

## **ORGANIZATIONS ACROSS THE U.S. JOIN CEO ACTION'S THIRD ANNUAL 'DAY OF UNDERSTANDING' TO ADVANCE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE WITH OVER 1.5 MILLION EMPLOYEES**

NEW YORK, APRIL 1, 2021 — Today marks the start of the third annual “[Day of Understanding](#),” an event created by CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion™ (CEO Action) to help address bias in the workplace and society. This month, CEOs and leaders from hundreds of signatory organizations will engage over 1.5 million employees in candid and courageous conversations about key issues on topics such as race, gender and sexuality to drive greater understanding and appreciation of differences.

“Candid conversations lay the foundation for change and help galvanize our efforts to build cultures of belonging in our workplaces and society,” said Shannon Schuyler, Chief Purpose and Inclusion Officer at PwC US. “This tough dialogue is less about talking and more about active listening. It requires vulnerability and the courage to give others a forum to share their personal experiences and perspectives. These conversations lead to thoughtful, deliberate behavior changes and actions that are driven by solidarity and embraced through allyship. When that happens, progress is made.”

Hosting candid conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion has been at the heart of CEO Action’s mission since its founding in 2017. Yet, in the midst of a pandemic, civil unrest, an election and economic upheaval, dedication to that dialogue has been a powerful tool to help bring people together and support one another during the past year. The rise in violence against Asian Americans and current trial of Derek Chauvin have only reinforced the critical role of these conversations — and with nearly 2,000 signatories across 85 industries, coalition CEOs and leaders have the power to change how millions of people talk to their colleagues about these tough topics.

Now and throughout the remainder of the year, CEO Action is offering its signatories expanded resources and peer-to-peer connection opportunities to help facilitate ongoing dialogue year-round. Its curated library of signatory-sourced materials includes videos, interactive experiences and conversation guides for in-person and virtual workshops. With the goal of building trust and reinforcing a commitment to cultures of inclusivity in the business community, collaboration — not competition — among signatories is facilitated through interactions such as a new Signatory-Led Community Group as well as webcasts and convenings that encourage dialogue and promote a deeper understanding of each others’ experiences and perspectives.

“We are looking forward to participating in our first Day of Understanding, by hosting a three-day event that will strengthen our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion globally,” says Cheryl Kern, vice president of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Herman Miller. “As a result of joining CEO Action and collaborating with other signatories, we are involving our leadership team and employees in real talk conversations around today’s most relevant topics. The last year has been eventful; yet throughout social uprisings and racial inequity challenges, our teams have learned so much from and about each other. We believe there is more to be aware of as we deepen our empathy, respect and understanding for our colleagues. Day of Understanding serves as a powerful platform and conduit for these conversations.”

While Day of Understanding in April is an opportunity to facilitate collective dialogue across the coalition, CEO Action encourages all leaders to engage in these conversations in their workplaces regularly, throughout the year. This ongoing commitment allows them to continue to learn about and understand the experiences of their employees, providing critical insights that can help support positive change across organizations.

“We hosted our first Day of Understanding last year focused on listening and sharing, which set the tone to prioritize relating to one another and building unity,” says Natasha Miller Williams, head of Diversity & Inclusion at Ferrara Candy Company. “From those conversations, we launched our DE&I Council, a cross-functional team including our senior leaders and chaired by our CEO. This group shares their experiences and perspectives to put our D&I commitments into practice and creates a space for deeper conversations on issues that are critical to our employees.”

CEO Action’s Day of Understanding directly ties back to the coalition’s foundational commitments to make workplaces trusting places to have complex, and sometimes difficult, conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion as well as to implement and expand unconscious bias education. For more information on the Day of Understanding and the CEO Action pledge, please visit [ceoaction.com/dayofunderstanding](https://ceoaction.com/dayofunderstanding).

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**About CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion™**

CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion™ is the largest CEO-driven business commitment to advance diversity and inclusion within the workplace, and will continue to be a meaningful voice and accelerator for action with the business community, signatories and employees. This commitment is driven by a realization that addressing diversity and inclusion is not a competitive issue, but a societal issue. Recognizing that change starts at the executive level, nearly 2,000 CEOs of the world's leading companies and business organizations are leveraging their individual and collective voices to advance diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Learn more at [CEOAction.com](http://CEOAction.com) and connect with us on Twitter: [@CEOAction](https://twitter.com/CEOAction).