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DIVERSE STEM WORKFORCE BOOSTS BUSINESS

THOSE LEADING THE CHARGE AT TOP COMPANIES AND AGENCIES SHOW BY EXAMPLE THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FOR THOSE IN STEM POSITIONS AND OTHERS.

Engaging the perspectives and ideas of others takes time and validates different world views. It also has the potential to create better solutions to challenging problems faced by those who lead diversity efforts in all sectors.

So says S. Chris Edmonds, CEO of The Purposeful Culture Group, ***drivingresultsthroughculture.com***.

“Such leaders don’t act purely from their own world views, but instead see their role as serving others,” he says. “They surround themselves with talented people of different ethnicities, religions, family dynamics and professional backgrounds - and they invite shared perspectives.”

He also points out that decisions made by leadership don’t always engender collective agreement.

“But if leaders engage others, learn from them, incorporate great ideas and perspectives, and explain why a particular decision is best at a particular time, that leader is one who validates and inspires others,” says Edmonds, who further urges leaders in diversity to “err on the side of inclusion, of listening and of learning. You’ll be a better leader for it.”

Representatives of Avnet, NASA, Huntington Ingalls Industries, BAE Systems and CACI address questions regarding the importance of workforce diversity and inclusion (D&I) in all disciplines, including those in the STEM arena. And they lead by example, demonstrating the benefits that businesses and organizations receive the more D&I is incorporated into their culture. Here’s what they have to say.

D&I Key to Avnet’s Culture & Success

Phoenix, AZ-headquartered Avnet is one of the world’s largest distributors of electrical components and embedded solutions. Sam Wolo, global director of diversity and inclusion, works across multiple stakeholders to integrate diversity and a culture of inclusion into all aspects of the company’s work environment.

BY BARBARA WOODWORTH

D&I Is Central to CACI's Business Strategy

Arlington, VA-headquartered CACI is a provider of information solutions in support of national security missions and government transformation for intelligence, defense, federal and civilian customers. In her capacity as vice president, talent acquisition and mobility, Dana Waring is responsible for ensuring that CACI is hiring and retaining a diverse array of top information solutions and services talent.

In terms of a business imperative, how important is it for employees, including those in STEM positions, to have a diverse workforce?

Waring

At CACI diversity and inclusion is central to our business strategy. Since our founding in 1962, we've sustained a shared corporate culture of ethics and integrity that values each individual's unique contributions to the success of our company, our employees and our customers.

We know that a diverse workforce produces innovative thinking. It improves our potential for recruiting and retaining highly qualified employees, and it makes us a more attractive business partner. Embracing diversity is good business - and the right thing to do.



Dana Waring is vice president, talent acquisition and mobility for CACI.

“AT CACI EACH EMPLOYEE IS A PARTNER IN OUR SUCCESS. REALIZING THAT DIFFERENCES CAN BE STRENGTHS IS VITAL TO OUR FUTURE.”

What initiatives have been most successful for embracing diversity and inclusion within your company?

Waring

CACI's diversity and inclusion program includes a successful focus on diversity recruiting, with a specific goal of increasing diverse representation from traditionally underrepresented populations.

We're building pipelines and establishing partnerships with traditionally underrepresented educational institutions and

professional organizations such as Women in Technology International (WITI), the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), and others.

What advice do you have for other companies interested in implementing successful D&I policies?

Waring

We've found that a strong and shared corporate culture of ethics and integrity is essential to the successful development of a diverse workforce that seamlessly unites to support our customers.

CACI leadership also continually reinforces our cultural values, including our commitment to a diverse workforce, in employee communications and the foundational cultural documents we provide to all employees.

We make diversity and inclusion a part of our annual corporate training, as well, renewing every employee's commitment to D&I each year and assuring that managers possess a "cultural competency" that enables them to successfully oversee teams of diverse employees.

At CACI each employee is a partner in our success. Realizing that differences can be strengths is vital to our future. We're committed to building on diversity, enhancing our capabilities, delivering excellence to our clients and creating meaningful careers for our employees.

More information about CACI is available at caci.com, careers.caci.com and social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Huntington Ingalls Buoyed by Diverse Workforce

Based in Newport News, VA, Huntington Ingalls Industries is America's largest military shipbuilding company and a provider of professional services to government and industry. With 20 years of experience in human resources, Dawn Smith is the director of EEO and diversity at Huntington Ingalls. She emphasizes how having a diverse workforce is a business imperative, a business benefit and a business advantage.

In terms of a business imperative, how important is it for employees, including those in STEM positions, to have a diverse workforce?

Smith

There's no question having a diverse workforce is a business imperative. Making the best business decisions involves building a workforce that includes individuals with a variety of backgrounds, skills, experiences, different perspectives and ideas.

Establishing a diverse workforce is not enough, however, if employees don't believe their contributions are valued. At Huntington Ingalls leaders are challenged to create a workplace where the least-empowered feel confident enough to speak up and share their views.

What initiatives have been most successful for embracing diversity and inclusion within your company?

Smith

Within our company, one initiative has been key: diversity councils. Each division has its own diversity and inclusion council that provides oversight for D&I strategy development and implementation.

Additionally, each month an executive diversity council, com-