Innovation is especially difficult for many companies. This year, we set out to find the bold, the committed, and the creative to recognize in our 9th annual International INNOVATION in Diversity Awards. We found our Top 10, and because we were inundated with such innovative programs, awarded an unprecedented 20 additional Awards of Excellence.

These companies deserve to be prominently featured and recognized for the work they have done to put unique and innovative programs and initiatives in place. Our hope is that next year we will be profiling your company and holding you up to the same level of esteem that these fine organizations have earned. Our heartiest congratulations to our Top 10 and Award of Excellence companies!
Despite an improvement in the percentage of minority high school students enrolling in college after graduation, the increase is still minimal and not at pace with the challenging global economic environment. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 12.5 percent of Latino and 14 percent of black high school graduates enrolled in a four-year college within 12 months of graduation, compared to 62.3 percent of white students in 2009. These figures are even more disturbing when considering enrollments at the most competitive schools. It’s a critical issue that can’t be ignored—the future of corporate America depends on an educated workforce. PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) recognized a growing need to address the talent pipeline issue and launched the Impact program in 2008.

“So far, [college] has been the best two and half years of my life. It has introduced me to so many different people; it has changed the way I think...It has exposed me to things I would have never been exposed to,” said Prince Debrah, Impact Scholar.

Impact provides high-performing African-American and Latino high school students with tools and strategies for navigating the college planning process and career exploration. This 15-month program is part of PwC’s corporate responsibility commitment to cultivate the next generation of diverse leaders in the marketplace.

“It has instilled those values of going out there and networking and making sure that you are trying to find your passion and what you want to do,” said Impact Scholar Leandra Stewart.

Impact Scholars are selected through a competitive application process that includes an in-person interview. After being accepted, Scholars participate in monthly workshops that help them navigate the college admissions process—exploring academic options, crafting an exceptional essay, learning how to be distinctive in a college application, and much more.

Impact is designed to equip scholars with mentoring support to help them create education strategies; exposure to careers in the accounting profession; a broader awareness of academic and professional options; and information for navigating the college-planning and financial-aid processes.

With college tuition costs rising, financial aid remains a major factor in college decisions. Impact Scholars and their parents participate in a comprehensive workshop dedicated solely to paying for college. On average, Impact scholars received $30,000 in scholarships and grants from the college he or she attended.

Impact Scholars work in cohorts with fellow students and high-performing PwC employees that serve as mentors. PwC mentors assist students throughout the college planning process, sharing their experiences and providing exposure to career paths.

“Serving as an Impact Mentor gave me an opportunity to not only give back to the community in which I live, but to share my experiences and lessons I’ve learned with students who can soak up that knowledge,” said Andrew Barclay, Impact Mentor.

And results are impressive. 100 percent of Impact graduates have matriculated to colleges and universities nationwide—nearly 300 students to date. 58 percent of the colleges and universities that accepted Impact graduates from 2009-2011 are recognized as “most and more selective” by U.S. News & World Report. Collectively, Impact Scholars have been offered more than $15 million in scholarships and grants from all accepted schools.
The Sidley Scholars

One of Sidley Austin LLP’s goals is to achieve greater diversity, not just for the firm, but in the legal profession as a whole. Toward that end, in 2006, the Sidley Prelaw Scholars Initiative was launched, the first program of its kind among U.S. law firms.

Designed to address a recent decline in minority enrollment in U.S. law schools, this program provides financial support and guidance to as many as 36 minority and LGBT college juniors and seniors who have an interest in attending law school, demonstrate academic promise, and have financial needs that inhibit their legal career aspirations. Applicants come from across the country and a range of U.S. undergraduate institutions, including Ivy League and private colleges, public universities, and historically black colleges. Students complete an application that includes documentation of their academic success, financial need, and leadership skills, as well as a personal statement about their desire to study law.

Sidley Scholars receive an initial award that pays the tuition of a Law School Admissions Test (LSAT), preparatory course registration fees for the LSAT, and application fees for up to seven accredited law schools. Upon completing the LSAT preparatory course and law school applications, Scholars receive an additional scholarship award during their last year of college. At each Scholar’s request, they also receive coaching on law school application preparation and are mentored by lawyers and staff.

During the summer before law school matriculation, Sidley Scholars selected from the prior year’s application cycle are invited to Sidley’s home office in Chicago for an intensive two-day orientation to the traditional first-year law school courses and law school life. This orientation is taught by Sidley partners and associates, and joined by judges, academics, and in-house counsel from some of Sidley’s clients.

This year, lawyers from Eli Lilly, Takeda, The Gap and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, as well as federal court judges, are expected to participate. Scholars tour the federal courthouse in Chicago and meet with members of the bench. They hear from successful minority, racially diverse, and LGBT lawyers about diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. Sidley lawyers and other trained legal professionals provide an overview of first-year contracts, torts, criminal law, legal writing, civil procedure and property courses. Scholars bond during social events with Sidley’s lawyers and invited in-house lawyers. This introduction to law school helps students to make the most of their educational experience from the beginning, while managing some of the dislocation and stress that often burden first-year law students.

In the last six years, a number of other U.S. law firms have initiated programs modeled after Sidley Scholars. Successful participants in the Sidley Prelaw Scholars Initiative have been entering the legal profession for the last two years, and the firm has welcomed over 150 Sidley Scholars into the program since its inception. Many scholars have been accepted into some of the best law schools in the country, and after graduation have gone on to law firms, government and corporate positions, education, and business. For many, the Sidley Prelaw Scholars Initiative was the factor that made their dream of becoming a lawyer a reality.

“A long time advocate for workforce diversity as a “must-have” rather than a “nice-to-have,” the talent management firm JBK Associates launched its DNA Campaign [Diversity IN Action] to advance diversity as an essential part of corporate social responsibility.

The firm started with itself. Founder and President Julie Kampf designed a corporate social responsibility program built on three pillars: diversity, environmental sustainability, and philanthropy. Kampf built an award-winning team that is multi-racial, multigenerational and gender-balanced, with key executives from different faiths and backgrounds. To attract and retain top talent among workers with young families, she provided flexible work schedules, part-time opportunities and telecommuting opportunities, earning JBK acclaim from Working Mother magazine as a Best Women-Owned Business. To encourage innovation, she requires the entire staff to read books that enhance their understanding of the trends shaping workforce diversity. She even leased a separate space in the firm’s office to accommodate candidates with disabilities.

The DNA campaign has generated staff enthusiasm, and as team members have brainstormed ways to advance diversity, they also have shown an increased commitment to environmental sustainability. For example, the firm has cut its paper usage by 75 percent while also increasing recycling and reducing energy usage. In addition, every em-
To learn more about how organizations can prioritize diversity and inclusion, including multiple organizations that have been recognized by Diversity Journal.

The DNA campaign carries the diversity message still further through Julie Kampf’s work as a diversity champion. Kampf calls on organizations nationwide to prioritize diversity in her speaking engagements at venues such as the Multicultural Forum on Workplace Diversity and the Linkage Summit on Leading Diversity, in her bylined articles and media interviews, and through service such as her role on the Board of Visitors for the Howard University John H. Johnson School of Communications.

If it’s true, as Margaret Mead said, that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world, then JBK’s DNA Campaign is changing the way the business world values diversity.

In 2009 Vanguard introduced a new program called the Diversity Speaker Series. To date, this is one of the company’s most popular diversity programs. The goal of the series is to build empathy and understanding by exposing employees to key diversity dimensions in an interactive and engaging format.

Distinguished speakers are invited to Vanguard to share personal stories about work, life and everything in between. Frequently these events reach capacity within hours after enrollment is opened. On average, more than 1,000 employees attend live events. For those who may not be able to attend the performance in person, sessions are broadcast to locations in Arizona, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. Additionally, events are recorded and made available online. Vanguard also provides facilitator guides for leaders to conduct post-event discussions with their teams.

This year the Diversity Speaker Series began during Black History month, with an innovative new approach. The format began with a call to action for participation in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. days of service, followed by multiple opportunities to view the powerful HBO film View from the Balcony of Room 306, which highlights King’s legacy and last days. Each session offered participants time to share their feelings and observations about the film and memories from that time period.

The program culminated with a live interview featuring Reverend Samuel “Billy” Kyles, longtime civil rights leader and a close friend of King. Directly following the presentation, he and his wife joined members of the Black Professional Network (VBPN) and invited guests from senior leadership team for lunch and further discussion.

Inside/Out...Voices from the Disability Community was the second event in the speaker series. This live theater performance explored the firsthand stories of seven individuals and their experiences with disability.

Said one employee: “Inside Out was spectacular—easily the best piece of theatre I have ever seen. Thank you so much...for bringing this to Vanguard. I could not believe how quickly the 90 minutes went by. I took away three lessons: be the change, be of service, and build community.”

Vanguard uses a survey to measure the success of the Diversity Speaker Series. The attendance, comments, and Net Promoter Scores have reinforced the value of these programs to employees.

In 2011, Alcoa Foundation began to track its grants dedicated to reaching diverse populations and promoting inclusiveness. From the global partnership with Girl Scouts of the USA to employing people with disabilities at Point Henry Café in Australia, to more than 100 employees who serve as mentors to U.S. veterans, Alcoa is reaching people of all backgrounds in an effort to make organizations and communities stronger.

As the world evolves, so do the skills needed to stay competitive. To prepare communities for these changes, Alcoa Foundation focuses on programs that increase the number of students enrolled in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) initiatives.

Reaching out to the next generation of workers starts with programs that engage young minds. In March, Alcoa Foundation awarded $25,000 to the Summer Engineering Experience for Kids (SEEK), a program developed by the
National Society of Black Engineers [NSBE] to raise the interest of STEM in underrepresented minority students.

In support of this program and recognizing the importance of engaging a broader audience, Alcoa invited NSBE members who attended the annual convention and career fair in Pittsburgh to use Twitter to share their thoughts and experiences. Alcoa’s Recruiting Center of Excellence partnered with the Alcoa African Heritage Network (AAN), one of Alcoa’s affinity groups that support diversity across the company’s worldwide operations, to plan the “Tweetup.”

Approximately 70 Alcoa employees supported the event as volunteers, including Everick Spence, Plant Manager of Alcoa’s Kwinana plant in Springdale, AR and co-chair of AAN. There were also 20 Alcoa employees conducting on-site interviews for full-time jobs and internship positions.

More than 200 NSBE student members, faculty and administration from Alcoa’s 18 Campus Partnership colleges and universities across the U.S. tweeted #iwananwork4Alcoa, resulting in nearly 1,600 tweets. Students attended the interactive exhibits from the Alcoa Innovation Center, a showcase of Alcoa initiatives in sustainability and technology, and learned about careers at Alcoa from several business unit leaders and corporate recruiters.

To date, five full-time job offers and 16 internship positions have been accepted by NSBE members who attended the career fair. While the investment was relatively small, the gains were significant, demonstrating that deployment and integration are key.

While this was a great opportunity to expose minority Millennials to a mining, manufacturing and innovation company and connect people through social media, Alcoa’s involvement with NSBE extends far beyond the “Tweetup.” The company has also become a member of the NSBE Board of Corporate Affiliates to further enhance its efforts to recruit talented engineers and support NSBE’s 30,000 members.

Alcoa Foundation’s STEM and workforce development partnerships are integrated into a Talent Value Chain for the next generation of skilled operators and trades people, engineers, designers, and managers. Support for STEM education provides the base for more students to have the academic and career knowledge required to continue their studies at two- and four-year academic institutions. In 2012, Alcoa Foundation will invest $1.1 million in STEM and workforce development programs. PDJ

In New York City, several executives joined guests in a panel discussion to share their experiences and perspectives with clients and employees. During his welcome remarks, Citi’s CEO Vikram Pandit said, “Events such as this are part of how we create the environment and culture that allows women to not only do what they’re good at, but to feel supported.”

The Citi Foundation made a $1 million grant to the Calvert Foundation, to launch the Women INvesting in Women INitiative (WIN-WIN). The program will invest at least $20 million in high-impact organizations and projects worldwide that help create economic opportunities for women lacking access to traditional credit and funding sources. Below is a sampling of other activities on International Women’s Day:

- In London, Citi colleagues collected 200 boxes of clothing for Dress for Success to celebrate the day and Citi’s 200th anniversary.
- In Mexico City, Citi hosted a program for 200 senior managers with internal and external panelists from government and media.
- In San Francisco, Citi and the Financial Women’s Association of San Francisco featured a panel of business leaders on the subject of ingenuity.
- In Singapore, 300 Citi colleagues raised funds for the Citi-Tsao Financial Education Program for Mature Women.
- In Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Citi hosted former City Councilwoman and State Legislator Casey Murschel to present “Women in Leadership – Past, Present and Future.”
- Citi Kenya partnered with Junior Achievement for an Innovation Boot Camp for university students.
- Citi Turkey celebrated the contributions of women with a photo exhibition and panel on the “Role and Importance of Women in the Business World.”

IWD connected colleagues and clients from different countries and businesses with new ways to celebrate Citi’s diversity. The energy and excitement has generated interest in forming employee networks and councils across the globe, as well as increasing focus on women’s programming. Externally, Citi received positive media coverage, and at many events engaged clients in dialogue demonstrating Citi’s leadership, ingenuity and commitment to diversity. PDJ

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In today’s health care environment, cultural competence is key to the delivery of quality care to culturally and linguistically diverse communities. As the nation’s leading provider of healthcare services, HCA is comprised of locally-managed facilities that includes 163 hospitals and 109 freestanding surgery centers in 20 states and England that employ approximately 199,000 people. Today, four to five percent of all inpatient care delivered in the country is provided by HCA facilities. In 2010, HCA’s diversity council provided a clear directive—focus on cultural competence. As a result, the C3 [Culturally Competent Care] Initiative was established to support the dissemination of resources and tools to facilitate culturally competent care within HCA’s healthcare network.

According to Sherri Neal, HCA’s diversity officer, “I felt the first thing we needed was an internal roadmap that would establish a comprehensive framework for implementing cultural competence initiatives across the enterprise and position HCA as a leader in the delivery of culturally competent patient-and family-centered care.”

The C3 Resource Guide, developed in September 2011, provides direction to improve communications within the workforce, better serve patients, and enhance communities. It includes helpful cultural competence background information, steps for implementation, cross-walks with Joint Commission patient-centered communication standards, Office of Minority Health CLAS Standards, and other recommended strategies.

The HCA C3 Resource Guide was first designed as an electronic book accessible to employees via the intranet. The footnotes in the document were hyperlinks that enabled users to easily access ancillary information relevant to key areas. This eco-friendly innovation is also easy to update as new input and feedback are collected. Employee reactions to this online innovation have been extremely positive. As a result of the ease of use and quality and value of the content, HCA received several requests for print copies and now have created a print version for distribution.

The purpose of the C3 Resource Guide was to provide HCA affiliates with the necessary tools to guide the implementation of culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies and services. There are multiple external resources that provide recommended practices for creating a more culturally competent and inclusive organization, but the C3 Resource Guide is the internal roadmap. It is built on strong “patients first” philosophy, but is also aligned with regulatory and other standards that relate to cultural competence.

The most important benefit of this document is that HCA has an internal roadmap for how cultural competence and inclusion should be driven through the organization. The guide is designed to help assess, adapt, and apply new approaches and techniques as a long-term effort that will last many years.

Faced with a challenging economic landscape, Sodexo, like many companies, sought to identify cost-effective innovations for delivering new learning programs designed to inform, engage and educate employees around diversity and inclusion. This goal was realized in 2011 when Sodexo launched its first Virtual Diversity Business and Leadership Summit (VDBLS).

The virtual platform was designed, developed and implemented to provide comprehensive diversity and inclusion learning solutions for all employees. A cross-divisional team was responsible for the planning and execution of the Virtual Summit, including subject matter and technical experts beyond the Office of Diversity.

Complementing the already successful in-person event, VDBLS was a perfect solution for Sodexo’s culture and highly decentralized structure. It was a creative way to connect employees and deliver diversity and inclusion training and development in a cost-effective manner with low environmental impact. VDBLS blended virtual solutions, including over sixty learning activities, offering employees the opportunity to engage in new learning experiences as well as connect with subject matter experts through facilitated live sessions and virtual chats. It also offered employees the flexibility and convenience to participate in summit offerings at any time and from any location.

The learning events and activities presented through VDBLS focused on building skills, knowledge, and awareness around different dimensions of diversity. In addition to learning events, live chats, and networking opportunities, participants could visit the online resource center to download and view diversity-related materials and research to support learning, development, and performance. Additionally, with the Virtual Summit being available for a seven-month period, the content was accessible to a wider audience for a much longer period than the traditional, in-person Summit.

Through VDBLS, Sodexo was able to promote cutting-edge approaches to addressing diversity among a large, dispersed employee population while dealing with the need to balance time and resources. As a result, Sodexo increased diversity competency company-wide. Of the 2,243 individuals who registered, 84 percent participated in the VDBLS environment, and 96 percent stated they would apply the learning to their job. A total of 2,151 training events were completed through VDBLS. Sodexo was also able to leverage the VDBLS Resource Center to house diversity and inclusion materials, which increased utilization of existing documents such as the Manager’s Reference Guide and the Diversity Annual Report, as well as promoted usage of new resources such as a Ramadan Tip Sheet and informative videos.

Overall, the feedback was very positive and provided the
In 2011, Phillips Lytle LLP introduced its own innovative diversity pipeline program “Peace Out.” Through “Peace Out,” teams of Phillips Lytle lawyers guide interactive sessions with middle school students in underserved communities in which the firm has office locations. The “Peace Out” program engages students in role playing, as they explore problem solving and dispute resolution in a scripted legal controversy. The graphic used to identify and brand Phillips Lytle’s pipeline program is a peace symbol. Each arm of the peace symbol represents a principle of practice for students to learn and embrace—problem, knowledge, and solution.

The firm started its “Peace Out” pipeline program in the City of Buffalo. Firm attorneys developed a variety of classroom exercises where students organize legal positions and ultimately make and judge a courtroom argument, engage in negotiations on behalf of a client’s interests, or participate as an advocate in an arbitration. Part of what makes “Peace Out” so innovative and effective is that these exercises were designed to include subject matter that students readily connect with, such as copyright and trademark disputes adapted from actual controversies, and sports and entertainment problems relevant to contemporary issues.

Another part of the concept is that the firm stays connected with students who meet lawyers through “Peace Out.” Phillips Lytle returns to participating schools to conduct additional, more advanced exercises and plans to launch a “Peace Out” website that will be sponsored and maintained by the firm. By introducing students to some of the skills that lawyers draw upon to confront and resolve matters, and by giving students multiple opportunities to experience the process for themselves, the firm believes they have developed a significant way to impact the pipeline of diverse talent into the profession.

The feedback from students, teachers and firm attorneys who have participated in “Peace Out” has been strong. The firm has been invited to return to the classrooms where they have previously conducted the “Peace Out” program, and interest in the program is growing. Individual students often tell attorneys at the conclusion of the program that they are now open to the possibility of practicing law and recognize that a successful career in law can take many forms.

The most significant indicator that “Peace Out” is effective and impactful has been the enthusiastic response from the students and educators who participate. Phillips Lytle also sees the program’s success when they observe the level of engagement by the students. The expansion of the program also speaks emphatically to its success.

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BDO’s International Secondment Program

The BDO network has more than 1,100 offices around the world, representing a variety of accounting practices and standards and a melting pot of different cultures. It’s fitting, therefore, that one of BDO USA’s broad range of programs allows employees to gain first-hand knowledge about international accounting practices.

BDO USA and BDO Member Firms worldwide offer qualified employees the opportunity to participate in short or long-term international reassignments, called secondments. Program participants—or secondees—enjoy a rich and multi-layered experience in international offices, where they become integral team members, learning different work ethics with different clients in a different culture.

Secondments typically last anywhere from three months to two years, depending on the requirements of the receiving and sending offices.

The success of this program at BDO USA stems from the support of local and regional management and the team of experienced professionals who match employees with the right roles at the right times. BDO USA counts 51 professionals who participated in the secondment program in 2012.

CSC Disability Partnership

In November 2011, CSC and Bender Consulting Services, Inc. hosted an industry forum on the employment of people with disabilities. The objective of this forum was to bring together leaders from the technology services industry as well as the broader business and disability communities to discuss best practices in the employment of people with disabilities.

In addition to participants from CSC and Bender Consulting, the business community was represented by companies such as Bayer, CACI, Freddie Mac, Northrop Grumman, Serco, Inc., and Towers Watson. The disability community was represented by leaders from the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD).

The industry forum was held as part of CSC’s longstanding Partnership for Freedom with Bender Consulting. Launched in 1998, this partnership provides competitive employment to people with disabilities in areas such as information technology, finance, human resources, and other related fields.

CSC works with Bender to place people with disabilities using a contract-to-hire model. Over the past 14 years, the CSC/Bender Partnership for Freedom has expanded to provide opportunities at various locations across the United States and in Canada.
The GE’s Women’s Network exists for more than 100,000 women working at GE, to cultivate their leadership skills, business practices, personal contacts, and career opportunities. The Women’s Network started in 1997 and includes 166 hubs in 48 countries.

In 2008 GE started a small group peer mentoring program called myConnections. The aptly-titled program is a forum for women to learn from one another in a small group environment. The curriculum includes both business and balance events.

The hubs determine how to enroll women in the program—via performance-based criteria or open enrollment. Each group includes two coaches and a champion. Coaches help groups overcome barriers, facilitate ideas, facilitate information sharing, and help the groups find funding for their events. Champions, who are senior-level leaders, attend group events and help participants gain exposure to other senior leaders in GE.

The program grew quickly. More than 7,500 women participate in it to date and will reach 10,000 by the end of 2012. myConnections events accounted for 16 percent of total Women’s Network events at GE in 2011.

The Women’s Leadership Program is a ten-month learning journey that was developed in conjunction with the Center for Creative Leadership. It includes various methods of learning from online, classroom, and action-learning projects that are implemented within the company. This program was specifically developed to address the leadership needs of women and also includes pre-identified mentors and coaches that were thoughtfully matched with each of the participants.

The objective of this program is to increase the proportion of women leaders in Ingersoll Rand. This program is a holistic approach designed to help prepare the next generation of women leaders.

All of the program participants were specifically chosen because of their proven track records and potential for growth in the company. The company felt that focusing on this group and providing them additional training and coaching would help the women to stay with the company longer.

The program emphasizes on-the-job learning; coaching and mentoring with an internal senior leader; and building a sustainable network. Furthermore, everyone who is involved in Women’s Leadership Program receives development, not just participants. This means internal mentors receive advanced mentoring skills training. The development is not focused on closing today’s skill gaps, but developing toward higher skills required for senior leaders such as global acumen, innovation, and talent stewardship.
In 2011, Mercer, an operating company of Marsh & McLennan Companies, embarked upon a partnership with an external recruiting firm to help build and maintain a diverse pool of high-quality candidates within its Europe, Middle East, Africa region for hiring in the short-term, as well as for longer-term pipeline planning. This external partner supports the company’s specific needs—identifying strong diverse candidates in areas where Mercer has a shortage, has difficulty finding individuals from diverse backgrounds or could consider alternatives to the traditional methods for resourcing talent.

Unlike typical engagements with search firms or recruitment agencies, Mercer collaborates with the recruiting partner throughout the entire talent-planning process. They assist with succession planning and even help identify potential candidates for positions which are at risk for turnover. In order to connect with broader pools of talent, including the important sector of ‘passive candidates’ (including women on career breaks), they’ve developed approaches to engage and maintain relationships with these individuals through networking opportunities, forums, etc.

Similarly, in the U.S., Marsh & McLennan Companies launched an Inclusion Network in which the company works with a consortium of women, LGBT, and minority-owned executive search firms to identify and introduce the firm to new sources of talent for senior-level roles.

New York Life held an Executive Women Officers Summit which featured senior women from across the company. The Summit focused on three objectives: fostering cross-functional collaboration of senior women, providing a relationship building environment among women, and identifying ways to advance the women’s strategy. The idea for the Summit was conceived by a group of senior-level women wanting to work collaboratively to support the development and advancement of women in the company.

This summit was developed by Executive Officer Women (EOW) at New York Life. While it was a voluntary event, over 90 percent of EOW participated. The CEO attended the event and engaged in open discussions about the issues raised and challenged the group to provide solutions. A variety of workshops were held addressing themes ranging from networking to improving professional management.

Senior executive officer women were encouraged to become mentors or sponsors for other women. Many members of the advisory team that created the program have now become active advisors to the Women’s Employee Resource Group. Numerous networking events have since been held including one that was attended by the CEO and other members of the EMC. The company continues to see support from the EOW and is partnering with them to execute the opportunities identified.

Northrop Grumman’s Professional Development Series (PDS) was launched in early 2011 in an effort to create synergy among the employee resource groups who were conducting professional development workshops for their respective membership.

The series addresses the development needs of ERG members, as well as all employees across the organization, by offering bi-monthly sessions throughout the year. ERG members design and lead the sessions to help employees develop skills such as critical thinking and executive presence, as well as functional and domain competencies such as program management and business acquisition.

Sessions average 150 attendees, with each session introduced by a key member of the sector’s executive leadership team. Sessions are presented by ERG members, thus providing an opportunity for developing and honing their own...
In an effort to engage a geographically disperse workforce throughout the country, ERGs utilize RoundTable [an audio/video teleconference technology] to allow employees to attend sessions virtually. The approach allows employees to participate from their workstation so they are more engaged.

The PDS is thriving and has expanded from 14 sessions in 2011 to 21 in 2012. Through these sessions employees are applying business acumen to address real business challenges and contributing to the success of the company. PDJ

**Rockwell Collins’ Supplier Diversity**

Rockwell Collins’ supply chain recognized the critical need for and value derived from diverse thinking throughout the Rockwell Collins supply base.

To drive diversity within the supply chain, Rockwell Collins has implemented two key programs: a Supplier Alliance Advisory Council (SAAC) and a Small Business and Supplier Diversity Office.

The SAAC was established in 1993 to serve as the supply chain board of directors. They provide best practices in supply chain management processes by sharing information between Rockwell Collins and its diverse suppliers. The SAAC, comprised of a rotating group of representatives from key suppliers, represents the entire supply base, which includes diverse commodities and categories.

SAAC members worked with internal Rockwell Collins teams to improve the online Supplier Portal, which is the main interface between the company and suppliers. The SAAC established a strategic roadmap for the portal and participated in the rollout and implementation of key updates. As a result of this innovative partnership, the supplier portal has increased to 5,650 users with approximately 90,000 monthly hits. Furthermore, suppliers who use the portal have an average on-time delivery rating of 96 percent. PDJ

**Thompson Hine Diversity Champion Award**

As Thompson Hine commemorated its centennial anniversary in 2011, the Diversity & Inclusion Initiative was charged with developing a program to celebrate the firm’s long-standing commitment to diversity and recognition of those whose efforts have helped sustain and strengthen that commitment. Thus, the Thompson Hine Diversity Champion Award was born, to be awarded annually to a member of the firm who best embodies the firm’s dedication to diversity and inclusion.

Jim Jalil, a partner and member of the firm’s Executive Committee, spearheaded the effort and remains a passionate and active participant in the award nomination and selection process. He formed an award committee composed of partners and senior managers, who seek, review and evaluate nominations. On October 4, 2011, the inaugural Diversity Champion Award was presented to partner Trish Smitson during a firm-wide luncheon. PDJ

**Sparrow Health**

Sparrow Health System, a Level I Trauma Center whose workforce encompasses over 9,000 Caregivers and Volunteers, leads the way in quality care throughout Mid-Michigan.

Over the past 12 months the Diversity and Inclusion department has refocused its strategic direction to include business-level prioritization, due in large part to a shift in hospital reimbursement plans and changing demographics in the patient population and community.

The D&I Integration Model is a five-phase approach for leaders to integrate diversity and inclusion into business operations.

The D&I team met with directors of the pilot areas to understand firsthand their scope of responsibilities and understand the challenges they face in meeting the needs of a diverse patient population and community. Part of the approach is to conduct a cultural assessment, followed up by focus groups, to get behind the data. Once completed, the core team will participate in a series of meetings to determine priorities, goals, objectives, and tactics.

Preliminary outcomes are proven to be positive. Since the launch of the Integration Model pilot, Sparrow Health has formed partnerships with various diverse community groups to identify and address health disparities. For example, Physician Speaker Series will be offered in languages other than English, with a bilingual physician and a translator.

Several meetings have been held with diverse communities to discuss issues around disease that are prevalent to certain demographics, including Understanding Prostate Cancer and Hypertension. Sparrow is also participating in a ‘Community Health Needs Assessment’ to identify specific needs in addressing health disparities in the communities served. PDJ
distribution center (DC) in Anderson, South Carolina. Key features include touch screens, adjustable work stations and the use of pictures and images throughout the facility. It opened with a goal of having one-third of the workforce be people with disabilities. A similar facility opened in Windsor, Connecticut two years later.

With 45 percent of the Anderson DC workforce having either a disclosed cognitive or physical disability, this program became the model. Today, ten percent of the DC workforce is made up of people with disclosed disabilities at all levels, after being expanded to all 21 of the company’s facilities.

Walgreens launched its national Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI) this May. The in-store training program aims to help people with disabilities gain retail and customer service skills, and works closely with community organizations and vocational rehabilitation agencies to train and develop candidates.

Complementary to innovative programs in the field, Walgreens established a business resource group in 2009 called INCLUDE. The group focuses on disability education and awareness to assist in the development of best practices to promote employability and productivity. PDJ

Walmart: Mentoring Hispanics

Walmart’s Associate Resource Groups have found an innovative way to help people live better. This is accomplished through a mentoring program called Mi Futuro [my future in Spanish], which was created by the Hispanic Latino Associate Resource Group (HLARG). The program started in 2009 as a way to connect associates with the local community. After conducting research and speaking with school faculty, HLARG was given the opportunity to mentor 30 students with one-hour mentoring session per month at Oakdale Middle School in Rogers, Arkansas.

The program was deliberately developed for eighth grade students, as studies have revealed that ninth grade can be one of the most challenging years for students and is critical to one’s successful completion of high school. Mi Futuro’s monthly curriculum and activity focus on various topics related to goals, budgeting, life skills, and career options that are designed to help students’ futures.

Student-mentee’s grades were improved as were their levels of confidence to succeed. Many of the students are now determined to pursue college and actually see it as a viable starting point for their career success. Last year, more than 350 students were mentored by HLARG members, as well as members from Walmart’s six other Associate Resource Groups. The program has since expanded beyond Northwest Arkansas to include field-based associates who are engaged to mentor students in other states. PDJ

Military Hiring at Waste Management

One talent population that is important to Waste Management is the military. The company states its commitment should be through action, not words; therefore, they have averaged hiring a veteran every day of the year for the past four years. The more than 3,600 employees who are veterans make up 8 percent of all employees. In addition, 6 percent of the veterans hired at WM each year self-identify as disabled.

WM’s mission and purpose are two things that they find in common with the Armed Forces, and why they seek out and embrace the experiences and qualifications that veterans bring.

Some aspects of Waste Management’s military/veteran hiring program include:

- Dedicated military staffing manager
- Full-pay differential and continued benefits (including family) to reserve and guard employees activated to duty (five year limit)
- Family support for activated employees (care packages, visits, employee relief fund access, etc.)
- Posting of USERRA guidelines at 1,000 plus WM facilities and specific military leave policy
- Student veteran internships
- Partnerships with DOL/DOD resources
- More than 50 military job fairs per year to include White House/National Chamber Hiring Our Heroes events
- Awareness (internal/external) through public affairs, community relations and aggressive military targeted advertising
- Veteran professional network inside of WM
- Veteran employee on-boarding program. PDJ

WellPoint’s “We Care” Program

Challenged by a new organizational focus on continuous improvement, in 2010 WellPoint decided to rethink its approach and look at social responsibility and diversity through a unified lens.

To leverage technology, WellPoint moved content online, to a dynamic website entitled “We Care.”

The content is centered on three areas of focus: Our People, Our Communities and Our Environment. WellPoint includes a video message from their CEO and videos that showcase associates engaged in community volunteerism and associate resource groups. There is information on awards and recognition, a section that is permanently updated to reflect what’s new, and an interactive map that provides information about contributions and activities state by state. Depending on the specific interest of the user, the report can be easily customized and printed. PDJ