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CRAIN'S 2021 NOTABLE EXECUTIVES IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

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CRAIN'S CHICAGO BUSINESS 2021 NOTABLE EXECUTIVES IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

NEW!

Directors of DEI are a new breed. They hail from the world of human resources, but many have been recruited from other disciplines. The importance of these 39 specialists grew last year following the growing stature of the Black Lives Matter movement, the murder of George Floyd and the recognition of systemic racism. A number of them report directly to their company's president or CEO.

Many DEI managers opened channels to hear the grievances of Black and Latino employees. They launched speaker series and added resource groups. They expanded inclusion initiatives or established more concrete goals in recruiting and advancing minority staff along with metrics to measure progress. In some cases, job descriptions were rewritten to mitigate bias, and interview processes were reviewed. Some managers launched training for senior management to spotlight unconscious bias. The next years will show whether Chicago companies are willing and able to reform long-established practices that have hindered diversity and inclusion.

By Judith Crown and Lisa Bertagnoli

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 executives for whom nominations were submitted and accepted after an editorial review. The honorees demonstrated that they made an impact in advancing DEI at their companies and in the workplace.





Crystal Andrews Banks

Director, diversity and inclusion

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Joan Archie

Executive director, construction compliance
UChicago Medicine

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Chief learning and diversity officer
Kraft Heinz



Natalie Bodus

Senior director, inclusion and diversity and employer brand
Zebra Technologies

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Pamyla Brown

Community and citizenship director
Turner Construction Co., Chicago

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Derrick Brummell

Inclusion and diversity lead, U.S. Midwest
Accenture

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Tanjia Coleman

President

Reimagine Organization Development

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Erickajoy Daniels

Chief DEI officer

Advocate Aurora Health

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Carl Davis

Senior vice president, DEI and recruitment
Mesirow Financial

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Melissa Donaldson

Senior vice president, chief diversity officer
Wintrust Financial

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Alan Durand

Senior director of people

Kin + Carta

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William T. "Toby" Eveland

Chicago office managing partner

Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr

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Corliss Garner

Senior vice president; head of corporate social responsibility and DEI
First Midwest Bank

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Graham Grady

Partner

Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP

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Anuradha Hebbar

Partner, global DEI practice leader
Kincentric

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Precious S. Jacobs-Perry

Equity partner

Jenner & Block

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Jessica Kimbrough

Chief DEI officer

United Airlines

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Irina Konstantinovskiy

Executive vice president, chief human resources and chief diversity officer
Horizon Therapeutics

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Wil Lewis

Chief DEI officer

Experian

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Connie L. Lindsey

Executive vice president and head of corporate social responsibility
Northern Trust

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Aletha Maybank

Chief health equity officer, senior vice president
American Medical Association

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Natasha Miller Williams

Vice president, head of diversity and inclusion
Ferrara

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Otto Nichols III

Executive vice president and shareholder
Clayco

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Andrea O'Leary

Global senior director, culture and change

Aon

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Amalia Pallares

Associate chancellor and vice provost for diversity
University of Illinois at Chicago

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Ernesto Palomo

Partner and co-chair of diversity and inclusion committee

Locke Lord LLP

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Janice Parks

Chief human resources officer
First Hospitality

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Allison Pittman

Head of inclusion and diversity, U.S. Region
CIBC

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Kavitha Prabhakar

Chief DEI officer

Deloitte

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Pamela Randle

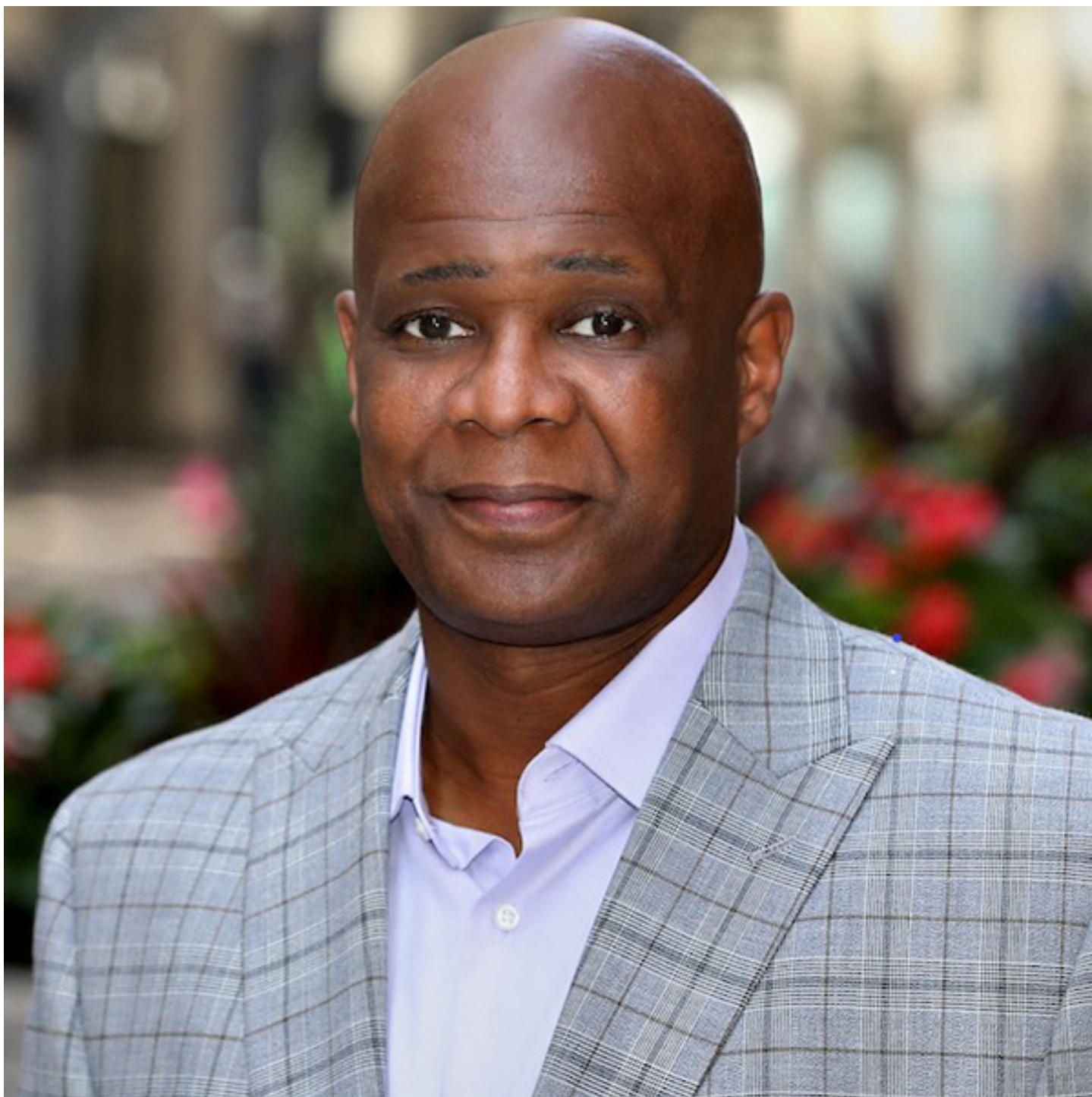
Vice president and senior business consultant
JPMorgan Chase

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Claude Robinson

Executive vice president, external affairs and diversity
UCAN

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Laura Rock

Chief human resources officer
Zurich North America

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Cedric D. Thurman

Executive vice president, chief diversity officer and group head, community investment and DEI

Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago

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Shannon Tomlinson-Eiland

Senior director, DEI and HR compliance
Cantel Medical

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J. Vincent Williams

President and CEO

Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council, Chicago

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Ken Williams

Executive vice president
Chicago White Sox

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Jonita Wilson

Chief diversity officer

Discover Financial Services

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Margo Wolf O'Donnell

Partner

Benesch

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Namrata Yadav

SVP, global head of inclusion

Bank of America

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'Opening opportunities for minority contractors'



Joan Archie has been a trailblazer in opening opportunities for minority contractors. A South Side native, she spent 24 years at the Chicago Urban League, where she became interested in economic development. Archie developed the Construction Compliance Initiative for UChicago Medicine to open more opportunities for minority- and women-owned contractors. She then went on to join

UChicago Medicine after being recruited by Michelle Obama, then executive director for community affairs at University of Chicago Hospitals, and Valerie Jarrett, chair of the medical center's board of trustees.

What attracted you to the Urban League?

I simply fell in love with the mission and vision of the organization. Working to achieve equity for Black families and communities through social and economic empowerment resonated with me and my desire to work toward making a difference. I wanted to know, at the end of my career, that I worked toward changing lives and communities, as opposed to creating shareholder wealth.

How did the Construction Compliance Initiative come about?

UChicago Medicine wanted a program that maximized opportunity for certified diverse firms to participate in the system's new construction projects. At the time the initiative

participated in our weekly diversity meetings and at each milestone achievement would say: "What more can we do?"

Did you come across resistance to this approach?

The support provided by the health system at the highest level was not mirrored in construction management or general contractors working at UChicago Medicine. There was expected resistance to identifying separate, distinct portions of work to subcontract to diverse firms. We wound up doing a great deal of work with construction-management firms and general contractors, helping them to see and comply with our vision for providing economic benefit to diverse firms through their construction and renovation projects.

How does it work? Do companies contact you directly or do they work through the general contractors?

Certified diverse firms are either solicited to participate in the competitive bid process by UChicago Medicine or through the awarded construction management firm or general contractor. There are minority- and women-owned business enterprises utilization goals on every construction and renovation project, and there are processes in place to support attaining those goals. Efforts are made to utilize certified firms as prime contractors whenever possible.

Can you share metrics on the value of work completed by minority contractors?

In fiscal 2020, UChicago Medicine spent \$20.8 million with certified minority- and women-owned construction and construction-related firms, through contracts awarded and paid, with \$4.3 million in wages going to minority and female construction workers. More information is available in the [health system's community benefit report](#).

What are obstacles for further progress?

There are many: lack of access to capital, banking and bonding relationships, limited access to critical information and business networks, and a lack of opportunity. It's the legacy of systemic bias that creates an unlevel playing field. It takes a lot hard work for an organization to actualize its desire to have diversity in the construction firms used to complete its projects. Unless and until a company has a real commitment to achieving and maintaining diversity it will be a hard problem to rectify. Thankfully I've seen

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