

WORKFORCE

Leadership program inspires women to go All In

In the Buffalo Niagara region, only 27 of the 100 largest employers are led by women.

"We are looking to change that," said Sydney Flanagan, coordinator of the All In program for the Western New York Women's Foundation.

All In is a year-and-a-half-long program for employers, aimed at promoting women in leadership and gender equity in the workplace.

The program addresses workplace barriers that disproportionately impact women. The goal is not only to make the workplace better for women and gender minorities – and all employees – but to ensure women who aspire to leadership roles have opportunities to grow.

"We really want it to be a tool to drive recruitment and to improve retention," Flanagan said.

Several employers have completed the All In program over the past few years, including M&T Bank, Harmac Medical Products, SUNY Buffalo State University and Girl Scouts of Western New York.

All In provides employers with a list of strategies to pursue; depending on their size, employers choose up to 20 of them to tackle.

"I think that one of the benefits of this is, anyone that joins this program already knows what the benefit of having women in leadership positions is," Flanagan said. "It's just kind of, how do I get there?"

The employers provide All In with five years of benchmark metrics on publicly available demographics, to help measure their results over time. They work with the coordinator to develop an action plan, covering areas such as dress codes and hiring and performance evaluation.

CCNY, which provides evaluation, analytics, quality



LIBBY MARCH, BUFFALO NEWS

Sydney Flanagan, coordinator for WNY Women's Foundation's All In program, says companies that participate "create a lot of change that affects everybody at an organization, and not those people that just attended that event that day."

improvement, coaching, and training services to nonprofits, completed the All In program, earning its POWER seal. POWER is short for Positioning Our Women for Every Role.

CCNY, a Buffalo-based nonprofit with 35 employees, was already working on promoting diversity, equity and inclusion within its organization. But the company was looking for a way to measure its progress and make impactful changes, said Heidi Milch, the executive director. All In was appealing because of its use of data and metrics – something which CCNY could relate to, she said.

"It gave us a lot more concrete things we could do and look at and measure progress with, versus a theoretical and sort of qualitative approach, which is what we had been doing prior," Milch said.

CCNY worked on strategies including leadership. When

CCNY began the All In program, only 11% of its board members were women; now, the percentage is 45%. And CCNY has women in the roles of president and vice president.

CCNY also made sure it had inclusive policies and procedures. That included having a dedicated space for breastfeeding, using inclusive language, and setting a policy to always first try to purchase from local minority- and women-owned businesses.

The organizations participating in All In meet quarterly as a cohort, for educational sessions on topics such as pay equity and domestic violence policy. Those sessions also allow the members of the cohort to share ideas and experiences with each other.

"It's usually a really good conversation, and it's a safe place to do so, and it really creates a lot of change that affects everybody at an organization, and not those

people that just attended that event that day, which I think is a really unique piece of our program," Flanagan said.

Based on their size, employers pay anywhere from \$3,000 to \$10,000 to participate in All In. Flanagan said the "sweet spot" for All In tends to be smaller to mid-sized organizations that don't have an employee or team already dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion issues.

Milch said the All In program can have lasting effects for employers trying to make headway in DEI.

"I think businesses make better decisions when it's inclusive of others' voices, because without your workforce, your business obviously can't produce or serve what they're supposed to do," she said. "So you need to empower and include everyone, and I think this program helps organizations learn how to do that better."

Exact Partners emerges from merger

Spada Accounting Advisory has merged with Outsourced CFO Partners, creating a newly named firm: Exact Partners.

The combined firm is headquartered at 8463 Sheridan Drive in Amherst, which was the former home of Outsourced CFO Partners.

Exact has about 35 employees, the majority of whom are based in Western New York. For over six months before the merger, the two firms had partnered and offered complementary services to clients.

As a combined firm, Exact will "offer a more comprehensive suite of services across accounting, tax and outsourcing solutions for our business partners," said Dan Spada, an Exact partner.

Exact specializes in serving startups, private equity backed businesses, and franchises looking to scale quickly and efficiently.

NEW YORK HOMEOWNERS:

Do you need a **New Roof and Help** paying for it?

*Any leaking, visible damage, or roof age, may ***qualify** you!*

Do you need **Energy Efficient Windows & Help** paying for it?

*Drafty windows, energy cost too high, you may ***qualify**!*

HELP IS AVAILABLE EVEN IF YOU COULD PAY CASH

YOU MAY *QUALIFY** THROUGH
NEW RELIEF PROGRAMS**



Qualify Today: **716-261-9678**

scan or visit **nyfund.net** to see if you ***qualify**

**Enrollment is only open during a limited time.*

Programs, appointments, and installations are on a first come, first serve basis in your area.

Approved applications will have the work completed by a quality repair crew provided by: HOMEOWNER FUNDING.

Not affiliated with State or Gov Programs. Permit: NY: LTC21-10059780