



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Newsletter

August 2026 Edition

https://bnhra.org/Diversity_and_Inclusion



It Starts With Belonging

Inclusion doesn't happen through policies alone—it is built through everyday interactions and decisions. It can look like inviting different perspectives into a conversation, recognizing contributions, making meetings accessible to everyone, or simply taking the time to listen. Leaders play an especially important role by setting the tone and demonstrating that every voice matters. When inclusion becomes part of how an organization communicates, collaborates, and makes decisions, it moves from being a workplace initiative to becoming part of the culture.

When people feel like they belong, they are more likely to share ideas, collaborate, take initiative, and bring their best selves to work. In this edition, we're taking a closer look at what workplace inclusion really means, why it matters, and how small everyday actions can help create a culture where everyone has a seat at the table—and feels comfortable using their voice.

ALL Voices Matter

At its heart, inclusion is about belonging—creating an environment where employees feel accepted, respected, valued, and comfortable being themselves. People want to know that their contributions matter and that they are part of something bigger than their individual role. When employees experience a genuine sense of belonging, they are more likely to feel connected to their work, their colleagues, and the organization.

Belonging is created through everyday experiences. It can be as simple as making sure everyone has an opportunity to speak during a meeting, recognizing employees for their contributions, welcoming

different perspectives or checking in with someone who may feel left out. These small actions can have a significant impact because they send a powerful message: "You matter here." Inclusion is not a once-a-year initiative—it is something employees should experience consistently throughout their workday.

Leaders have a particularly important role in creating belonging. A leader doesn't have to have all the answers; sometimes, creating belonging starts with simply asking, "Whose voice haven't we heard?"

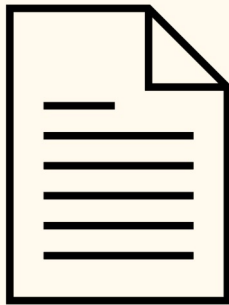
**September 17, 2026 BNHRA
Legal Update**

**October 22, 2026 Equity in
Action Awards**



Diversity is a fact.
Equity is a choice.
Inclusion is an
action.
Belonging is an
outcome.

-Arthur Chan



Inclusion and belonging are not simply feel-good concepts—they can have a meaningful impact on an organization's ability to attract, engage, and retain employees. Deloitte research found that 80% of employees surveyed said inclusion is important when choosing an employer, while 39% said they would leave their current organization for a more inclusive one. Among millennials, the connection was even stronger, with more than half saying they would leave for a more inclusive workplace.

There is also a measurable connection between diversity and organizational performance. McKinsey research found that companies in the top quartile for ethnic diversity on executive teams were 36% more likely to outperform their peers financially, while companies in the top quartile for gender diversity were 25% more likely

to outperform executive teams were 36% more likely to outperform their peers financially, while companies in the top quartile for gender diversity were 25% more likely to outperform. These numbers highlight an important point: when employees feel that their perspectives are valued and that they truly belong, organizations are better positioned to benefit from the different experiences, ideas, and talents their workforce brings to the table. Inclusion isn't just about who is in the room—it's about making sure everyone has the opportunity to be heard and contribute.

Everyone Belongs & Everyone Matters

A Seat At The Table



Imagine walking into work and immediately feeling like, “Yep, I belong here.” That feeling is at the heart of workplace inclusion. Inclusion isn't just about having different people on the team; it's about making sure those people feel welcomed, respected, and valued once they arrive. A diverse workplace without inclusion can feel like being invited to the party but never being asked to dance.

True inclusion means employees are encouraged to participate, share their ideas, ask questions, and bring their authentic perspectives to the workplace. Belonging is often built through the little things. Who gets invited into the conversation? Whose ideas are recognized? Who gets opportunities to lead? Are new employees welcomed into the team, or left to figure everything out on their own? Even something as simple as remembering someone's name, asking for their opinion, or making space for a different perspective can make a big difference. These everyday moments help employees understand that they aren't simply filling a position—they are a valued member of the team.

And here's the fun part: everyone has a role in creating belonging. You don't need a fancy title, a special committee, or a 20-page initiative to make someone feel included. Say hello. Invite someone into the conversation. Give credit where it's due. Listen before responding. Celebrate different ideas. Inclusion is created one interaction at a time, and those interactions can shape the culture of an entire organization. When people feel like they belong, they're more likely to participate, collaborate, and bring their best ideas to the table. Because a great workplace isn't just one where people work—it's one where people feel like they belong.

Don't Forget! Equity In Action Awards!

It is with great excitement we announce the Equity In Action Leadership Forum and DEIA Awards!

Join us in celebrating the leaders in our community who truly embody and champion DEIA in their workplaces. Hear from our respected panelists what DEIA truly means, and forward our mission of creating meaningful pathways for all in WNY!

Voting is now open to nominate an individual you would like to recognize!

<https://lnkd.in/g8Gj79ap>

Vote Today!