

LEVERAGE

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HcBI UPDATE

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Q&A WITH ALEXIS STILES

TLN recently interviewed Alexis Stiles, Global Healthcare Practice Leader for Spencer Stuart, an executive search and leadership consulting firm headquartered in Chicago, on how prioritizing diversity in search is changing the mindset of corporate America. page 3



The Fierce Urgency of Now

As the Public Health Emergency wanes (and let's pray that continues), other epidemics that were laid bare by COVID remain untreated.

They are not viruses, but they can be just as lethal. I am talking about systemic racism and its myriad comorbidities, including lack of sustainable income, nutritious food, decent housing and access to good healthcare.

The theme of our recent Executive Women of Color Summit was "Hindsight is 2020." What COVID exposed were, to borrow another phrase we've been using around here a lot lately, problems that had been hiding in plain sight. Problems such as the fact that people of color living in disadvantaged communities don't have the means, the modes and the experience to navigate our complex healthcare system. And when they get care, it is not as good as it is for whites.

I am hopeful that this time, things will be different. Given what we knew before and have relearned these past two years, inaction on health inequities is unconscionable.

The pressure to change may start from mass movements such as Black Lives Matter, but getting change done happens through leadership. [Our research](#) has exposed the stunning lack of representation of Blacks and women in healthcare leadership. We know people with diverse backgrounds bring new perspective to healthcare boards, including a keener sense of the urgency of improving population health for all communities.

We need new research to see if actions taken during and after the Public Health Emergency meet the spirit of promises to make healthcare C-suites and boards look more like the communities they served. Anecdotally, things don't look good. Two of the four Black CEOs leading the largest healthcare organizations in the country recently retired, and no Black women hold the top job. Anywhere.

There are so many qualified minority leaders in healthcare that there is no excuse for that situation. We are making it even easier; TLN in September will launch our [Emerging Leaders](#) program to create a robust pipeline of black, senior executives readied and positioned to lead healthcare organizations. They will make health equity not only a priority but a right.

We are still abuzz here at TLN over the success of our 6th annual Executive Women of Color Summit. How inspirational was it to hear from Jo Ann Jenkins, CEO of AARP, the largest nonprofit in the world? And how good was our panel of "brothers," woke men who understand why healthcare diversity is so important?

We are on the right track. We just need more organizations on board.

Antoinette (Toni) Hardy-Waller

Antoinette Hardy-Waller
Founder and CEO

The Leverage Network
INFLUENCE • EMPOWER • CHANGE
theleveragenetworkinc.com

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

Help change how healthcare is governed and led

As a general member of The Leverage Network (TLN), you are joining a pipeline of talented Black executives and industry leaders dedicated to improving healthcare delivery throughout communities of color.

Join this Exclusive Professional Network

TLN is committed to the professional development of rising, diverse, and qualified talent by providing resources that prepare, position, and promote individual members for healthcare leadership.

Membership in TLN is open to C-level executives, EVPs, SVPs or equivalent, who understand the struggle to eliminate healthcare disparities and enhance organizational performance depends on the successful inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences.

HEALTHCARE BOARD INITIATIVE
Getting a Seat at the Table

The Healthcare Board Initiative (HcBI) is a premier executive development program that enhances Black executives' preparedness for governance roles in the healthcare industry.

The Leverage Network (TLN) utilizes its HcBI program to build a robust pipeline of talented, well-prepared Black executives through the Power of 3 (P3). P3 is a three-part strategy established to prepare executives for board opportunities through training and executive coaching, position them for greater visibility within the industry through access to an influential network of individuals and corporate partners, and promote them for viable healthcare board opportunities.

Seasoned executives will emerge from this six-month experience with a greater number of tools, resources and relationships that they can employ in their governance roles, providing them with active, informed and independent guidance on their board governance journey.

The HcBI program is meant for tenured C-level executives with the title of executive vice president or equivalent who are committed to enhancing organizational performance by ensuring the consideration of diverse perspectives and experiences and advocating for board diversity. Research demonstrates greater performance.

The Curriculum

- ▶ Two full-day in-person sessions
- ▶ Two "top close healthcare and industry thought leaders"
- ▶ Four emerging industry thought leaders
- ▶ "A View from the Corporate Board"
- ▶ Culminating in a panel discussion

First session is \$1,500 annual fee

LEVELING UP!
Time to Diversify Healthcare's C-suite

The Leverage Network (TLN), a national leader in preparing, positioning and promoting Black professionals for service on healthcare governing boards, is now bringing the same approach to the C-suite with its new Emerging Leaders program.

Emerging Leaders, You Got Next

This innovative 6-month program focuses on grooming tenured leaders for executive leadership roles in healthcare organizations. Patterned after TLN's highly successful Healthcare Board Initiative (HcBI), participants gain insights from Black pioneers in healthcare senior leadership into how to leverage opportunities for advancement and avoid the "hiding in plain sight" phenomenon.

TLN uses its proven "P3" approach to prepare emerging leaders for C-Suite positions through training and executive coaching, position them for greater visibility within the industry through access to an influential network of individuals and corporate partners, and promote them for viable C-Suite positions in healthcare.

Research has shown a correlation between healthcare provider diversity and better care for disadvantaged communities. With new awareness of health disparities experienced by communities of color, organizations increasingly seek leaders whose life experiences inform their approach to solving unequal access to quality care. TLN urges healthcare organizations of all kinds to encourage qualified executives to apply for the Emerging Leaders program.

The Curriculum:

- ▶ Two full-day leadership forums with industry experts
- ▶ Two networking events with TLN Healthcare Board Initiative cohorts
- ▶ Webinars tailored to the needs of Emerging Leaders
- ▶ Small-group executive coaching sessions with successful, veteran Black executives

First class is scheduled for Fall 2021. Cost to join is \$750. Program is limited to 25 participants.

JOIN NOW

theleveragenetworkinc.com

GET WITH THE PROGRAM(S)!

Want to accelerate your career through board service and entrée to the C-suite?

Check out our programs and then apply to join.



HcBI UPDATES



CHARLES DESHAZAR, MD

Charles DeShazer, MD, a member of the 2nd cohort of the Healthcare Board Initiative, has been busy of late. He recently left Highmark Inc., where he was chief medical officer, to take on a new post at Google as director of clinician products with oversight of Care Studio – software that organizes complex healthcare information to help clinicians spend more time caring for their patients. He is managing teams in Palo Alto, California, and London, England, building tools to support global health improvement.

Dr. DeShazer also was recently appointed to the board of Adatalem, a leading workforce solutions provider that partners with organizations to proactively address future labor needs and empowers career development with access to world-class academic curriculums, certifications, and training programs across healthcare and financial services industries. (Adatalem is led by Lisa Wardell, the only Black female chairman and CEO in the S&P 400 Index.)

"I am so grateful to have gone through HcBI. The program provided vital signposts on my journey to a board position. The didactic sessions were very insightful and informative, especially regarding how the board search process differs from the job search process. This knowledge allowed me to be better prepared and positioned for opportunities. The networking was also extremely valuable as we had the opportunity to have direct conversations with accomplished leaders in the industry as presenters as well as peers."

– Charles DeShazer, MD



Q&A WITH ALEXIS STILES

TLN recently interviewed Alexis Stiles, Global Healthcare Practice Leader for Spencer Stuart, an

executive search and leadership consulting firm headquartered in Chicago, on how prioritizing diversity in search is changing the mindset of corporate America.

TLN: As one of the leading executive search firms, what drives Spencer Stuart's commitment to promoting diversity and the advancement of Black executives?

Alexis Stiles: Diversity, equity and inclusion are integral to the success of businesses today. Leveraging different perspectives contributes to a more complete understanding of opportunities and issues, fostering better decision-making and competitive advantages. Actively partnering with our clients to help advance their diversity and inclusion objectives, we focus on equity and equality when presenting candidates, with the goal of increasing the representation of historically under-represented and under-resourced groups, such as Blacks for senior leadership roles and corporate boards.

TLN: Why is it particularly important to advocate for diverse representation in senior leadership and governance roles within healthcare organizations?

AS: Systemic racism, implicit bias and interpersonal racism all play a role in perpetuating racial health disparities. Often, minority patients in economically diverse areas are underserved and do not receive the same treatment as white patients, leading to distrust in the healthcare system. Other societal factors such as less access to grocery stores, affordable medications, insurance and more all contribute to health disparities. Racial equity can only be achieved by acknowledging these disparities and confronting them. Having diverse representation in senior leadership and boards is one way to achieve this.

TLN: There have been several organizations that have put forth glossy ad campaigns with iconic TV commercials denouncing racism, discrimination and bias, yet have not gotten their own house in order. TLN's research demonstrate there were only 4 Black CEOs of the largest healthcare companies, now only 2. How do you navigate disconnects like this?

AS: Accountability and authenticity are crucial to making real sustainable change on diversity and inclusion. This type of change starts with leaders taking a close look at their own organizations and being able to identify areas of improvement. As an executive search and leadership

consulting firm we work to identify and cultivate a pipeline of talented emerging leaders. To place and promote more Black leaders they need to be exposed to and presented for the right opportunities to grow, develop and advance. Progress in this area requires advocacy, sponsorship, and mentorship. Spencer Stuart is in the unique position of talking with leaders every day. We present diverse candidate slates to our clients and partner with organizations such as the TLN Emerging Leaders program to help our clients make progress in their own diversity, equity and inclusion journeys. Though these efforts are a step in the right direction, like many organizations, we continue to strive to help improve Black representation in healthcare and hope to see an increase in the number of Black CEOs and board directors in the industry in the coming years.

TLN: Do you believe this culmination of systemic, intergenerational racism has lit larger fires under corporate board and C-level seats to put greater muscle behind their principles and lean into policy, build coalitions, and use their market power — not just their words — to drive change?

AS: We do hope that this is a movement and not a moment. As our society becomes increasingly multi-racial, the business case for having diverse leadership has been made. Organizations with diverse teams consistently outperform organizations with non-diverse teams. As we are seeing companies take steps to improve diversity on their corporate boards and C-suites, much of the drive for change comes from institutional investors and other broader stakeholders. Investors put pressure on companies when it comes to reimagining policies and in turn to build their market power. Broader and societal stakeholders encourage companies to be more vocal and active on diversity issues both internally and externally. As a culmination of these various influences, we are seeing tangible change. Our research into boardroom recruiting for our annual *U.S. Spencer Stuart Board Index* found that the recruitment of Black directors reached a historic high this year. It's up to all of us to ensure that gains in diversity made amid the increased attention to systematic racism continue.

TLN: What is your hope for the Emerging Leaders program and how can it change the dynamic as it relates to increasing diversity at the senior leadership level of healthcare organizations across the country?

AS: We think this program will help cast a wider net for Black talent and create a robust community of Black senior leaders and board-ready executives. We hope to nurture deep, long-term relationships with these leaders because strong relationships lead to the best ideas, more diverse and informed opinions, and positive impact.