

# LEVERAGING ERGS FOR ALLYSHIP

Our workplaces don't exist in a vacuum, and when moments of unrest, civil rights victories or other changes occur in the country, they affect our workforces. ERGs represent a wide variety of identity groups, so you can use them to facilitate discussions, support community outreach, and to provide leadership advice as well as serve as safe spaces for employees to share their experiences and concerns. Below are some tips on leveraging your ERGs during moments of change.

**FACILITATE DISCUSSIONS.** As groups of individuals with lived experiences in certain identity areas, your ERGs can use moments of social change to facilitate authentic and informative discussions with other employees. In addition, hosting these discussions can raise awareness about these ERGs so that members of underrepresented groups and their allies can join.

**PROVIDE LEADERS WITH HONEST INSIGHTS.** Similarly, leaders should consult with appropriate ERGs when planning to publicly or internally address moments of change. Individuals in these groups can provide varied, constructive feedback about how your company can address and facilitate change.

**SERVE AS A SUPPORT NETWORK.** ERGs can provide solidarity in the workplace. If an ERG focuses on an under-

represented group, members of that group and their allies can use the ERGs they are part of to serve as safe spaces for employees to share their feelings about current events and provide support during difficult times.

**BE THE LIAISON BETWEEN YOUR COMPANY AND THE COMMUNITIES YOU SERVE.** ERGs often serve as touchpoints between communities and companies. Through your ERGs, partner with organizations that address current events. Encourage volunteer work, or even pledge to match employees' donations. Additionally, ERGs can help your company recruit diverse employees. They can share opportunities with community groups they partner with, and recruiters can inform prospective employees about ERG opportunities to showcase the company's commitment to diversity and inclusion.



(Photos by Frank Ammaccapane)



For more informative content regarding ERG best practices, check out coverage of DiversityInc's 2019 fall ERG Festival. Panels during this event included speakers from AT&T (HoF), Accenture (No. 5), The Hershey Company (No. 21), TD Bank (No. 18), ADP (No. 4), Wells Fargo (No. 11), Sanofi (No. 28) and Sodexo (HoF).