Leadership by Inclusion

9th Annual D&I awards recognize staff and teams

Accompanied by the percussive Dhol Indian rhythms of Drummer Dave Gupta, hundreds of staff assembled in the MC Atrium March 28 for the 9th Annual Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Awards. It was the capstone event for a dynamic D&I March Celebration with the theme: “Leadership in Times of Change: Focusing on Inclusion.”

Master of Ceremonies Kenroy Dowers, Sr. Manager for IFC’s Global Financial Markets, welcomed attendees. MIGA Executive Vice President Izumi Kobayashi remarked that inclusion is an evolution in people’s minds: “With 168 nationalities, how does our uniqueness work for the Bank Group?” she asked staff.

Managing Director Caroline Anstey said inclusion makes a tangible difference to everybody in the workplace: “Diversity is more than a ‘nice to have,’” she urged. “We need to get beyond this point, beyond brochures and one-off celebrations. Inclusion—and zero tolerance for harassment—are who we are.”

Anstey encouraged staff to broaden their focus to all aspects of diversity—to expand beyond considerations of nationality, gender, and religion, to sexual orientation, disability, academic, and linguistic backgrounds.

“We need to know what we stand for. I want people in Singapore, Manila, and Moscow to say, ‘There goes a World Banker: a person committed to listening & learning,’” she said, “who has zero tolerance for harassment. This brand needs to become central to who we are.”

Dowers introduced each award-winner, with MD Anstey greeting those who approached the dais—winners and those received the awards on winners’ behalf.

Sserunkuma Israel Bbosa, the Sr. Driver in Kampala, is considered the Uganda Office’s “go to” person. His nomination stated: “In addition to his day job, he orientates new staff at all levels including the country manager and visiting missions and Israel is very well respected by all staff.”

Sidi Mohamed Boubacar, from the Bank’s Cairo Office, “demonstrates strong awareness of cultural and behavioral differences, and shows great sensitivity and respect with staff from different religious backgrounds.”

For Mansour Elimane Kane, one key achievement was implementing the MIGA Professionals Program, which recruits staff from Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and Nationalities of Focus. “Mansour’s actions over the last four years,” said Dowers, “have fundamentally changed MIGA and significantly contributed to propelling MIGA to become one of the top performing institutions in terms of D&I.”

Next up was Meg Kinnear, the Secretary-General of ICSID. Kinnear not only encourages participation, but has overseen ICSID’s achievement of 50% females and Part II nationals at Level GF and above.

Colleagues call Mamta Saxena a role model in D&I. Her nomination stated: “Mamta demonstrates a caring and inclusive attitude towards fellow ACS colleagues, investing a lot of her own personal energy to help them to grow professionally and to guide them in achieving work-life balance.

Teams receiving awards this year included GLOBE, the employee resource group of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) staff, which has evolved to become...
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues must be routinely included—and demonstrated—in our World Bank values, said Managing Director Caroline Anstey at a March 27 roundtable hosted by GLOBE, the LGBT employee resource group.

“We must be clear that we stand for inclusion and zero tolerance for all forms of discrimination ... and that all Bank staff stand for the same values,” Anstey said. LGBT inclusion and workplace climate were on the agenda for a standing-room-only crowd gathered to hear a panel of representatives from IBM, Accenture, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

Anstey, who moderated the session, began by echoing some of the remarks she made at a GLOBE-sponsored breakfast earlier this month with U.S. Congressman Barney Frank on how LGBT rights fit into the development agenda. She called for ensuring all benefits are shared by same sex couples and looking for ways to mainstream LGBT issues into an inclusive development agenda. Anstey then made a surprise announcement that paternal leave benefits would now be extended to all same sex couples and couples who have children through surrogacy.

Fiona Grant, a Human Resources Director from Accenture and Karla Bousquet, Director for Executive Client Marketing at IBM, detailed approaches to LGBT inclusion and the challenges of working globally, including in some countries where homosexuality is illegal. “Support and buy-in from top-level leadership is fundamental,” said Grant. Bousquet, who has led diversity initiatives in IBM’s MENA headquarters, echoed Grant’s point, and added that for many companies, LGBT inclusion is an issue of competitiveness—recruiting and retaining employees and staying afoot with competitors.

Deena Fidas, Deputy Director for Education and Outreach at HRC, said that she first discusses the business case for LGBT inclusion with many of the companies she works with. Fidas said that “for companies who care about their brand and want to attract and retain talent, the business case is easy to make.” Fidas oversees HRC’s Corporate Equality Index, a survey that ranks more than 1,200 major employers on the workplace climate for LGBT employees.

Both Accenture and IBM ranked highly in the Corporate Equality Index, and both also now have Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) for LGBT employees. The ERGs serve as professional development networks. Grant said that the rise in social media has helped LGBT employees to find each other and organize into networks. Bousquet noted that the top leaders in each country at IBM now have an LGBT mentor.

Anna Brandt, WB Executive Director for the Nordic and Baltic countries, talked about public sector efforts around LGBT inclusion. She highlighted SIDA’s LGBT Action Plan, and its mandate to include LGBT issues into country assistance strategies, projects and programs. “If we want to be serious about fighting poverty and promoting inclusion, we have to include LGBT issues,” said Brandt. The LGBT population is often socially and economically marginalized in many countries. Currently, nine out of 40 of SIDA’s country strategies include LGBT issues, and SIDA allocated $5 million to specific LGBT projects last year.

Echoing Anstey, GLOBE President Fabrice Houdart said, “We should start here at home. We have to be absolutely clear that we have zero tolerance for discrimination within the institution. We must be clear that what we stand for is inclusion.”
Miss Representation
Documentary Film challenges persistent media bias

The new documentary film Miss Representation by Jennifer Siebel Newsom starts with a dizzying, overhead shot of a beautiful woman. “When I found out I was pregnant with a girl, everything came into focus,” says a female voice. “When I looked around me, I was frightened for her. I couldn’t imagine that she could grow up to be healthy and fulfilled.”

It is Siebel Newsom herself. Within this personal frame, Miss Representation sets out to expose the limited portrayal of women in mainstream American media as the cause of their relative lack of voice in politics and other positions of power. The filmmaker makes use of celebrity interviews, blockbuster footage, and stark statistics to defend her thesis.

“This was a story that needed to be told,” declared Siebel Newsom to a packed Preston Auditorium on the celebration of International Women’s Day. “We’re selling sex and violence to our children 24/7. Is there any wonder that we have all this violence in our culture?”

Siebel Newsom knows this firsthand from her time in Hollywood. She earned more than 30 acting credits in film and TV—from Mad Men to Numb3rs—before making Miss Representation, her first as director.

“We’re exporting the lowest-common denominator to the rest of the world. Where’s our moral compass?”

Introducing the film, EXT VP Cyril Muller reflected on progress. When he joined the Bank Group in 1991 there were no female VPs, but today half of all VPs are women.

“This film is not our usual lens, but it is one that is important, which will certainly challenge us,” said Muller. EXT’s dynamic thinkEQUAL campaign co-sponsored the event with the Diversity Office.

The statistics are arresting. Despite being 51% of the American population, women represent: 3% of clout positions in the mainstream media; 3% of Fortune 500 CEOs; 7% of mainstream film directors; 16% of film protagonists; and 17% of Congress. The film is timely: 2011 is the first year since 1979 that women have not gained seats in Congress.

Winding through a host of causes—including media deregulation, excessive advertiser influence, and bias on the part of programmers and producers—the film encourages viewers to use their power as citizens and consumers to change the status quo.

By all measures, the film has already accomplished a lot. After premiering at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival, Miss Representation was optioned by Oprah Winfrey’s OWN Network for domestic TV distribution. A pledge on the film’s website has been signed by more than 50,000 people.

“The film has taken on a life of its own. I’m very proud of our education curriculum, which is already in 2,000 schools,” said Siebel Newsom, who is also married to the Lieutenant Governor of California and former Mayor of San Francisco Gavin Newsom.

“But we still have a long way to go.”

A vibrant Q&A followed before Julie Oyegun thanked Anne-Marie Nguyen for spearheading the event. “If we see this as a women’s issue, then we’ve lost the point,” declared Oyegun, the Bank Group’s Chief Diversity Officer. “In our response to this movie, especially in terms of a movement, we must work with young men, and the younger the better. Our strongest allies are likely to be the fathers of young girls. Please take the work forward.”
Pamela Cox, VP of East Asia Pacific, was a strong supporter of SSA/CR staff in her former post as VP of the Latin America and Caribbean Region. Her appointment of an African as Director for Brazil not only changed the perception about SSA/CR working in middle-income, non-African countries, it also empowered the minority Afro-Brazilian segment of the population in the country. Pamela mentored and empowered women. LCR was the first VPU to achieve gender parity in management. Pamela modeled inclusion, with all continents represented on the Regional Management Team, which comprised 50 percent Part II nationals and 50 percent women. Pamela challenged managers to ensure diverse candidates in the pipeline, diverse short-list committees and interview panels, and to look for different perspectives when hiring.

Emmanuel Mbi, MNA’s Director of Strategy and Operations has devoted himself in his 30+ years at the Bank to fighting for D&I, whether ethnic, racial, or national. Wherever he worked, Emmanuel mentored younger staff and, where merited but overlooked, advocated their promotion. He built teams and units with staff from across the globe, giving substantive assignments and opportunities, particularly to often marginalized nationalities. Staff from various nationalities (both Part I and Part II) have sought to work with him or sought his support. He has also served as a member of the D&I Advisory Group that advises Senior Management on strategies and initiatives to achieve a fully diverse and inclusive workplace.

President Robert Zoellick has demonstrated that leadership is critical to developing a strong D&I culture. His appointments have truly helped to make senior management globally representative. Half of those at the VP and MD levels are female and about 36 percent are Part II country nationals. Two of the three MDs are female; two of them and the Chief Economist come from Part II countries. For the first time in Bank Group history, all heads of Legal work in IBRD, IFC, and MIGA are female. Since mid-FY08 when Zoellick announced a goal of gender parity in management, the ratio of women in management across the Bank Group has risen from 29% to 35%. Zoellick has also advocated for further diversifying U.S. staff, with a view to making them more representative of the U.S. population.

The IFC Admin & Corporate Legal Matters Team, particularly Annette Miller and Maria Aniana, have been models of inclusion. The team has integrated and mentored Brad Lassiter, who came to IFC through a work placement program run by Gospel Rescue Ministry. The IFC Women’s Network was also recognized for its active programs in every region, spearheaded by Corrie Shanahan, Ana Maria Mihaescu, Nathalie Louat, and Oulimata Sarr. The network focuses on issues relating to women and leadership at IFC, including onboarding, talent management, networking and mentoring, work-life and family issues, diversity, and parity.

Chief Diversity Officer Julie Oyegun closed the event: “Each and everyone of us needs to own the D&I agenda. It is the only way to be the world’s Bank.”