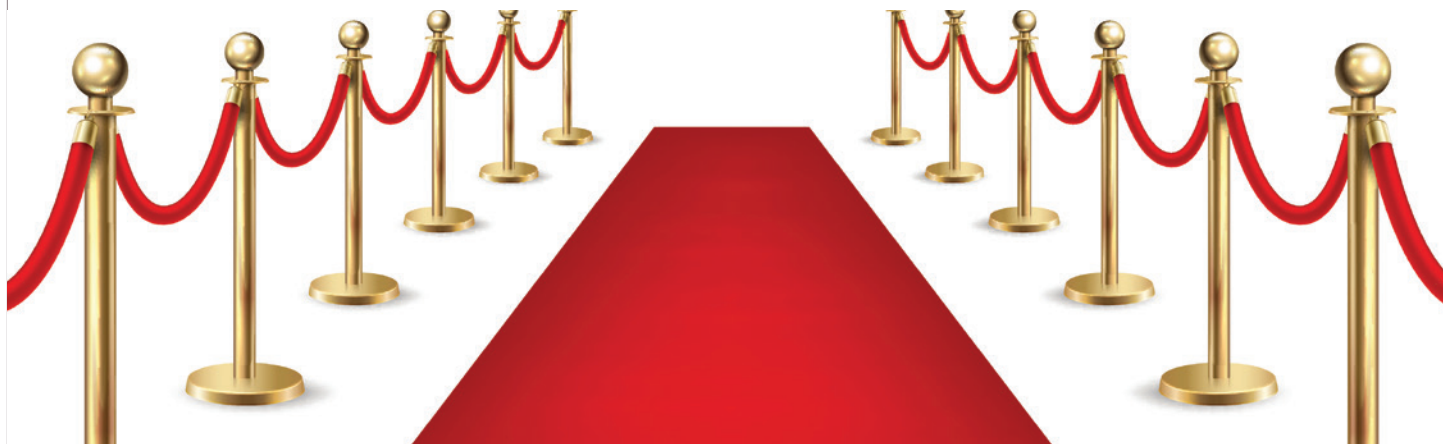
**by TANISHA A. SYKES**

**T**he mark of a great leader is one who is committed to the people, dedicated to the craft, and determined to create equity for all in the workplace. In this issue, *Inclusion* honors our 2021 Hall of Fame, a group of powerful women leaders who are paving the way in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

While many have hung up their corporate hats, they are leveraging an average of 30-plus years of expertise across various roles in Fortune 500 companies and in new endeavors as entrepreneurs, nonprofit leaders, university executives, and board members.

The latest analysis from McKinsey & Co. shows that the business case for inclusion and diversity is stronger than ever. Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on executive teams were 25 percent more likely to have above-average profitability, according to the report. It also shows that more progress is needed, citing that within the United States the average female representation on executive teams is 21 percent, and these teams will need 29 years to reach gender parity.

That's why the women listed here are more critical than ever. As global leaders, they are continuing to break barriers by making the organizations where they currently serve more diverse, inclusive, and equitable.







**Dr. Rohini Anand** is the founder and CEO of Rohini Anand LLC, a DEI advisory to public and private-sector clients. The former SVP corporate responsibility and global CDO for Sodexo is an expert in DEI, corporate responsibility, human capital, and executive leadership. At Sodexo, Anand reported to the global CEO and was a member of the North America Executive Committee.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Completing her forthcoming book, *Leading Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: A Guide for Systemic Change in Multinational Organizations*, which offers strategies to help multinational companies advance DEI. “During my career, I missed having a practical resource on how to ignite global inclusion transformation,” says Anand. “This book is a view from someone who has had to pioneer a way forward without a real map.”

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Advancing social justice on a global scale. Anand serves on several nonprofit boards, including the Galt Foundation, an organization providing jobs to people with disabilities; WomenLift Health, a group working to advance women in health care; and the Tent Partnership for Refugees, an organization mobilizing the global business community to provide career opportunities for refugees.



**Dr. Deborah P. Ashton** is a DEI consultant with more than 30 years of cross-industry experience. She has led diversity offices at Fortune 500 companies such as Medtronic, Harley-Davidson, and Darden Restaurants. Ashton created the 360 Inclusion Leadership Profile, a tool that assesses individual skills for leading a multicultural workforce, and the Inclusive Culture Profile, which measures the extent to which employees believe the company promotes inclusion. Her strategic model, Six Pillars of Diversity and Inclusion, at Novant Health, was recognized by the Institute for Diversity and Health Equity of the American Hospital Association. Today, she is founder of Equity Rising and the president of Planet Perspective, a firm specializing in inclusion, social justice, and a bias-free workplace.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Strategizing around diversity and equal pay. “I designed DEI training and spearheaded annual pay equity analysis at Argonne National Laboratory, Medtronic, Darden Restaurants, and Harley-Davidson,” says Ashton, a licensed psychologist who was a postdoctoral clinical fellow at Harvard Medical School.

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Working tirelessly for DEI. Ashton is an advisory board committee member for Mill Road Progressive Governance Fund, which invests in corporations to increase effectiveness and board diversity. Ashton is also penning a book on inclusive talent acquisition and management.



**Yolanda Lee Conyers** was instrumental in transforming Lenovo, a Fortune Global 500 company, into a culturally integrated global brand. As the former president of the Lenovo Foundation and the CDO and HR business partner for the technology company, Conyers was responsible for governing HR strategies in support of eight organizations across the company. Known for her expertise in cultural and change management, Conyers led the integration of Eastern and Western cultures for Lenovo when the Beijing-based company acquired IBM’s Personal Computing Division in the United States. She described the experience in a coauthored book, *The Lenovo Way*. Previously, Conyers was a business leader at Dell and worked in data-driven analytics at Texas Instruments.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Helping a global transformation. “I led the integration of [the company culture] for Lenovo while successfully living and working in China with my family for three years,” says Conyers. “The company grew from \$3 billion to \$60 billion in revenue today.”

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Sharing her DEI expertise. After retiring from Lenovo in January 2021, Conyers plans to “continue to share the knowledge I’ve gained as a mentor and advise on nonprofit and nonexecutive corporate boards,” she says.



**Dr. Shirley Davis** is a global thought leader in HR and DEI practices, a senior executive, and a certified leadership coach. As president and CEO of SDS Global Enterprises Inc., a firm specializing in HR strategy development, talent management, and DEI, she delivers the strategic outcomes that allow leaders to build cultures in which all talent can thrive. A former chief D&I officer at several Fortune 100 companies and at the Society for Human Resource Management, the world's largest HR membership association, Davis has built a reputation as a master of reinvention.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Building a personal board of advisors. "I have utilized them throughout my career," says Davis, author of the recently released book *Living Beyond "What If?"* "Relationships are the new currency, and having the right people around me has led to my career, business, and financial success."

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Partnering with companies to build inclusive, equitable, high-performing workplace cultures. The author, international speaker, and LinkedIn Learning instructor presents to leaders at all levels globally. In addition, she is a board member for organizations including the Make-A-Wish Foundation of America.



**Jackie Glenn** has long been recognized as an outstanding HR executive. Her focus: strategic plans, talent development, and DEI. As the former global vice president of diversity and inclusion at Dell EMC, Glenn led the company's worldwide D&I strategy, leading to groundbreaking efforts such as the design and implementation of an innovative D&I curriculum and the institutionalization of the company's transgender reassignment program. Today, Glenn is the founder and CEO of Glenn Diversity Inclusion & HR Solutions, a consulting practice offering the development and execution of best practices needed to create inclusive corporate cultures.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Launching a transgender reassignment program at her former company. "EMC is a huge organization that has been around for a long time, so launching something of this magnitude was a big deal," she says. "It spoke to the value EMC placed on diversity and inclusion as an organization."

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Preparing future leaders. "I aspire to train the next generation of DEI leaders so that when I step out, they can step in," says Glenn, who is also a board member of the Museum of African American History in Boston and a trustee on the board of Beth Israel Lahey Health.



**Pat Harris** began her 41-year stint at McDonald's Corporation while taking courses and eventually graduating from Roosevelt University in Chicago. The former global chief diversity officer and vice president of community engagement was responsible for the evolution of the company's diversity and inclusion strategies impacting McDonald's restaurants around the world. Thanks to Harris's leadership, McDonald's has been widely recognized for its commitment to diversity, including winning the coveted Catalyst Award for its global women's initiative. Having retired from McDonald's in 2017, Harris is now founder and CEO of the TBS Learning & Tennis Center.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Helping and empowering others. She watched her mother do the same. "I wanted to emulate her," says Harris. "Having her mindset made it easier for me as a diversity practitioner to position McDonald's as a leader in D&I."

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Educating and inspiring young people. At TBS Learning & Tennis Center, located in her hometown of McBee, South Carolina, "we help enhance life skills of children in the fifth through eighth grades, offering STEM workshops, team-building activities, and educational field trips," says Harris. She also serves as chair of the board of trustees for Roosevelt University and is cochair of the Push EXCEL board.





**Gwen Houston** is the global diversity, equity, and inclusion consultant/coach for GM Houston Consulting LLC. She consults with companies looking to elevate their efforts to become world-class leaders in DEI. While she is now retired from corporate work, the former chief diversity and inclusion officer at Microsoft Corporation, Campbell Soup Company, Aetna, and Nike is a well-known global business leader and strategist with more than 25 years of experience. For her efforts, Houston has received a multitude of honors from her former companies and publications alike, including Campbell Soup's President's Award, Microsoft's Distinguished Leadership Award, *Savoy's* Top Influential Women in Corporate America, and one of *Diversity Woman's* 50 Diversity Champions.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** A dedication to DEI. "I have brought the fullness of my intellect, identity, and abilities as an innovator of positive change across a variety of corporate entities," says Houston. "My commitment has been steadfast and unwavering!"

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Living a balanced life. Aside from running her own consulting practice, Houston "leads an active lifestyle," she says. That takes on many forms, including "philanthropy, mentoring/coaching, and pure gratitude for the many blessings."



**Rosalind Hudnell** is a passionate D&I advocate. As Intel Corporation's first chief diversity officer, she delivered the leading strategy that launched the \$1 billion Diversity in Technology Initiative. An expert in workforce development, Hudnell directed the 10K Engineer's Initiative for President Obama's US Council on Jobs. She also served on the World Economic Forum "Internet for All" Steering Committee and led decade-long research focused on equity and inclusion, coauthoring a findings report in *Harvard Business Review*. Now retired, Hudnell received a lifetime achievement award for her impact on D&I from Intel. She currently serves as the chair of the Stanford Medicine Commission on Justice and Equity.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Making it! "This young Black girl from Pasenda, California, rose to become a global executive who helped change the face of technology through a deeper commitment to diversity and inclusion," says Hudnell. "As leaders, it is about what we did to open doors, advocate, promote, and protect."

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Reclaiming her roots in the performance arts. The former professional ice skater is especially inspired by Alvin Ailey's legacy. Hoping to "continue to advocate for diverse storytelling," she sits on the board of trustees for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the board of directors of the Black Filmmakers Foundation, noting that dance, art, and music have always been a catalyst for inclusion and learning.



**Donna Alligood Johnson** retired as Mastercard's chief diversity officer in 2017. She then launched Johnson Alligood White LLC, specializing in career coaching and corporate diversity solutions. At Mastercard, Johnson developed an award-winning global diversity strategy. She was also cochair of the Mastercard Business Resource Groups (BRG) for employees of African descent, creating the first multicultural global diversity summit. In addition, Johnson designed diversity programs that fostered inclusion, talent engagement, and innovation. Mastercard was lauded by the Human Rights Campaign, *Working Mother*, and Diversity-Inc for its transformational programs.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENTS:** A global relaunch of D&I. "At Mastercard, my team built a program that represented the importance of diversity while emphasizing inclusion," says Johnson. "We also developed an online learning platform, paving the way for more discussions about diversity on a global scale."

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Focusing on community service. "I am president of the Fairfield County Chapter of the Links Inc., in Connecticut, one of the nation's oldest volunteer service organizations enriching African Americans' culture and economic survival," says Johnson. "Over the past two years, we have concentrated on health-care education, voter registration, and equity justice issues."



**Wendy Lewis** has pioneered high-impact global DEI initiatives. As the former global chief diversity officer and vice president of community engagement at McDonald's, Lewis launched and led the first-ever Global Gender Balance and Diversity Strategy. Her "Diversity IS Inclusion" mantra became an educational framework for developing culturally intelligent leaders, colleagues, and partners. Prior to joining McDonald's, Lewis was senior vice president of diversity, inclusion, and strategic alliances for Major League Baseball, where she centralized strategic planning processes for D&I for MLB's 30 franchises, the central office, MLB Network, and MLB Advanced Media. Lewis was known for her multifaceted approach to gaining empathy, diplomacy, and trust among key stakeholders.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Her MLB experience. "Almost 30 years of my DEI career was with Major League Baseball," says Lewis. "Pioneering MLB's analytics, talent pipeline, development strategy, supplier diversity, and unprecedented industry DEI standards and best practices at the club/franchise level and within the Commissioner's Office was literally game changing."

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** The advancement of "life, liberty, and equity." Through her firm, Wendy Lewis Enterprises, LLC, she has created ALLY SHIFT, a platform that will offer classes, workshops, and presentations related to DEI with the goal of "shifting life-changing moments to movements," says Lewis.



**Emily Pitts** was recruited out of retirement to join Lindenwood University in Saint Charles, Missouri, as the chief diversity officer and director for the Center of Diversity and Inclusion in July 2021. Pitts broke barriers as the first Black female general partner at Edward Jones after building her Atlanta-based financial advisory business to 1,300 clients with \$70 million in assets under management. In 2004, she oversaw marketing the firm's credit card and mortgage services to its financial advisors, and in 2007 became the first general partner responsible for DEI. Pitts also established the firm's first Courageous Conversation Program around race and DEI issues, helping to elevate women in the firm while creating a national dialogue.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Being the first. "I am proud of becoming the first African American woman general partner at Edward Jones, a Fortune 500 company," says Pitts. "That role ultimately led to the opportunity to oversee the firm's inclusion and diversity efforts."

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** Creating a DEI curriculum for colleges. Since retiring, Pitts has been working with colleges to create a DEI training curriculum. In her new role at Lindenwood University, she looks forward to "ensuring DEI is integrated into everything we do," says Pitts. "I hope my legacy will include that I helped people move to a greater commitment of seeing, hearing, and caring for each other regardless of race, gender, physical capabilities, or orientation."



**Anise Wiley-Little** is a managing partner and member of the board for MEGA-K Enterprises LLC, which advises suppliers, businesses, and executives on HR strategies and diversity. With more than 25 years of success in sectors ranging from financial services to human resources to management firm industries, Wiley-Little provides executive coaching for high-level executives. Previously, as the first chief diversity officer for Allstate Insurance Company, she played a key role in orchestrating the company's diversity business strategies. She is the author of *Profitable Diversity: How Economic Inclusion Can Lead to Success*. Thanks to her leadership, business with diverse suppliers at Allstate increased by \$32 million within six months, to a total of \$1 billion.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:** Impacting so many people. "I am most proud of having had the platforms to convene CDOs and other like-minded executives to learn, share, and grow their knowledge of diversity and inclusion," says Wiley-Little. "This was accomplished through establishing Allstate's Supplier Summit and its branding of inclusive diversity, which remains today."

**CONTINUING LEGACY:** A champion for inclusion. "I advise businesses, diverse suppliers, and executives on HR strategy, diversity strategy, and supplier strategy through a family-held business," she says. **IN**

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