



# EMBRACING DIVERSITY

EQUITY & INCLUSION



Mitsubishi Electric US



ECOS



Beckman Coulter Diagnostics



Kairos Investment Management Company LLC



KBS Realty Advisors

*Diversity in the workplace involves recruiting and retaining a workforce inclusive of different backgrounds, national origins, and communities. From the placement of women in the C-Suite position to supporting organizations that lift disenfranchised communities, companies across Orange County are investing in creating a sense of belonging, in and outside of the office.*

*Embracing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion acknowledges and celebrates exemplary companies advancing those efforts in the community and creating tangible positive impacts.*

*The 62 companies featured in the Business Journal's inaugural DE&I special report are paving the way for others in OC looking to further their inclusionary efforts and reap the benefits of a more diverse yet cohesive organization.*

**METHODOLOGY:** *The honorees did not pay to be included. Their profiles were drawn from nomination materials submitted. This list is not comprehensive. It includes only organizations for whom nominations were submitted and accepted after an editorial review.*

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# Diverse Customer, Employee Base for Exemplis

## 7 Portfolio Companies; Several Employee Resource Groups

■ By KATIE MURAR

**Exemplis LLC** was founded 27 years ago with a mission of making everything about the customer.

A deeper dive into the inner workings of the maker of ergonomic chairs, furniture and other related products reveal the Cypress-based firm is just as invested in its employees.

Just as the firm counts seven business lines for a diverse customer base—from office tenants to video game players—the company has several different internal umbrellas dedicated to diversifying its employee base and providing resources for employees from disenfranchised or targeted communities, such as people of color, people with lower-income backgrounds or members of the LGBTQ+ community.

“Just like the custom products we create are unique, so are our employees,” **Mike Smith**, vice president of human resources, said. “We strive to create opportunities for all team members to have equal access to resources while embracing the unique perspectives they bring with them.”

Pride month in June brought several examples to the forefront for Exemplis.

Its bag manufacturing arm, **Timbuk2**, partners with **SF LGBT Center** to distribute backpacks, luggage and other consumer bags to youth seeking services there.

**Joseph Piazza**, Timbuk2’s director of customer experience and site operations, heads Exemplis’ E-Pride Employee Resource Group, which participates in various community events and donates time and resources to support the LGBTQ+ community. Exemplis also has an employee-led Pride Month advisory committee.

“Pride month gives everyone the opportunity to come together as a community and celebrate who they are,” Piazza said in a statement.

Exemplis has two other employee resource groups: Women Inspiring Success at Exemplis and Sustainability.

The company has been selected for inclusion in the Business Journal’s inaugural **Embracing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Special Report**.

“Throughout our 27 years in business, we have worked hard to create a foundation where our team members can thrive,” the company said.

### Flexibility

Exemplis says its brand, **SitOnIt Seating**, is the largest office furniture manufacturer in North America, providing build-to-order office products like chairs, tables and ergonomic accessories that ship in as little as two days.

Additional brands include **X-Chair** office chairs and **Mavix** gaming chairs, as well as **Edloe Finch** and **Albany Park**, which offer modern home furnishings, including build-to-order sofas and other furnishings sold online only.

The firm, which has been based in OC since its inception in 1996 counts TK employees, all hired through a “structured, fair recruiting process” with an in-house talent acquisition team that works with local and national organizations to seek out and build diverse candidate pools.

Employees work in the office on a hybrid basis, with increased flexibility to “attract employees with diverse needs by allowing them to manage their work-life balance more effectively and participate in the workforce with fewer obstacles to their success.”



SitOnIt Seating is the largest brand for manufacturing firm



Summer styles from Timbuk2, 1 of 7 portfolio brands



SitOnIt Seating chairs by Exemplis for corporate customers

Some positions are fully remote, which has allowed Exemplis to leverage talent from all communities nationwide.

### Events, Grants

The company created a dedicated DE&I internal website as a resource for existing and prospective employees, with an events calendar, training materials and information about the company’s employee resource groups.

DE&I events include a speaker series via video conference. The firm in May hosted **Bill Bermingham**, executive director of **New Vista School** in Laguna Hills, in celebration of World Autism Month to learn more about neurodiversity in the workplace.

During Hispanic Heritage Month last year, the company hosted on-site celebrations and shared personal stories from staff contributors as part of the weekly newsletter, with employ-

ees sharing recipes, photos and family traditions.

Exemplis provides opportunities for staff throughout the year to contribute time or money to different causes, and the firm regularly awards in-kind and cash grants focused on social justice causes. As an example, the company matched employee donations to organizations supporting the Turkey/Syria earthquake crisis, the Equal Justice Initiative Fund and the **Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Anaheim-Cypress**.

### Feedback

Don’t just take Exemplis’ word for it. The firm has monthly and annual employee engagement surveys to measure the success of these strategies, during which it asks specific inclusion-focused questions.

In the past year, an average of 82% of the

staff rated inclusion favorably, including questions like “I feel respected at work” and “diverse perspectives are valued on my team.”

Nearly 90% of employees say, “I am proud to work for this company.” ■

### Exemplis LLC

Exemplis

- **FOUNDED:** 1997
- **HEADQUARTERS:** Cypress
- **CEO:** Paul DeVries
- **BUSINESS:** manufacturing, consumer products
- **BRANDS:** SitOnIt Seating; Timbuk2; X-Chair; Mavix; Healthy Back; Edloe Finch; Albany Park
- **NOTABLE:** SitOnIt Seating is largest office furniture manufacturer in North America



# The new chapter of healthcare begins here

At UCI Health, we don't just practice medicine, we create it. Now we are writing the next chapter for healthcare in Orange County. With UCI Health — Irvine, UCI Health will bring our patients unparalleled expertise, leading-edge treatments and the finest evidence-based care that only an academic medical system can offer.

The 800,000-square-foot medical campus will be anchored by a state-of-the-art hospital, which will offer 24-hour emergency care and personalized cancer treatments, including hundreds of clinical trials by our NCI-designated comprehensive cancer center. Our world-renowned experts will also deliver exceptional care in other specialties, such as digestive diseases, neurosciences and orthopaedics, all powered by the University of California. We stop at nothing to build a healthier tomorrow.

Learn more at [ucihealth.org/irvinehospital](https://ucihealth.org/irvinehospital)

## UCI Health



# Rutan & Tucker DEI Goes Far Beyond Box-Checking

## Half of Irvine Firm's Attorneys Listed as Diverse

■ By KEVIN COSTELLOE

**Rutan & Tucker LLP**, the second-largest law firm based in Orange County, has crafted a maternity leave program that lets expectant mothers stay on partnership track as part of the firm's push for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Pregnant women get a 25% reduction in workload in the month before giving birth, with a 50% reduction the first month back to work, and an additional 25% reduction during the second month back.

"It's optically unnoticeable," said Rutan Partner **Ashley Vernick**, since many people aren't even aware of the reduced hours that allow a reintegration into work.

She said, "it allows women to stay on the normal path and trajectory to partnership without feeling the need to take a step back in hours and holding themselves back from promotion."

One result: the number of women partners at Rutan has jumped 51% since 2018.

Rutan has woven DEI programs into the firm's fabric to be sure that everyone is included.

"Diversity is not just you need to be diverse," said Vernick, the co-chair of the firm's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. "It's you being connected to other diverse individuals and learning their background and learning how they think, and engaging with them."

The **American Lawyer** magazine named Rutan & Tucker a top firm for diversity this year.

The company has been selected for inclusion in the Business Journal's inaugural **Embracing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Special Report**.

### Retention, Promotion

"We have a lot of programs for retention, promotion which ties into the equity and inclusion aspect of DEI," Vernick told the Business Journal on June 26.

She is a 2011 graduate of the **University of Chicago Law School** and works in Rutan & Tucker's headquarters at the Boardwalk office development along Jamboree Road, near John Wayne Airport.

Vernick is an experienced litigator, known to her clients not just as their lawyer, but also



Rutan & Tucker promotes diversity, equity and inclusion in numerous ways



**Ashley Vernick**  
Partner, DEIC  
Co-Chair  
Rutan & Tucker



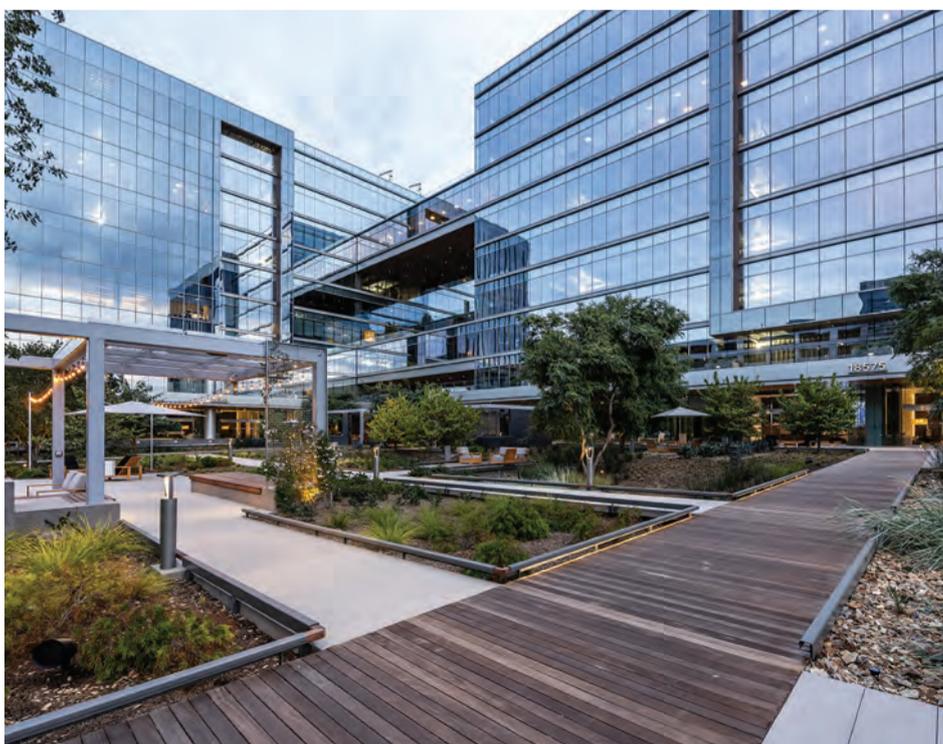
**Vijay Pai**  
Partner, DEIC  
Co-Chair  
Rutan & Tucker

their consultant, touching all facets of their business. Her wide-ranging practice areas include contract and business disputes, employment matters, insurance coverage and real estate.

The other co-chair of the diversity committee is **Vijay Pai**, the head of the firm's Real Estate Section and a graduate of the **Columbia University School of Law** in New York.

Pai is a member of the board of **Youth Employment Services Inc.** and the **South Asian Bar Association**.

With 147 lawyers firmwide Rutan & Tucker is second only to **Knobbe Martens** with 284 as of February in the OC law firm size rankings, by attorney headcount. Most of Rutan's lawyers are in Irvine, though it has also expanded to Palo Alto, San Francisco and Scottsdale, Ariz.



Rutan & Tucker's HQ is at the Boardwalk office project in Irvine



Rutan & Tucker cited for diversity work

Rutan's other DEI projects include a "diverse mentoring program" pairing together a partner and an associate from different practice areas to ensure there is no boss-subordinate dynamic.

### Programs Succeeding

Rutan points out the DEI work has been succeeding.

The firm says just over two-thirds of its associates—36 in all—are classified as "diverse."

The category "diverse" includes female, Asian, those of two or more races, Hispanic/Latino and African American/Black. Rutan is also in the process of starting to track veterans, people with disabilities and LGBTQ+.

Here is a breakdown of some other Rutan & Tucker statistics:

- Twenty-four of its 74 top-rung partners fall into the diverse category.
- Half of its 147 lawyers fall into the diverse category.
- Twenty-eight attorneys are participating in the DEI mentoring program this year.

Vernick noted that the programs are not limited to attorneys who self-identify or otherwise qualify as "diverse."

Rather, Vernick makes a proactive effort to reach out to all attorneys to encourage their participation, noting that participation by attorneys who do not qualify as diverse is critical in embracing and fostering diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within the firm.

### 'Diversity of Thought'

"For Rutan, diversity isn't just about a checked box, ethnicity or nationality or gender," diversity committee co-chair Vernick said.

She is a member of the **Orange County Bar Association Diversity Committee**, a board member of the **Orange County Hispanic Bar Association** and a member of **Orange County Coalition for Diversity in the Law**.

The firm also supports those groups and more, including the **Thurgood Marshall Bar Association**, connecting, supporting and increasing the Black legal community in Orange County. Rutan also supports the **Orange County Lavender Bar Association**, the official association of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and allied attorneys, judges, and law students.

"Diversity of thought is one of the things that we want to promote," Vernick said.

The firm also runs implicit bias training and promotes mental wellness programs.

She said the various DEI groups and program participants are encouraged to provide feedback, which can be done confidentially.

"It's not that DEIC created these programs. DEIC was a manifestation of these programs, policies and mindsets that have been around forever," according to Vernick. ■

### Rutan & Tucker LLP



- **FOUNDED:** 1955
- **HEADQUARTERS:** Irvine
- **PRACTICE:** corporate and tax, employment, government and regulatory, intellectual property, real estate, litigation and trial, land use and entitlement
- **ATTORNEYS:** 147 firmwide
- **NOTABLE:** awarded the Diversity Scorecard from The American Lawyer in 2023 as a top firm for diversity

# CDF Labor Law Elevates Diverse Attorneys

## Firm Receives Certification For Representation Efforts

By KAITLIN AQUINO

CDF Labor Law LLP's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives help the Irvine-based employment and immigration law firm recruit and retain not only employees, but also clients.

"More clients and companies are demanding DEI of their firms and outside counsel," CDF San Francisco Office Managing Partner and diversity committee lead Alison Tsao told the Business Journal.

The firm, which counts offices across California, represents employers and advises them on issues such as compliance and immigration matters.

Corporations that are interested in working with CDF have increasingly required the firm to complete surveys about its DEI efforts and metrics over the past five years.

"It is a business imperative to recognize that this is now a client mandate by a lot of companies," Tsao added.

CDF has been selected for inclusion in the Business Journal's inaugural **Embracing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Special Report**.

### Diversity Lab-Certified

CDF has the metrics to pass diversity screenings required by prospective clients.

The firm this year earned the Mansfield



CDF Labor Law's admin staff; firm has 5 offices across California, including an Irvine HQ

Certification Plus from Diversity Lab, which describes itself as an incubator for initiatives that boost diversity and inclusion in law.

The credential signifies that CDF has achieved 30% representation of historically underrepresented lawyers (attorneys who are women, people of color, LGBTQ+ and who have disabilities) in current leadership roles and in professional development programs.

The firm, in fact, has far surpassed the required 30%. Underrepresented lawyers account for over 68% of all CDF's attorneys, and 65% of those lawyers occupy firm governance roles, according to the company.

"Our firm has always been very diverse," Tsao said. "Getting certified was to have official recognition of our efforts to

make us more attractive to candidates, recruits and clients."

### Mentorship Program

While CDF's Mansfield Certification Plus status attracts recruits and clients, the firm's mentorship program retains its attorneys.

Tsao got the idea for a mentor-mentee program after learning that other firms' lack of meaningful mentorship drove attrition.

Though the program started out as a service for diverse associates, CDF opened it up to include all attorneys at the firm.

"We didn't want to exclude anyone if they wanted or needed a mentor," Tsao said.

Through the program, mentees are assigned to one of the firm's partners. Mentors and mentees are required to meet at least once a quarter.

The program not only aims to provide professional development coaching for attor-

### CDF Labor Law LLP



- **FOUNDED:** 1994
- **HEADQUARTERS:** Irvine
- **MANAGING PARTNER:** Marie DiSante
- **BUSINESS:** employment, immigration law firm
- **EMPLOYEES:** 100
- **NOTABLE:** earned Mansfield Certification Plus for exceeding 30% representation of diverse lawyers in leadership roles

neys, but also to alleviate the racial and gender disparity in leadership in law.

"The legal profession as a whole has presented challenges for women and attorneys of color," Tsao said.

The percentage of women, people of color and women of color that have made partner at law firms has steadily increased in about 1% increments over the past 30 years.

As of last year, nearly 27% of firm partners are women, 11% are people of color and around 4% are women of color, according to the **National Association for Law Placement**.

By contrast, 49% of firms' associates are women, 28% are people of color and 17% are women of color.

Pairing historically underrepresented lawyers with partners that share their racial and gender identity will help increase those percentages because diverse attorneys "need to see a role model and a path to success at the firms where they work," Tsao said.

"It's not just a matter of working hard, but that partnership or elevation is achievable." ■



Alison Tsao  
San Francisco Office  
Managing Partner  
CDF Labor Law

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**Albright, Yee & Schmit, APC** *Newport Beach* Legal/Law Firm  
 80% of Albright, Yee & Schmit's (AYS) employees are diverse and all the firm's leaders are diverse. AYS recruits minority lawyers and staff of all ages, has mentoring programs to prepare minority lawyers for partnership, and trains staff to manage all aspects of the business of law, including the latest technology. In addition, the company pays for childcare, sponsors employees to learn how to golf, and participates in charitable events that benefit minorities and underserved communities.



**Alliant Insurance Services** *Irvine* Insurance Brokerage  
 Alliant Insurance Services has invested in formalizing a national Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) department led by Chief DE&I Officer and is operationalized through a six-pillar DE&I strategy. Alliant engages in organization-wide DE&I fluency training, in addition to transforming organizational behavior by promoting allyship and through many other initiatives. Alliant also established the Alliant Insurance Foundation that focuses on promoting diversity and inclusion by broadening access to career opportunities in the risk management and insurance industries and to provide support and resources to diverse and underrepresented individuals.



**American First Credit Union** *Brea* Credit Union  
 American First Credit Union serves predominantly low-income members, providing them with a large variety of helpful services and financial education. The hiring process at American First aims to include a diverse pool of job applicants, leading to a diverse workforce. The corporate culture embraces a diverse workforce that is equitable, inclusive, and unified. American First also takes pride in their diverse fun squad that helps their workforce have fun together. In addition, the group of diverse employees helps to organize the company's community outreach efforts.



**American Red Cross of Orange County** *Santa Ana* Nonprofit  
 The Red Cross' Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Vision is to be an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion by creating and maintaining a diverse, high-performing workforce of employees and volunteers who reflect all communities it serves. The Red Cross has a National Diversity Advisory Council, a group of external diversity thought leaders who convene quarterly to advise on issues relevant to diversity and inclusion. In 2020, the Red Cross launched an interactive series called Learning2Action designed to help people have difficult conversations about diversity, allyship and unconscious bias, and in 2022, the organization debuted an annual month-long Allyship in Action series to showcase more opportunities for team members to support, honor and celebrate one another.



**Applied Medical** *Rancho Santa Margarita* Medical Devices  
 Applied Medical is committed to improving the affordability and accessibility of high-quality healthcare. Team members regularly engage in DEI training to enhance their understanding of diverse perspectives and experiences and they actively seek feedback and suggestions to continually improve diversity and inclusion efforts. Applied Medical has a diverse leadership team that reflects their workforce and the communities they serve. Some other efforts include regular surveys, an open-door policy for feedback, leadership training programs, pay equity analysis, examining pay discrepancies, mentor programs, family assistance resources, cultural education, honoring veteran members, and supporting marginalized communities.



**Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo** *Irvine* Law Firm  
 Since day one of AALRR's founding in 1979, diversity has been fundamental, placing a high priority on the recruitment, support, and promotion of minority attorneys. The firm has two committees tasked with raising awareness, and providing opportunities to all, including those underrepresented in the legal field. The two committees are the DE&I Committee and Women@AALRR.



**Automobile Club of Southern California** *Costa Mesa* Insurance  
 AAA believes creating an inclusive culture begins with the leaders of the organization, who routinely participate in engaging training focused on inclusive leadership. They place a priority on partnering with diverse professional organizations. The Head of Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging, senior-level leader, tracks initiative and action plans through a yearly DEI scorecard. This includes organizational demographics, DEI training initiatives, diverse recruiting pipelines, employee engagement survey feedback, and employee volunteerism in underserved communities.



**Avanath Capital Management** *Irvine* Multifamily Real Estate Investment  
 As a Black-founded and owned company, Avanath espouses an operational philosophy based on DEI. The firm is steadfast in providing career opportunities for diverse groups both internally and among the residents it serves in its communities. The management team comprises leaders with varied backgrounds, and 81% of the firm's employees belong to a minority class. Regardless of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, Avanath believes in hiring the most qualified individual for every position and in developing a team that brings innovative solutions to the table.



**B. Braun Medical Inc.** *Irvine* Medical  
 B. Braun Medical Inc. established eight employee resource groups in March 2021. In April 2022 the company hired a Senior Director of DE&I, who has grown the employee resource group community from 450 to almost 800 memberships. In addition, the Senior Director of DE&I leads the development of partnerships with universities to promote the company and industry to students from underrepresented populations.



**Balfour Beatty Construction, LLC** *Newport Beach* Construction  
 Balfour Beatty fosters and supports employee established affinity groups, community involvement initiatives, award-winning diversity and inclusion experts and mentorship networks. The firm takes part in annual diversity training and focuses on recruiting at historically black colleges or universities (HBCUs) and high schools, universities, and community colleges throughout California.



**Beckman Coulter Diagnostics** *Brea* Diagnostics  
 Beckman Coulter is a globally diverse team dedicated to nurturing an inclusive culture of belonging where associates are empowered to realize their potential. The company's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion council, made up of 11 senior leaders, and Leadership team meets monthly during operating reviews to focus on DEI growth and areas for improvement. They have three full-time DEI practitioners and 12 local site teams to integrate DEI into their work with a focus on local needs and cultures.



**BKM Capital Partners** *Newport Beach* Commercial Real Estate  
 100% of BKM employees attend in-person and online education to address topics like harassment prevention and unconscious bias to raise awareness and promote a greater understanding and respect for an inclusive work environment. BKM established an ESG Committee in 2019 with the purpose of formulating and executing the firm's ESG & DEI strategic plan. The committee members are dedicated to making a social impact through charitable giving, volunteering our time, and promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

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**Boys & Girls Clubs of Capistrano Valley** *San Juan Capistrano* Nonprofit  
 BGCCV established a Board-sponsored Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Committee that was co-chaired by Human Resources Committee Director (a volunteer) and a senior-level BGCCV management member. Not only have board members been introduced to DEI education programs but so have the youth development professionals and members at all branches.



**Cal State Fullerton- Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion** *Fullerton* Higher Education  
 Cal State Fullerton's Human Resources, Diversity, and Inclusion (HRDI) department is dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment within the Titan community. HRDI has cultivated an environment where DEI benefits employees and teams by promoting diversity, resolving conflicts constructively, fostering collaboration, providing continuous learning opportunities, and ensuring accountability in DEI efforts. HRDI's unwavering dedication to advancing DEI contributes to a workplace where individuals from all backgrounds feel valued, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.



**Casco Contractors** *Irvine* Construction/Commercial Real Estate  
 Casco Contractors is a certified woman-owned business in a male dominated industry. Casco has implemented initiatives to show their commitment to embracing DE&I and company culture including a tuition reimbursement program, the Casco Futbol Club, an annual offsite event, spotlighting employees weekly on the internal newsletter, and through philanthropic efforts focused on the advancement of women.



**CathWorks** *Irvine* Medical Device  
 CathWorks strongly believes that impact is amplified when you build and promote diversity. To encourage the topic as a company, they offer unconscious bias training, communication to manage bias, promotion of pay equity, acknowledging and celebrating holidays of all cultures, and tracking progress.



**CDF Labor Law LLP** *Irvine* Law Firm  
 Since the inception in 1994, CDF has built their foundation on being a diverse and inclusive workforce. CDF has pledged to affirmatively consider at least 30% women, racial and ethnic minorities, lawyers with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ lawyers for equity partner promotions, leadership roles, recruitment of attorneys at all levels, and formal client pitches. To meet this goal, CDF joined the certification process through the Mansfield Rule for mid-size law firms. The firm's DEI Committee has a goal to continue to improve upon its currently robust Diversity and Inclusion Mentoring Program.



**City of Hope Orange County** *Irvine* Healthcare  
 Since its origins in 1913, City of Hope has been dedicated to providing equitable treatment to all the people it serves. City of Hope is actively addressing disparities across the cancer care spectrum - from research and patient access to diagnosis and treatment. With their DEI mission 'to infuse DEI into our DNA'. In addition to the system senior vice president and chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer, City of Hope launched a DE&I Governance Council, a community of enterprise leaders dedicated to advancing a culture of DE&I.



**City of Irvine** *Irvine* Governmental Organization  
 The City of Irvine is recognized as one of the most ethnically diverse and fully integrated cities in the country. In the beginning of 2021, the City Council passed a resolution reaffirming Irvine's commitment to DE&I and formed the DEI Committee. The DEI Committee provides input on the needs of the community, and advises the City Council on Irvine business, community affairs, policies, hiring practices, and culture.



**Coastline College** *Irvine* Higher Education  
 Coastline's campuses are welcoming atmospheres no matter one's race, gender, religion, background, orientation, physical abilities, etc. Coastline's DEISAA Work Group encourages the development and implementation of practices that create supportive environments. The committee serves as a coordinating body for ensuring that college policies and practices are race-conscious, social justice focused, and rooted in equity in support of students, staff, and faculty. Coastline College is ranked #1 in California for Diversity.



**Community Legal Aid SoCal** *Santa Ana* Nonprofit Legal Services Organization  
 In 2020, CLA SoCal made a formal commitment to a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) initiative. By the end of 2023, CLA SoCal will include language about integrating JEDI principles and responsibilities into everyone's job descriptions.



**County of Orange** *Santa Ana* County Government entity  
 The County of Orange developed a County Language Access Policy that establishes standards and procedures for providing equal access to County services and programs. The County of Orange successfully launched its first Language Access Program in February 1, 2021 with the purpose of establishing the standards and common procedures for County departments when providing critical programs and services information translated into the most Prevalent Languages spoken in the County as determined by the most recent United States Census include English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese.



**Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Orange County** *Orange* Nonprofit, Child Welfare  
 CASA OC provides training to staff that cover diversity topics related to the work they do within the child welfare system. In addition, volunteers must complete 34 hours of training during their onboarding process which includes a DEI unit and covers topics such as implicit bias, privilege, LGBTQ+ youth, inclusive language practices, amongst others. CASA OC counts on the Diversity Committee, led by the Diversity Recruitment Coordinator, which focuses on recruiting volunteers that mirror the demographics of the youth that they serve.



**Disneyland Resort** *Anaheim* Entertainment/Theme Park  
 At Disney, they are cultivating an environment where all people feel valued, welcomed, and appreciated for their unique life experiences, perspectives and cultures - and where diverse views and ideas are sought after and seen as critical contributions toward collective success. Business Employee Resource Groups (BERGs) are employee-led groups bringing together cast members of shared identity or interests, which provide insights, support, career development and community engagement.



**Ducere Global Business School** *Newport Beach* Higher Education  
 Ducere's new campaign "Be Known & Heard" was designed specifically to uplift and support women of color in the workplace. Ducere provides access to career-focused, quality higher education which helps professionals progress in their careers, including their own employees. They have launched a women4women initiative and minority group initiatives.



PRIME-LC Director Dr. Charles Vega, fourth from left, celebrates with the 2023 graduating class, the 20th since the program began training doctors to meet the needs of Spanish-speaking communities.

# Changing the face of healthcare

Despite medical advances over the last century, Black, Latino, Asian and other underrepresented communities continue to have higher rates of chronic heart and kidney disease, diabetes and many other serious health conditions than their white counterparts.

The issues driving these disparities — lack of healthcare access, implicit and explicit caregiver bias, poor communication, cultural differences and general mistrust — have long compelled leaders at UCI Health and the UCI School of Medicine to address their devastating impacts.

As Orange County's sole provider of advanced, academic medicine, UCI Health has been working for decades to ensure that every member of the region's diverse communities has access to leading-edge, culturally relevant care.

In 1985, UCI Health opened Orange County's first Federally Qualified Health Center in locations in Santa Ana and Anaheim to meet the needs of the area's economically and culturally disadvantaged patients. Now nearly 40 years old, these clinical locations have also served as training grounds for legions of medical students, residents, nurse practitioners and physician assistants to care for these diverse patient populations.

UCI School of Medicine leaders also saw the need to increase diversity and cultural understanding among physician ranks. In 2004, the medical school launched the nation's first program to train and develop Spanish-speaking physicians committed to reducing healthcare disparities for Latinos, especially immigrants.

Twenty years later, more than 160 doctors have graduated from the Program in Medical Education for the Latino Community (PRIME-LC), a five-year, dual master's and medical degree program that is changing the face of healthcare for impoverished Latino communities around the state. Other University of California medical schools have since adopted similar programs to meet their communities' needs.

"The more physicians we can help shape with this model and the more healthcare workers we can graduate into the world who are passionate about community medicine, the more people in these communities will receive the quality healthcare they deserve," says PRIME-LC Director Dr. Charles Vega.

Inspired by PRIME-LC, UCI Health maternal-fetal specialist Dr. Carol Major in 2018 led the creation of the first U.S. medical school program for physician leaders to serve the unique needs of Black, Caribbean and African communities. Called Leadership Education to Advance Diversity-African, Black and Caribbean (LEAD-ABC), the program this year graduated its first class of five doctors, with 49 more medical students enrolled in the program.

"The emphasis is leadership, advocacy and community," says Major. "We are in the process of developing leaders who are passionate about lifting up and helping ABC communities."

UCI Health also is home to Orange County's first and only interdisciplinary program dedicated to providing high-quality gender-affirming care for young people and adults. Launched in 2016, the Gender Diversity Program has redoubled its efforts to expand access to this care. In 2020, UCI Health was recognized as a national leader in LGBTQ+ healthcare.

Since then, dozens of UCI Health physicians with a special interest or expertise in caring for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer patients have designated themselves LGBTQ+ champions, with a rainbow icon on their profiles.

In cancer research and care, UCI Health is making strides to serve poor and minority patients with its Advancing Cancer Care Together program, which serves patients in Anaheim, Garden Grove, Santa Ana and other communities in central Orange County.

The Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center also received a major grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to boost enrollment in clinical trials for Latino, Asian and Black patients, who are historically underrepresented in clinical study data.

"With the help of culturally adept health navigators at these sites, in just two years we have seen a significant increase in the number of underrepresented patients we are able to reach," says Dr. Richard A. Van Etten, director of Orange County's only NCI-designated comprehensive cancer center.

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**Easterseals Southern California**

*Irvine*

Healthcare/Disability Services

Easterseals has two affinity groups: LGBTQ+ and Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) that are designed for staff to join together with a focus on providing support, enhancing career development and sharing experiences in the workplace. ESSC's internal RISE (Respect, Inclusion, Self-Awareness & Equity) program supports DEI efforts focused on current employees as well as those they recruit in the future.



**ECOS**

*Cypress*

Manufacturing

ECOS is led by President and CEO Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks, a woman of African American and Greek descent who has made diversity, equity, and inclusion for women and minorities central to ECOS's mission. Through company mentorship and a clear focus on DEI in hiring and promotions, she has built a company that reflects the diversity of ECOS consumers across the U.S. and around the world.



**Eide Bailly**

*Tustin*

Accounting

Eide Bailly has worked with an outside DEI consulting firm for a few years to create annual DEI roadmap of initiatives and goals. Every employee undergoes formal inclusion and diversity training and the company utilizes the Circa platform to ensure job postings reach diverse candidates. The firm has four identity-based employee resource groups that provide a safe and welcoming community to staff to network, share, and educate.



**Exemplis**

*Cypress*

Manufacturing/ Consumer Products

Exemplis starts with their week-long onboarding session that highlights expected behaviors that are reinforced quarterly in employee performance reviews. The DE&I Leadership Council and annual roadmap provide opportunities to discuss and implement important DE&I initiatives. The Exemplis DE&I program is part of their overall Environmental Social Governance (ESG) efforts. The Exemplis Charitable Giving Fund (Exemplis for Good) is focused on two pillars of giving/volunteering, including Sustainability and Social Justice.



**Free Wheelchair Mission**

*Irvine*

Nonprofit/Healthcare

The human resources manager, chief executive officer, and an appointed diversity and inclusion liaison for employees meet quarterly to discuss and review any incidents that have been reported or to evaluate whether additional training is needed. All newly hired employees are required to complete a video about workplace Diversity and Inclusion.



**Frost Brown Todd Alvaradosmith**

*Santa Ana*

Legal

Frost Brown Todd (FBT) has consistently been at the forefront of the legal DEI space for nearly two decades. They launched the Women's Initiative in 2001, formed their D&I Committee in 2005, and hired their first full-time D&I director the following year. The firm sponsors attorneys' participation in several leadership and professional development programs specifically geared toward the advancement of underrepresented talent in the legal profession. Affinity groups help to foster connection and community among team members through internal programming, mentorship/sponsorship, professional development, and community outreach.



**Genesis Bank**

*Newport Beach*

Banking

Genesis Bank hosted listening sessions with employees, community partners, and municipal leaders in Southern California to help shape DEI role and purpose. From the listening session, five DEI priorities emerged and formed the pillars of the Bank's board-approved DEI Strategic Plan. Since approving the strategic plan in May 2022, the Bank has executed numerous initiatives to promote DEI within the organization and create a culture of belonging and growth for employees.



**Green Street**

*Newport Beach*

Real Estate

Green Street launched its DEI initiative in 2020 as a foundational pillar against discrimination and bias. In support of the DEI initiative, key employees across the company were selected to drive change. The council works to enhance awareness, promote diverse perspectives, and develop a framework for change that will eliminate barriers in the workplace. The committees are responsible for talent acquisition, workplace environment, employee development, client & community efforts, and communication efforts.



**Hilton Anaheim**

*Anaheim*

Hospitality

The Hilton Anaheim Team celebrates by hosting diversity observations, offering different types of food, and supplying pins to support certain celebrations and holidays. Such holidays include Black History Month, Women's History Month, Ethnic Diversity Awareness Month, Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Pride Month, Intergenerational Month, National Hispanic Heritage Month, Disability Employment Awareness Month and Veterans & Military Families Month.



**Howard Building Corporation**

*Costa Mesa*

Construction

HBC is an employee-owned company who has achieved 100% pay equity. Through education, communication, and community outreach, ERGs regularly host events and training to foster a sense of belonging while enhancing internal company culture. HBC sets annual diversity hiring, promotion, and training targets based on current workforce demographics versus labor market availability.



**Ingram Micro**

*Irvine*

Global Distributor of IT solutions and services

Ingram Micro established and accelerated their "Together at Ingram Micro, Uniquely Us" after the tragic death of George Floyd. "Together" is a robust program of listening sessions, training, resources, and more, inspired by our participants. Eight Employee Resource Groups were formalized, and the global vision is being acted on locally to empower associates and community. In addition to regular Q&A sessions with managers and teams, the company brings outside voices and expertise to help foster conversation and provide perspective.



**Johnson & Johnson MedTech**

*Irvine*

Medical Technology

At a global scale, Johnson & Johnson MedTech (J&J MedTech) is committed to providing an inclusive work environment where each person is considered an individual and has a sense of security, fulfillment and purpose in their jobs. By integrating DEI in their ways of working, J&J MedTech can drive accountability and engagement from an executive leadership level; embed DEI into global processes, policies and programs; and engage employees as active contributors to a culture of belonging.



**Kahana Feld LLP**

*Irvine*

Law Firm

Kahana Feld's DEI committee meets monthly to discuss and evaluate progress with initiatives, events, and process improvements. Kahana Feld is a member of the law firm anti-racism alliance and recently applied for a DEI Leadership Seal from the California State Bar's newly launched DEI Leadership Seal Program.



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**EMBRACING DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION 2023**



**Kairos Investment Management Company LLC** *Irvine* Real Estate Investment  
 Kairos Investment Management Company LLC is a minority-owned, experienced, and respected commercial real estate investment and management company. Kairos regularly hires and promotes qualified, educated women and people of color and ethnic diversity with a solid background in real estate experience and management.



**KBS Realty Advisors** *Newport Beach* Commercial Real Estate  
 The essence of DEI, embedded into KBS' supportive and long-established company culture, extends to the firm's organizational structure. In 2022, KBS appointed a new ESG Manager, Apaulo Malloy, a woman of color with an extensive background in human resources and company operations, to direct the firm's ESG efforts as a proactive strategy to drive KBS toward a sustainable and socially equitable future.



**Lutheran Social Services of Southern California** *Orange* Nonprofit/Social Services  
 Lutheran Social Services is committed to culturally-appropriate services and engages different population demographics in the context of their communities and unique lived experiences. From recruiting practices to pay and benefits, promotions, and all other aspects of employment, an environment of equity is of utmost importance.



**M S International Inc. (MSI)** *Orange* Building Materials  
 MSI was founded by an immigrant woman and are managed by a diverse senior leadership team that represents a broad spectrum of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, national origin, and veteran statuses. The company's diversity committees and employee groups solicit feedback from their peers and leaders, generate ideas to improve inclusion and belonging, and share suggestions and submit ideas to senior leadership.



**Mitsubishi Electric US** *Cypress* Manufacturing  
 Mitsubishi Electric uses Lean principles which enables companies to reduce waste, increase efficiency and achieve continuous improvement by empowering the people closest to the work. The company established its DEI Task Force as an advisory committee to senior management to advocate for DEI as essential for the company's success, deepen their efforts to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, promote diversity and inclusion among suppliers, and foster open dialogue on ways to support DEI at Mitsubishi and in local communities.



**Octane OC** *Newport Beach* Nonprofit  
 Octane is committed to enhancing DEI commitment as seen through initiatives such as Women Leaders of Octane and the Non-Profit Accelerator. Octane's workforce is made up of 70% women and are seeking to continuously improve the diversity in the workforce.



**Parentis Health** *Laguna Hills* Healthcare  
 By hiring employees from diverse backgrounds, Parentis Health enhances communication and builds strong relationships with patients and their families. Their diverse team members bring a wealth of experiences and language skills that enable them to bridge any communication gaps and ensure that every patient feels heard and understood. The company also offers training programs and resources to educate employees on DEI topics and encourage inclusive behaviors in the workplace.



**PepsiCo Beverages North America, West Division** *Aliso Viejo* Food and Beverages // Consumer Packaged Goods  
 Globally, PepsiCo is on track to achieving 50% women in management roles globally by 2025. In addition, men and women are currently paid within 1% of each other in base compensation and people of color and non-minorities are paid within 1% in base compensation. PepsiCo employees are encouraged to join Employee Resources Groups which host inclusive programming. For example, the PepsiCo Women Inclusion Network (WIN) and Women of Color (WOC) hosted a 3-day conference in Las Vegas focusing on mentorship, sponsorship, and management techniques.



**RJI International CPAs** *Irvine* Accounting  
 To accelerate diversity in its recruitment pipeline, the firm partners with the Latino Business Student Association at Cal State Fullerton. The firm also cultivates equity to ensure everyone has the resources and support they need to grow and succeed. The firm is committed to removing obstacles to career growth, including eliminating the financial burdens its employees face when obtaining a CPA license. In addition, they encourage senior team members to obtain their Masters in Tax Law and covers their continued education fees.



**RSM US LLP** *Irvine* Professional Services  
 RSM places a high value on DEI. Internally, RSM invests over \$3 million annually, has five full-time resources and has over 200 professionals serving dual roles executing their Culture, Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) programming. Throughout their business practices, their commitment encompasses key pillars of community, diversity, ethics and sustainability.



**Rutan & Tucker** *Irvine* Law Firm  
 Diversity at Rutan means a guarantee of equal opportunity in hiring, compensation, promotion, and career development. Rutan's Recruiting and Diversity Committee efforts have resulted in new associate classes consisting of more than 50 percent women and 33 percent people of color over the past five years. Through the diversity committee, Rutan promotes mentorship, and senior attorneys conduct small group meetings with associates to encourage open dialogue on issues of concern.



**SingerLewak** *Irvine* Accounting Firm  
 SingerLewak embraces a strategic approach to workforce education by offering financial support for staff's continuous education, i.e., for completing Master classes in Accountancy, CPA courses, etc. which is making a meaningful and durable commitment to nurture a more diverse talent pool with in-demand skills and support DEI goals. The firm is working to establish relationships with Historically Black Colleges, in addition to their relationships with other accounting associations that represent other ethnicities.



**Slalom** *Irvine* Management Consulting  
 Slalom's overall ID&E strategy is embedded in their greater People Strategy to ensure continuity and presence across all markets and teams. The company funds eight employee resource groups that are supported by a full-time global ERG program manager. Slalom's ID&E Center of Excellence is made up of seven talented and experienced ID&E practitioners each assigned to a Slalom office and works closely with local leadership, ID&E ambassadors, and Slalomers to help each office accelerate their journey to their goals.

# Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging at AAA - Auto Club of Southern California

Our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and belonging (DIB) is rooted in our organizational mission and core values. We consider it critical to create a culture where all employees, regardless of background or characteristics, are valued and treated with dignity and respect. We strive to ensure our employee base is representative of the communities we serve.



We have established diversity, inclusion, and belonging as a business imperative. Led by an executive diversity council and a designated head of diversity and inclusion, we coordinate annual measurable initiatives moving us toward a culture where all employees can bring their true authentic selves to the workplace. These initiatives include impactful leadership training focusing on unconscious bias, allyship, and tools for being an inclusive leader. In addition, we emphasize inclusive recruiting by partnering with diverse professional networking organizations, local state colleges, and other institutions of higher learning.



**Herman Jenkins**  
(He/Him/His)  
*Head of Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging*

To achieve our objectives and give all employees a voice, the Auto Club has established employee-led Business Resource Groups (BRG) formed around a common diversity or interest. Through networking, promoting employee development programs, cultural celebrations/education, and providing service to underserved communities, our BRGs support an inclusive environment by helping employees overcome roadblocks that prevent them from realizing their full potential in the workplace.

We understand that our diversity is our strength. Harnessing the value of that diversity through an inclusive culture creates a team capable of delivering legendary service to our members.



## Green Cleaning Manufacturer Embraces Diversity



Family-owned and operated since 1967, ECOS makes plant-powered laundry detergents and cleaners that are safer for people, pets, and the planet. ECOS products are made in the USA using global ingredients without dyes, formaldehyde, 1,4-dioxane, phthalates, or optical brighteners. A women-owned and Black-owned company, ECOS is Climate Positive and restores 110% of its carbon, water, and energy use back to the earth. ECOS, ECOS for Pets, and ECOS PRO cleaners are available at major club and grocery retailers and natural foods stores throughout the U.S., internationally, and online.

ECOS is led by President and CEO Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks, a woman of African American and Greek descent who has made diversity, equity, and inclusion for women and minorities central to ECOS's mission. Vlahakis-Hanks actively promotes a corporate culture of diversity and empowerment with a leadership team that is 60% female and 40% BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color). Additionally, both the Innovation/R&D and Quality Control/Technical Teams are over 60% female, which reflects ECOS's support of women in STEM fields. Through company mentorship and a clear focus on DE&I in hiring and promotions, she has built a company that reflects the diversity of ECOS consumers across the U.S. and around the world.



**Proudly serving Southern California since 1900**

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**EMBRACING DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION 2023**



**STEM Advantage**

*Huntington Beach*

Nonprofit

STEM Advantage mentors, prepares, and inspires women and underserved communities to pursue STEM careers through a holistic program that includes internships, mentors, scholarships, professional and career development, and community. STEM Advantage designed a holistic program that benefits students (“STEM Advantage Scholars”), their families and communities resulting in a generational impact with a clear and immediate path to address the gender and racial wealth gaps.



**Sundt Construction**

*Irvine*

Construction

Sundt’s diversity, equity and inclusion efforts focus on the following five areas: Leadership alignment, education and training, pipeline diversity, community connections and measurement. Sundt’s DEI Specialist continues to travel around the country, educating employee-owners in offices and at jobsites about DE&I. The company has an active DEI committee as well as a group of DEI advocates across all regions who promote relevant events and initiatives.



**Supply Solutions**

*Fullerton*

Janitorial Distribution

Diversity and inclusion starts at the top of the organization as owner/founder Jeffrey Lerma is a Hispanic minority and the company is a certified MBE. The leadership team is 50% female and the entire staff is 70% minority. Since being certified MBE, it has helped business grow and attract customers who have supplier diversity goals and in return Supply Solutions engages diverse suppliers on the items they sell.



**Taco Bell**

*Irvine*

Food/Quick Service Restaurant

Taco Bell focuses on I&B: Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. They believe that without equity, diversity doesn’t solve enough. Without it, inclusion cannot ever be fully realized, and belonging cannot truly begin. Taco Bell is holding itself accountable by setting measurable goals, some set for year-end 2025, include 50/50 gender parity at headquarters; doubling the percentage of racially underrepresented talent; and increasing spending to 10% with diverse vendors and suppliers.



**The Phillips Group**

*Anaheim*

Accounting & Tax

The Phillips Group was recently named by Inc. Magazine one of the 2023 Best Workplaces in America, and this is because of the fact that team members feel valued, embraced, and engaged. With a small company of 11 people total, every member takes part in the DE&I team.



**The Priority Center**

*Santa Ana*

Nonprofit

The Priority Center believes diversity and inclusivity are not just buzzwords but essential pillars for the success and growth of the organization. They publish a bi-monthly Diversity & Inclusion newsletter and plan activities for all-staff meetings. The organization has a Diversity & Inclusion committee that is sponsored by the human resources director and supported by the executive leadership team.



**University of California, Irvine**

*Irvine*

Higher Education

For more than a decade, UCI has taken a university-wide approach to equity, diversity and inclusion. Led by the Office of Inclusive Excellence, this charge is about dismantling the systemic barriers of racism and discrimination that have too long been the norm in higher learning and the broader communities. UCI’s powerful vision of inclusiveness and change is supported through a dedication to ensuring accountability, providing training and education, conducting responsive research and building sustainable partnerships.



**University of California, Irvine, Health**

*Orange*

Higher Education/ Health Care

UCI Health created a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Framework in 2020 that focuses on four major themes: Awareness, Education, Hiring and Resources. The Framework and DE&I Council have benefited the UCI Health team by identifying areas that have room for growth, initiating active learning opportunities for employees such as implicit bias trainings, and assisting in the recruitment of staff to achieve greater workplace diversity.



**University of California, Irvine - Office of the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning**

*Irvine*

Higher Education

In July 2020, the Office of the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning (OVPTL) at the University of California, Irvine (UCI) founded the OVPTL Inclusive Excellence (IE) Workgroup to evaluate the department’s commitment to inclusive excellence and develop actionable steps for creating a more inclusive environment for faculty, students, and staff. The workgroup consists of 13 members from across the OVPTL’s divisions, units, and programs and is divided into five subgroups with their own projects including developing a survey, website, moments, resource guide & inclusive hiring/promotion and an annual report & accountability.



**Walsworth**

*Irvine*

Law Firm

Walsworth’s DE&I Committee is actively involved in creating opportunities for members of their internal community to share their voices, and learn about the different cultures that constitute our employee base. Walsworth not only received the Midsize Mansfield Certification, but was rewarded Mansfield Certification Plus status, which validates that the firm achieved 30 percent diverse representation in current leadership roles and pipeline activities.



**Withum**

*Irvine*

Accounting

Withum has three key areas of focus, Workforce, Workplace and Marketplace/Community to drive their efforts. The firm has received a score of 100% on the Disability Equality Index, a score of 100 on the Human Rights Campaign - Corporate Equality Index, ranked a top employer for Veterans by Military Times and was named a Certified Best Place to Work. The firm’s team member resource groups, formed by the Director of Inclusion and Diversity, were formalized to enhance the team member experience, and represent all team members.



# Ingram Micro-Where Everyone Thrives

As a leading global technology distributor, Ingram Micro's commitment to technological innovation is complemented by its unwavering focus on supporting a workplace where everyone thrives. This commitment is upheld by the company's dedication to diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I), encouraging every associate to bring their most authentic self to work, every day.

Every member of the company's global team—27,000 and counting—offers unique insights shaped by culture, backgrounds, lifestyle choices, physical traits, varied perspectives and more. Championing diversity across the organization is a key part of its success.

As Ingram Micro continues its focus on advancing its efforts around diversity and inclusion, the company has established eight distinct Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), including Pride, Multi-Cultural, Women's Forum and DisAbility and Inclusion. These groups are an important vehicle for driving inclusion and real belonging within the workplace and an opportunity for associates to connect with like-minded individuals.

Ingram Micro also continues its "Together at Ingram Micro, Uniquely Us" program. This comprehensive initiative is comprised of listening sessions, training programs and valuable resources, and aims to look deeper into what makes associates uniquely Ingram Micro. These associate-led focus help engage associates from across the organization to help better understand and create more inclusive environments.

"We understand that our people and their diverse talents define us, and we are committed to providing a workplace and culture where all individuals are comfortable and can thrive as they pursue their personal and career objectives," said Scott Sherman, executive vice president, Human Resources at Ingram Micro.

Ingram Micro looks forward to continuing to be an employer of choice in Orange County—and around the world—as it furthers its commitment to supporting a workplace where everyone thrives!



# What's the Secret to a Winning Culture?

Authenticity is the essential element of a winning culture. Withum has harnessed the power of authenticity by putting its people first. Through the Firm's Employer of Choice initiatives, which focus on inclusion and diversity, community and the 'Withum Way' culture, Withum has created an environment where team members feel empowered to be themselves and follow their passions.

Withum encourages team members to engage with one of its eight employee resource groups (ERGs). The ERGs partner with professional organizations such as ASCEND, ALPFA, Disability:IN, NABA and NGLCC to develop professionals, source talent and elevate Withum's brand.

For nearly 50 years, giving back has been a core pillar of the Firm's culture. Team members participate in the annual Withum Week of Caring, a firm-wide volunteer event running three days before Thanksgiving. PTO giveback enables team members to donate the cash value of unused paid time off to charities identified by the Firm's ERGs, such as the ASCEND Impact Fund and Dress for Success. Throughout the year, offices participate in local fundraisers and community events while supporting the organization-wide year-long giving initiative benefitting a worthy nonprofit of choice.

By listening to its people, Withum has created unique team member benefits, such as a Team Member Hardship Relief Fund, Childcare Reimbursement and Tuition Grant Assistance program. If you're wondering what it's like to work at Withum, the Firm's award-winning culture videos capture the Firm's authenticity and strength of inclusive relationships, which connect everyone through the power of #OneWithum.



**SUPPORTING A WORKPLACE WHERE EVERYONE THRIVES.**

*Let's shape tomorrow.*

**INGRAM MICRO**

**withum** ADVISORY TAX AUDIT

**lead with inclusion**

Withum's intentional commitment to inclusion and diversity reinforces the foundation of our culture of collaboration, innovation and trust. Our professionals make better informed decisions by looking at challenges from a variety of perspectives and experiences — allowing us to better serve our clients and communities.

[withum.com/inclusion](https://withum.com/inclusion)

**Salini Saiddha**  
CPA, Senior Manager

**Vince Phorn**  
CPA, Partner

DEI | SPOTLIGHTS

**Alliant Insurance Services-** DEI department and chief DE&I officer follow six-pillar DE&I strategy. The strategy includes accountability, culture, representation, clients, brand development, and community investment. Alliant engages in organization-wide DE&I fluency training, transforming organizational behavior by promoting allyship, increasing retention and advancement efforts through engagement in mentorship and forthcoming sponsorship programs, supporting employee resource groups, and conducting firm-wide unconscious bias training with an ongoing learning component.

The leadership from the chief DE&I officer has cultivated seven employee resource groups (ERGs) which encompass Asian American and Pacific Islander, LGBTQ+, Latino, Black, women, and veteran communities, and professionals who are living with or caring for family members with cancer. Externally, Alliant established the Alliant Insurance Foundation which focuses on promoting diversity and inclusion by broadening access to career opportunities in the risk management and insurance industries and providing support and resources to diverse and underrepresented individuals who are interested in pursuing careers in these industries.



**Automobile Club of Southern California-** At the Auto Club, leaders routinely participate in engaging training focused on inclusive leadership. Recent topics include diversity, inclusion and belonging, unconscious bias, DEI ally and agent for change, adopting an inclusion mindset at work, and embedding inclusion into everyday experiences. Diverse recruiting is an area of focus in the organization with a focus on partnering with local colleges and professional organizations.

AAA also provides three corporate employee development programs: High Gear- a management training cohort, Senior Leadership program- an executive education program, and AAA Accelerate- a college tuition assistance program. The Auto Club made Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging (DIB) a business imperative with several multi-year initiatives carried out by the Head of Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging. This senior-level leader tracks initiatives and action plans through a yearly DEI scorecard. The scorecard includes organizational demographics, DEI training initiatives, diverse recruiting pipelines, employee engagement survey feedback, and employee volunteerism in underserved communities through non-profit organizations, such as the United Way.



**KAHANA FELD LLP-** The Firm's DEI committee strives towards goals outlined in the strategic DEI plan. Kahana Feld is also a member of the law firm anti-racism alliance and recently applied for a DEI Leadership Seal from the California State Bar's newly launched DEI Leadership Seal program.

Kahana Feld's DEI policies have fostered a more inclusive and welcoming work environment, where people feel comfortable to express their unique ideas and perspectives. All members of the law firm have been encouraged to join Kahana Feld's DEI committee and to participate in the Committee's activities.



**City of Hope Orange County-** City of Hope is actively addressing disparities across the cancer care spectrum - from research and patient access to diagnosis and treatment. Some areas of DEI strategic focus include research, community programming, and advocacy. City of Hope has ten employee resource groups that focus on four strategic pillars: recruitment & retention, professional development, education & engagement, and community outreach.

City of Hope's work in communities is informed by the Cancer Center Community Outreach and Engagement Program & Community Advisory Board (COE-CAB). The board is a coalition of multiethnic, multisectoral stakeholders engaging in community-scientist-clinician collaboration to reduce cancer burden and inequities among ethnic minorities and vulnerable communities in California.



**Genesis Bank-** Genesis Bank's strategic plan focuses on actionable steps the bank will take to foster a diverse pipeline of talent looking to pursue careers in the banking sector, pool resources to support initiatives that advance DEI in the banking sector by tackling community issues such as financial inclusion and access for historically underrepresented groups, and work collectively with stakeholders (including other financial institutions) to address obstacles that prevent the banking sector from being diverse, equitable, and inclusive in its recruiting and hiring practices, product and service offerings, and engagement of third party vendors.

The Bank keeps an internal calendar of events to encourage employees to participate in community events and help employees feel more connected to the Bank's DEI work. Genesis Bank also organized a California DEI Bankers Collaborative, a group of DEI practitioners leading diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives within their financial institutions.



**County of Orange-** The County of Orange developed a County Language Access Policy that establishes standards and procedures for providing equal access to County services and programs. To ensure County-wide participation and adherence to the policy, the CEO's Communication Office has established a Department Language Access Leads (DLAL) team that is comprised of selected representatives from each department to participate in Language Access trainings, share practices and also actively identify opportunities to provide language access to its community members.



**Easterseals Southern California-** ESSC fosters a diverse and inclusive culture where teams and participants know they belong. They're committed to ensuring leaders, associates, volunteers and partnerships are as diverse as the communities they serve. ESSC's internal RISE (Respect, Inclusion, Self-Awareness & Equity) team is comprised of diverse staff from direct care professionals to senior managers from across the organization, meets regularly regarding initiatives related to workplace culture and explores best practices to enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

ESSC created an Associate Expressions platform on their intranet. Associate Expressions is designed to celebrate unique identities and bring authentic selves to work each day. Employees are encouraged to share personal reflections and lived experiences - from fun photos and written work to poetry and art. Companywide, they recognize heritage months and days of significance throughout the year to help facilitate greater awareness, appreciation and understanding of different cultures and traditions.





## Building a Culture of Inclusion

For over 100 years, Mitsubishi Electric has helped customers make changes for the better with sustainable products and technology. Mitsubishi Electric US, Inc. (MEUS), headquartered in Cypress, CA, is a US company of Mitsubishi Electric that empowers communities to reach sustainability goals through innovative solutions designed for comfortable, modern lifestyles. These include elevators and escalators, heating and cooling products, space and sensing systems, and semiconductor devices. And through the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, the company invests in inclusive strategies that empower youth with disabilities to lead productive lives.

As a global company, Mitsubishi Electric draws from the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals to define sustainability as including five commitments to: carbon neutrality, a circular economy, safety and security, inclusion, and well-being. Respect for all team members is foundational to our core values, and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) intersects with MEUS commitments to sustainability and a company culture focused on continuous improvement. At MEUS, team members are encouraged to welcome and value people of all backgrounds, identities and abilities to build a greater company, contributing to greater communities and ultimately a greater world. Mitsubishi Electric US, Inc. is honored to be recognized by the Orange County Business Journal for these efforts.

For more information about Mitsubishi Electric sustainability and social impact efforts, please visit [us.mitsubishielectric.com/sustainability](https://us.mitsubishielectric.com/sustainability).



## At City of Hope Orange County, Hope is Here for All

*A Culture of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Helps Drive Delivery of Advanced Cancer Care and Lifesaving Research*

City of Hope, one of the nation's largest cancer research and treatment organizations, has been repeatedly recognized as one of the country's top health systems for diversity, equity and inclusion. In California it has achieved the highest ranking.



The NCI-designated cancer center's holistic approach to DE&I focuses on reflecting and respecting the diversity of its staff, grateful patients, their families, and the community, said Angela L. Talton, City of Hope chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer.

As OC's most advanced comprehensive cancer center, it is opening more clinical trials specifically tailored for underrepresented people of color. In addition, its physician-scientists who solely focus on cancer reflect the diverse Orange County population.

"This complements our approach to understanding a patient's genetic profile and providing personalized treatment specific to their needs," Talton said.

City of Hope staff receive interactive, scenario-based training that teaches people how to mitigate bias and consciously change behaviors. Representation in senior leadership among women, Hispanic/Latinx and Black/African American has increased by 25%, 150% and 25%, respectively.

Its Supplier Diversity Program encourages partnering with vendors owned by minorities, women, veterans, LGBTQ, service-disabled, and historically underutilized communities.

All of these foster a supportive and inclusive employee culture.

Diego Rodriguez, MSN, RN, senior regional nursing director at City of Hope, is a member of the organization's employee resource group for LGBTQIA+ staff and allies. He notes that the organization continues to hire for its comprehensive cancer campus in Irvine and regional network clinics.

"You will be challenged. You will have opportunities you won't find anywhere else. You have diversity, you have inclusivity, you have equity. It doesn't matter what your background is, your strengths or weaknesses – you will get the help you need to be successful. That's not something that you find just anywhere," said Diego.

## Making tomorrow's world GREATER»THAN today's.

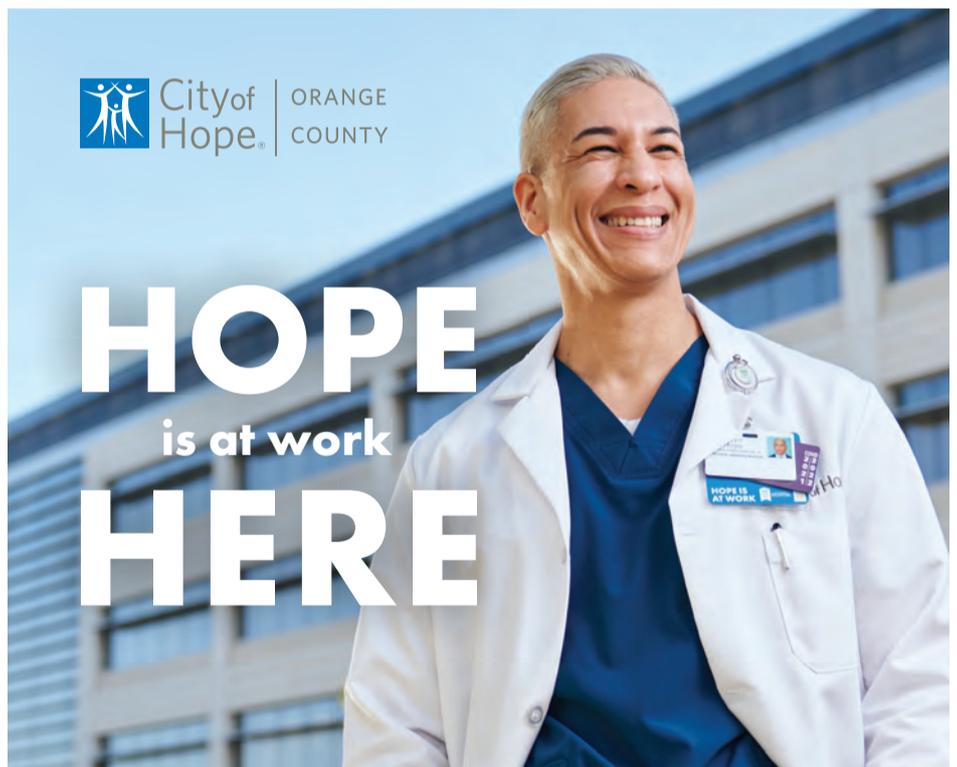
Mitsubishi Electric is dedicated to making changes for the better by building sustainable technologies and a culture of inclusion for all.



[us.mitsubishielectric.com/sustainability](https://us.mitsubishielectric.com/sustainability)



# HOPE is at work HERE



We are a diverse team united in our vision to speed lifesaving cancer treatments and scientific breakthroughs to the people who need them most. Because cancer affects us all, regardless of gender, orientation and skin color. Here, we've infused DEI into our DNA. Here, we're removing barriers to clinical trials, cancer screenings and cancer cures. We celebrate our differences to ensure that **HOPE LIVES HERE.**

Join us and bring your unique skills and background to our team:  
[CityofHope.org/OC/hopeisatwork](https://CityofHope.org/OC/hopeisatwork)



DEI | SPOTLIGHTS

**Frost Brown Todd Alvaradosmith-** In addition to longstanding initiatives, such as mandatory DEI training for new hires and bimonthly Inclusion Workshop Series, the firm has been intentional about foregrounding DEI in recruiting, retention, and advancement practices and corporate social responsibility efforts. Key pillars at the firm are collectively known as IDEB (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Belonging)—are not only essential to creating a workplace where everyone feels included, seen, heard, and valued. They also serve as guideposts for how they continue to be leaders among our law firm peers and proactively position themselves to meet the needs of clients in an increasingly intersectional economy.

The firm has held over 55 internal IDEB Workshops to date on topics ranging from LGBTQ+ inclusion and allyship to racial equity, mental health awareness, and interfaith dialogue. Featuring nationally recognized leaders, these workshops are often participatory in nature, encouraging team members to engage more deeply with IDEB topics through dialogue, experience sharing, and perspective taking.



**Howard Building Corporation-** ERGs play a massive role in engagement, community building, and workforce development. Through education, communication, and community outreach, they regularly host events and training to foster a sense of belonging while enhancing internal company culture. The committees—wellness, DEI, sustainability, and employee ownership—are key examples of how HBC employees are empowered to maintain and further develop a culture that reflects the company’s collective values.

HBC develops the skills of their workforce with on-the-job mentorships, cross-training, career development pathways, inter-departmental transfers, and a focus on equitable education. Every HBC leader’s priority is to mentor and develop their replacement, which results in a collaborative and supportive culture. Annually, the company dedicates an average of 3,300 hours of community service to over 20 organizations within the community.



**PepsiCo Beverages North America, West Division-** PepsiCo’s Racial Equality Journey (REJ) has committed to investing more than \$570 million over five years as part of this focus on increasing Black and Hispanic representation within the company, leveraging their global scale and influence to elevate diverse voices across suppliers and strategic partners.

PepsiCo recently embraced diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the organization by creating a dedicated business unit. The new Multicultural Business and Equity Development Organization will operate across PepsiCo’s North America beverage and convenient foods businesses and integrate work streams aimed at addressing a variety of business and people priorities into a one-team approach that will enable PepsiCo to drive sustained change and scale faster across its entire North America businesses.



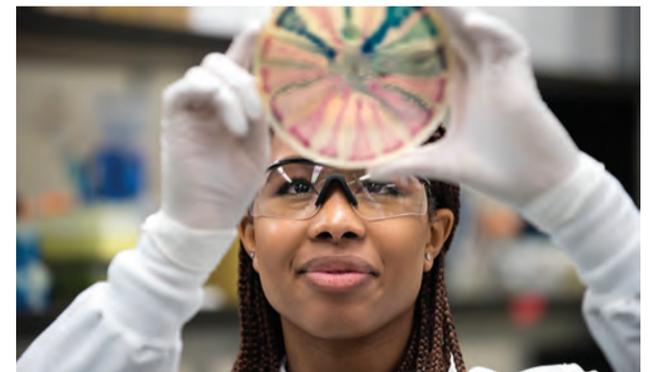
**RSM US LLP -** RSM Courageous Conversations are forums that focus on meaningful dialogue with firm leaders and employees from all backgrounds. Employee network groups offer unique ways for all employees to grow, develop and enhance their understanding of others while celebrating all walks of life and backgrounds.

RSM has made a commitment to underrepresented populations through partnerships with three diverse professional organizations, namely NABA, ALPFA and Ascend. These partnerships advance education, professional development and opportunity for those entering the accounting profession.



**University of California, Irvine-** The Office of Inclusive Excellence serves the campus priorities and is committed to a transformative, whole university effort grounded in their values: expect equity, support diversity, practice inclusion and honor free speech. Through its many initiatives, UCI aims to build and sustain a university culture where Black community members can thrive in their endeavors as undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff and alumni.

This month UC Irvine named an accomplished DE&I education leader as vice chancellor for equity, diversity and inclusion, as well as chief diversity officer. This role will oversee the Office of Inclusive Excellence and be responsible for leading and coordinating campus efforts to advance its institutional DEI initiatives in collaboration with students, staff, faculty, alumni and community partners.



**Ingram Micro-** “Together” is a robust program of listening sessions, training, resources, and more, inspired by our participants. The company’s eight ERG’s include Pride, Multi-cultural, Veteran Engagement, DisAbility and Inclusion, Butterfly Coalition, Modern Working Family, Womens Forum, and the newest Thrive which enhances associate wellness. In addition to creating safe spaces, all managers and leaders hold regular Q&A sessions with their teams to help advance DEI initiatives and make sure individual voices are heard.



**Withum-** In partnership with the Firm’s Team Member Resource Groups (TMRGs), Withum embraces the intersections of their team member’s identities and the diverse perspectives they bring to work daily. In partnership with leadership, the TMRGs host various events, including workshops, webinars, in-office lunch and learns, trivia and more to expand cultural awareness.

The Firm’s I&D pillars also have an outward focus on the next generation of professionals. Recently the Firm introduced a new role, I&D Outreach Specialist, to create strategic and intimate partnerships with different schools and universities. Working in tandem with the Firm’s campus recruiting team, the firm has established relationships with national, regional and student chapter organizations, such as the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA), Ascend, Association of Latino Professionals for America (ALPFA) and Out4Undergrad.

