



SPRING EDITION Diversity Briefing

AMERICAN MORTGAGE DIVERSITY COUNCIL | A FIVE STAR INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIP GROUP

D&I NEWS BRIEF

Fannie Mae Named a Best Place to Work

For the seventh consecutive year, Fannie Mae was designated a best place to work for LGBTQ equality by the Human Rights Campaign.



Fannie Mae has announced it has been designated a *Best Place to Work for LGBTQ Equality* by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation, earning a 100% score on its [2021 Corporate Equality Index \(CEI\)](#) for the seventh consecutive year. The annual benchmarking survey and report measure corporate policies, practices, and benefits related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) workplace equality for more than 1,000 U.S. companies.

“We’re honored to again be recognized by the HRC Foundation as stalwart advocates

for LGBTQ equality,” said Hugh R. Frater, CEO, Fannie Mae. “Fannie Mae’s social mission is rooted in equal opportunity, respect, diversity, and inclusion. We will continue to cultivate these values as cornerstones of Fannie Mae’s culture not only for our valuable employees but also our vendors, business partners, and customers as we continue to promote a more diverse and inclusive U.S. housing sector.”

Fannie Mae’s Office of Minority and Women Inclusion advances the company’s longstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion in the workplace and industry. Fannie Mae’s ongoing

internal and external initiatives include:

- Attracting, engaging, and retaining a diverse workforce.
- Supporting employee resource groups—including the LGBTQ Live Openly group—as they encourage professional development, cultural awareness, and community service, and give employees of all backgrounds and interests a chance to connect, learn, and grow while furthering the company’s mission and business objectives.
- Expanding opportunities for employees and diverse suppliers, vendors, and business partners, as outlined in the company’s [Equal Opportunity in Employment and Contracting Statement](#).
- Sponsoring the Future Housing Leaders program, which connects college students with diverse backgrounds to paid internship and entry-level job opportunities in the housing industry offered by top employers who are actively engaged in promoting diversity in their workforce.
- Diversity and inclusion oversight, programming, engagement, strategic planning, metrics, and reporting.
- Influencing and affecting corporate policies, practices, programs, and solutions to advance systemic racial equity within the housing industry.

The CEI rates companies on detailed criteria falling under four central pillars: non-discrimination policies across business entities; equitable benefits for LGBTQ workers and their families; supporting an inclusive culture; and corporate social responsibility.

MEMBER VOICES

From the Chair

Dear AMDC Readers,

As organizations prepare for things to normalize, a few questions come to mind. How is our current environment shaping the landscape of diversity and inclusion for the future? In an article published by Palladium, their Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. Rosanna Duncan, highlighted three important DEI trends to watch in 2021:

Mental Health and Wellness—In her article, Duncan writes that as more companies transition to remote work there will be an even greater focus on ensuring that systems are in place to support the mental health and wellbeing of their employees. How companies behave now during a global pandemic will be remembered for years to come.

Fostering an Open Culture—Duncan points out that due to the domination of social movement organizations, companies and businesses are going to need to create safe spaces for employees to have difficult conversations. This, in turn, creates an opportunity to build a culture of openness and transparency in the spirit of inclusion and tolerance.

Diverse Hiring Practices and Less “Tokenism”—Duncan explains that organizations will need to do more to identify, attract and retain diverse hires, understanding which groups are underrepresented in the workforce and why. Understanding this type of information can help organizations shape strategy, which will increase diversity in a meaningful way. Duncan warns that if a company is hiring diverse candidates for diversity’s sake alone, they risk tokenism, which is harmful and is not necessary when there is an abundance of diverse talent available.

As we launch our continued efforts in 2021 to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in our workplaces, remember that this is a journey and not a destination. It is not solely the job of one person or even a large group of people. Fostering an inclusive workplace is everyone’s responsibility from top to bottom, and it will take a collective commitment at all levels of the organization.

Best regards,



Lola Oyewole
VP, Human Resources and
Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer,
Ocwen Financial Corporation

MEMBER ALERT

AMDC Welcomes New Vice-Chair and Council Members

These new faces will join our current Advisory Council members in lending their passion and talent to moving the group’s mission forward.



Advisory Council Vice-Chair—**Frank Fuentes, NVP, MCL**, New American Funding

Frank Fuentes joined the New American Funding family almost 20 years

ago. He was hired by President Patty Arvielo and CEO Rick Arvielo to help launch the company’s inside call center, specializing in serving the needs of the Hispanic market. His dedication to serving this market quickly earned him a ranking as the No. 1 loan officer in the company. Fuentes was the first Latino and bilingual loan officer hired at New American Funding. He has shared his expertise personally to assist thousands of Hispanic families with responsible and affordable home loans and refinances.



Advisory Council Member—**Tai Christensen**, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, CBC Mortgage Agency

Tai Christensen is the

Director of Government Affairs and Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Officer for CBC Mortgage Agency, a national down payment assistance provider. She attended Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and has 17 years’ experience in the mortgage industry. She began her career in 2003 as a contract loan processor for multiple mortgage brokerages in Salt Lake City. In 2008 she began to work with the many American families facing foreclosure due to the Great Recession. Most recently, she

has become a national spokesperson for the UHOUSI Initiative, a comprehensive plan that focuses on increasing sustainable homeownership within black and brown communities.



Advisory Council Member—**Kisha L. Parker, EVP**, Corporate Sustainability, PennyMac

Kisha L. Parker has served as the EVP of Corporate

Sustainability for PennyMac Financial Services, Inc., and PennyMac Mortgage Investment Trust (collectively, PennyMac) since April 2020. In her role, she oversees PennyMac’s Corporate Sustainability Program, which focuses on identifying, measuring, and monitoring the environmental, social, and governance impact of PennyMac’s business activities to drive the company’s long-term sustainable growth and success. She also oversees PennyMac’s Diversity and Inclusion Program, which focuses on company-wide activities and division-level initiatives designed to foster an inclusive culture and attract, develop, and engage a highly diverse talent pool that reflects the communities where PennyMac employees live and serve. Prior thereto, Parker had been a corporate and securities attorney at PennyMac since 2013.

These new members joining existing members:

- Lola Oyewole, Chair, VP, Human Resources and Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Ocwen Financial Corporation
- April Alexander, National Community Development & Outreach Manager, Prosperity Home Mortgage
- Michael Ruiz, Director, Supplier Diversity, Fannie Mae
- Joe Velazquez, SVP, Neighborhood Lending, Bank of America

AMDC Education Subcommittee Hosts Webinar

Learn how to tie diversity and inclusion to employee development, employee acquisition, and morale.

The [American Mortgage Diversity Council](#) (AMDC) recently hosted a panel of experts in workplace diversity and inclusion entitled “How D&I Directly Impacts Health and Growth.” “Whether you’re starting at square one of D&I initiatives, or have long-established programs within your organization, this webinar will help you understand what it takes to elevate all things D&I,” organizers noted.

The webinar provided actionable goals that directly tie diversity and inclusion to morale, employee development, talent acquisition, and more. Panelists for the webinar included Joe Velazquez, SPV, Neighborhood Lending, Bank of America; and AMDC Educational Subcommittee Chair, Frank Fuentes, NVP, MCL, New American Funding; Angela Hurst, SVP, RES.NET; Lola Oyewole, VP, Human Resources and Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer, Ocwen Financial Corporation and Chair AMDC Advisory Council.

The American Mortgage Diversity Council promotes diversity and inclusion throughout the mortgage industry. The organization provides a platform for the collaboration of mortgage industry leaders for the advancement of diversity and inclusion dialogue. The organization develops and provides tools and strategies to create an understanding and appreciation of individual differences in thought, experience, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, style, sexual orientation, and gender identity. This webinar is part of [AMDC’s webinar series](#). Playback is available [here](#).



HUD to Investigate LGBTQ Discrimination Cases

The department will start enforcing the Fair Housing Act to prohibit discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.



While housing discrimination based on “race, color, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin” has long been illegal under 1968’s Fair Housing Act, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently added, “housing discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation” to the type of complaints it will investigate, act upon, and apply funds toward.

The action comes on the heels of President Joe Biden’s day-one executive order instructing agencies and departments to enforce prohibitions on such discrimination. HUD officials told reporters it is the first agency to have announced the implementation of this executive order.

During a recent press call, a senior HUD official said a “significant” share of fair housing complaints it receives involve sexual orientation or gender identity. (Separately, HUD told NPR it received 197 such claims over the past year).

“Housing discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity demands urgent enforcement action,” said Acting Assistant Secretary of Fair Housing Equal Opportunity, Jeanine M. Worden. “That is why HUD, under the Biden Administration, will fully enforce the Fair Housing Act to prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation. Every person should be able to secure a roof over their head free from discrimination, and the action we are taking today will move us closer to that goal.”

According to HUD officials, various discrimination studies reveal same-gender couples and transgender people experience demonstrably

less favorable treatment than their counterparts when seeking housing, specifically renting, which underscores the significance of its action. Until now, LGBTQ discrimination was not clearly defined as illegal and actionable discrimination.

“The memorandum relies on the Department’s legal conclusion that the Fair Housing Act’s sex discrimination provisions are comparable in text and purpose to those of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which bars sex discrimination in the workplace,” according to HUD. “In *Bostock v Clayton County*, the Supreme Court held that workplace prohibitions on sex discrimination include discrimination because of sexual orientation and gender identity. HUD has now determined that the Fair Housing Act’s prohibition on sex discrimination in housing likewise includes discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.”

Damon Y. Smith, Principal Deputy General Counsel reaffirms that legally, based on *Bostock*, and ethically, this is the correct move.

“We are simply saying that the same discrimination that the Supreme Court has said is illegal in the workplace is also illegal in the housing market,” Smith said.

Omar Gonzalez-Pagan, a senior attorney at Lambda Legal who has worked on LGBTQ housing discrimination cases including *Bostock* told VOX reporter Jerusalem Demsas that “Discrimination is oftentimes hard to address because you will have your inquiry about a home be rejected and you may not know why. The federal government has the tools to document complaints more systematically, to engage in deeper-level investigations, and to take more comprehensive enforcement through their office of civil rights.”

In summary, Gonzalez-Pagan echoed HUD-counsel Smith, telling the news outlet, the measure communicates “to real estate agents, landlords, property owners that this discrimination is not acceptable, is unlawful.”

HUD’s mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination and transform the way HUD does business.

Homepoint Hires First Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer

Company focusing efforts to promote increased diversity and inclusion throughout the mortgage industry.



Homepoint, a leading mortgage lender and servicer, has announced the appointment of DeAndre Lipscomb to the new role of Chief Diversity and

Inclusion Officer. Lipscomb will be responsible for partnering with business leaders to develop and implement strategic, programmatic, and operational initiatives that promote a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Under his leadership, Homepoint will engage, develop, retain, and attract a diverse workforce to align with the company's "We Care" values. Also, Lipscomb will play an integral role in growing the organization's corporate social responsibility and philanthropic efforts nationwide.

"At Homepoint, we ultimately define our business and our culture by the opportunities

we create and the way we treat people, whether it's our associates, partners, or customers," said Willie Newman, President and CEO of Homepoint. "With people at the forefront of everything we do, we want to be a force for good in all the communities we serve, and diversity and inclusion must be meaningful and structured components of how Homepoint continues to evolve and strengthen the mortgage industry. We are excited for DeAndre to join our team and make a significant impact through D&I initiatives that will make Homepoint the best workplace and best industry steward it can be."

In addition to internal programming to benefit Homepoint associates, Lipscomb's appointment as the company's first Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer represents Homepoint's focused efforts to promote increased diversity and inclusion throughout the broader mortgage industry.

Last September, Homepoint announced the launch of the Homepoint Foundation, for which the company dedicated its first \$1 million to establishing and funding additional minority-owned and women-owned mortgage brokerages throughout the country.

Lipscomb joins Homepoint after serving as the Executive Director of the Lake Trust Foundation and Community Impact Manager for Lake Trust Credit Union, a community development financial institution based in Brighton, Michigan. In that role, he designed and executed programs and partnerships to uplift underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Before Lake Trust, Lipscomb worked in the health insurance industry for 21 years, serving in executive leadership roles where he led employee engagement, marketing, communications, community outreach and contributed to diversity and inclusion strategies and initiatives. He is a certified diversity practitioner through the National Diversity Council and is a board member for its Michigan chapter.

"I am excited to take on this critical work for a people-focused organization like Homepoint," said Lipscomb. "I am impressed by the leadership team's demonstrated commitment to embedding diversity and inclusion into the company culture. I look forward to working with the team to strengthen communities through financial well-being brought by homeownership and education."

D&I INDUSTRY VOICES

Designing a Workforce for Today

Here's how organizations should start thinking differently about talent.

Hema Crockett and Jamie Jacobs

On a global scale, there have been major shifts in the way we think about work, the people who do the work, and where the work is done. An increase in the use of technology, the rapid change of pace and even reevaluating organizational priorities all play a part in this. As business models continue to evolve, organizations can no longer afford to stay complacent. To create an impactful and lasting competitive advantage, organizations need to get clear about their structure and make a pivot toward thinking differently about talent and work altogether.

Leaders know that for strategic execution to occur, organizations need the right people on their teams. The question we would ask is, "Do these right people need to be permanent full-time employees?" The answer is not necessarily. So, what does this mean in terms of talent and how can we think about talent differently moving forward?



First, Challenge the Status Quo

The first step toward pivoting is breaking old habits and throwing the traditional way of thinking out the window. A good place to start is by asking, "As an organization, how can we be successful,

achieve business results, and leverage the best talent?" Go beyond the surface here and think about the current structure of your organization. Does it make sense for where you might be today and where you want to be in the future? Are jobs and tasks being completed in ways that reach the goals of the business? For some, this first step, breaking out of traditional ways of thinking, is the most difficult and often overlooked. Look at all the different areas within your organization that may need updating and get specific about the changes, strategies, and talent that can be integrated to gain a competitive advantage.

Next, Break Down Job Descriptions

Once you have thrown out the traditional ways of doing things, take a close look at your job descriptions. In the past, employees typically signed contracts for a position with an umbrella of required tasks and the intent to stay with one company for several years. It was not common to see workers move around to different organizations very much, and

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D&I INDUSTRY VOICES

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those who did were often gig workers related to administrative or temporary positions. Today, this is not the case at all. Instead, by breaking down jobs into different projects, organizations can eliminate the need to always fill roles and hire full-time employees. Leaders need to ask themselves, "How can I break down this job description into its parts/projects?" Oftentimes, when roles are broken down, it is easy to see where there may be duplication or overlap as well. When you find ways to design roles that will increase the pool of highly skilled and qualified talent, you gain advantages in areas that may have been lacking before and allow room for greater experiences and perspectives.

Then, Create a Diverse Pool of Problem Solvers

So, you have thrown out the traditional way of thinking and doing things, you have broken down your job descriptions into their parts and create tasks and projects. From there, the next question is, "How do we complete these projects and tasks?" By leveraging the best talent. This means doing a few things. First, consider if there is anyone on the current team who can take a few of these tasks based on their skillset. Next, look to non-traditional talent sources such as the gig economy. By doing this, you are changing the makeup of your team, incorporating both full-time employees and highly skilled contingent workers. Gig workers and independent contractors are experts in their field, serving as high-level interim resources, responsible for contributing to overall business strategy. This pool of problem solvers and skilled workers act as an interconnected team, there to define and solve talent problems that arise.

With the ability to hire expert talent on an "as-needed" basis for temporary projects, gig workers are an ideal resource for organizations. When you tap into what the gig economy has to offer, this is when you truly create a talent advantage.

With the right thinking and processes in place, now is a great time to embrace new ways of thinking and working rather than letting old habits and new fears guide decisions. As a leader, keep reevaluating and adapting to achieve business objectives. The talent is here and available. It is up to you to leverage it to your benefit.

With more than 35 years of combined experience, and known as authentic, transformational leaders, [Gig Talent](#) Co-Founders Hema Crockett and Jamie Jacobs, have built strong reputations for creating and developing high-impact human resources teams that drive business results within tech, biotech, and global Fortune 50 companies. They have taken this experience directly to the Gig Economy where they help HR Consultants and Leadership Coaches do the work they love by matching them with organizations who think about talent differently.

MEMBER ALERTS

American Mortgage Diversity Council Welcomes New Premier Member

Premier Member

New American Funding is an independent mortgage lender and family-owned business headquartered in Tustin, California. Founded in 2003, they are dedicated to helping families and individuals improve their quality of living. New American Funding is a Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and Ginnie Mae direct lender, seller, and servicer.



A&D Property Services	Eagle Home Mortgage	Prosperity Home Mortgage
Altisource	Fannie Mae	Randall S. Miller & Associates
American Mortgage Service Co.	Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas	RES.NET
Aspen Grove Solutions	Independence Title	Ruth Ruhl
Bank of America	JGM Property Group Inc.	Safeguard Properties
Blend, Inc.	Mr. Cooper	Skyhill Financial
BRON	National General Lender Services	Sourcepoint
Caliber Home Loans	National MI	
Chenoa Fund	Nationwide Title Clearing	
CoreLogic	Ocwen Financial Corporation	
Deval LLC	PennyMac Financial Services	
DHI Mortgage	Planet Home Lending	

MEMBER ALERT

BRON Adds Director of Talent & Culture

Natasha (Tasha) Bullard, SHRM-SCP, serves as Director of Talent & Culture at BRON, Inc., where she leads and supports the people and cultural priorities of the organization. Before joining BRON, Inc. in January 2021, Bullard worked in similar roles within the Oil and Gas and non-profit industries, successfully helping organizations recognize and prioritize talent and culture as key drivers of organizational health and sustainability. Before her HR career, Bullard taught English as a Second Language in South Korea and had the pleasure of traveling through South Asia and Central Europe while living abroad. Outside of work-life, she enjoys spending time with her kids and husband, traveling, and being a devoted partner and advocate for social justice and child-serving causes.

MEMBER ALERT

DHI Mortgage Promotes Deborah Roebuck

DHI Mortgage announced the promotion of Deborah Roebuck to National Processing Manager where she is responsible for leading, developing, and implementing new team strategies and initiatives. Roebuck has 26 years' experience in the financial services industry and has held various roles from loan processing and underwriting to risk management, production management, and most recently regional operations leadership. She is also a member of the DHI Mortgage Diversity & Inclusion Committee where she champions and promotes company initiatives. Roebuck has this to say about the importance of these initiatives: "D&I means having representation from all groups that come together and bring their shared experiences. You cannot practice diversity without practicing inclusion as inclusion creates a space of welcomeness, respect and belonging which allows for equal opportunity for all to have an impact in the workplace in a significant way."

MEMBER ALERT

National General Joins Allstate Family of Companies

National General is pleased to announce they have recently joined the Allstate family of companies. Inclusive diversity is a priority at every level of Allstate, and they strive for a workforce that mirrors the diversity of the customers and communities they serve. They are committed to being a force for positive change and proud to be included in *DiversityInc's Top 50 Companies for Diversity*.

MEMBER ALERT

Planet Home Lending Promotes Two to SVP

Planet Home Lending, LLC, a national lender, and servicer, has promoted Jodi Bailey to SVP, Total Rewards, and Terry Mitchell to SVP, Human Resources. Both promotions come as Planet Home Lending continues to expand its mortgage platform and attract top talent. Bailey will oversee the company's Total Rewards and Payroll departments. She has nearly two decades of compensation and total rewards experience, obtained primarily in the mortgage industry. Bailey's extensive market insight will inform Planet Home Lending's compensation and benefits strategies, enabling it to attract and retain top-tier talent in today's competitive employment market. Mitchell will direct the human resources business partner team at Planet Home Lending, driving employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention. Known for his expertise in applying analytical tools to improve employee experience, Mitchell ensures Planet Home Lending employees are as happy on their first day and as they are on the day they leave.

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ONE COMMUNITY.**

**2021 DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION SYMPOSIUM
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 2021**

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American Mortgage Diversity Council

Where Diverse Groups Share Common Goals.

The American Mortgage Diversity Council (AMDC) promotes diversity and inclusion throughout the mortgage industry. The organization provides a platform for collaboration among mortgage industry leaders for the advancement of diversity and inclusion dialogue.

We want you to be part of the AMDC

Connect with mortgage leaders and collaborate to promote diversity and inclusion in our industry. We provide tools and strategies to create an understanding and appreciation of individual differences in thought, experience, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, style, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Become a Sponsor

By sponsoring an AMDC webinar, you will receive exposure and be seen by policymakers, lenders, and servicers as a leader in the D&I field.

Advertise Your Brand

Utilize our newsletter publication to promote your company's product or services, gain exposure to our membership, or celebrate your diverse team.

Contact Us

If your company is interested in the AMDC, please contact [Eileen Kornmeyer](#)