

LEVERAGE

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A victory and a defeat are both signs of how hard we must fight on equity and diversity

On April 7, the United States Senate made history, confirming by a 53-47 vote

federal Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black female Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

In hour after agonizing hour of her confirmation hearings, Judge Jackson set the gold standard for patience, courtesy and grace. She reminded us that perseverance, hope and resilience are the “middle names” for many black women executives in America.

In its 233-year history the Supreme Court has weighed in on the most significant issues impacting the lives of all Americans, but it has not represented the diversity of the people in this country. We can only hope that Justice Jackson’s unique background will influence major decisions to ensure equity and justice for all.

As we continue, as a country, to grapple with diversity, equity and justice (or its absence) we have experienced one of many setbacks. Just one week prior to Judge Jackson’s confirmation, a Los Angeles judge ruled unconstitutional a 2020 California law that had mandated that publicly traded companies with an executive office in California have at least one board member from an underrepresented community. California Gov. Gavin Newsom, in signing the bill into law, noted: “When we talk about racial justice, we talk about empowerment, we talk about power and we need to talk about seats at the table.”

Many of us hoped this law would be precedent-setting, spreading state by state, ensuring that more ethnic minorities had seats at the table. Here we are, yet again, defending the obvious, that it’s not just about getting more color in the room it’s about the lives we impact by being in the room.

Antoinette (Toni) Hardy-Waller

Antoinette Hardy-Waller
Founder and CEO



See what all the fuss is about in our new Healthcare Board Initiative video.



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EWOC RETURNS!

The Executive Women of Color Summit (EWOC) is a professional leadership and board governance conference designed to increase the representation of Black women on boards and to enhance their leadership journey. We bring together some of the most dynamic, influential and successful women in healthcare and corporate America to share candid, authentic conversations and lessons learned.

Our theme for this year's summit is "Claiming Our Truth." We use the symbol of Sankofa – a metaphorical symbol of a bird with its head turned to take an egg from its back, which expresses the importance of reaching back to knowledge gained in the past and bringing it into the present in order to make positive change. Our ability to acknowledge and claim our truth opens up a promising path to healing.

Come join us for a powerful, enlightening and healing experience, and claim your truth!

[For more information and to register click here.](#)



Q&A WITH NICK ECONOMAKOS

At our inaugural Emerging Leaders cohort graduation in March, Nicholas Economakos, a trial lawyer with long experience in employment law, now with the Bellows Law Group in Chicago, presented to the next generation of healthcare senior leaders on contract negotiations and getting paid your worth. The following Q&A was conducted by TLN's resident coach for the EL program, Bert Allen, principal at Allen Executive Consulting.

BA: What are common mistakes executives make when negotiating their employment offers?

Nick Economakos: The first mistake is failing to do your homework. You should come to any negotiation knowing what your dream agreement is, setting a precise goal (being able to justify and quantify your demands), and having practiced answering anticipated questions. You should know the extent of your interlocutor's authority and be able to anticipate his or her priorities for this hire. Open your mind and really listen to everything being said. Lastly, set the terms of your departure when negotiating your employment contract terms; it's always better to negotiate during the honeymoon phase and not the divorce. Severance and restrictive covenants are very important to your future.

BA: What are current trends in employment negotiations/employment offers?

NE: Remote work! Make sure you pay attention to the language surrounding where you are allowed to work. Some businesses will continue with a hybrid work from home and office model, whereas others will switch back to 100% in-office. Make sure you negotiate what works for you. Also, if you are required to move, ask about your prospective employer's willingness to pay relocation costs. I am not seeing sign-on bonuses as much these days, but I feel like that is going to change in the near future, as it is difficult for companies to attract talent.

BA: Describe the components of the employment offer/agreement.

NE: First and foremost, what is your title and to whom are you reporting? Second, where are you required to work and are there relocation expenses? Third – everyone's favorite – compensation. You never get a second chance to negotiate your starting base salary. Seek benefits and equity that matches your peers'. If you are leaving anything on the table from your previous job, ask your new company to make you whole.

BA: Describe the differences you have observed in the way men negotiate vs. women; white people vs people of color.

NE: The real difference comes from the interviewer, not the interviewee. Racism and gender discrimination are found in every setting and every interaction. In the interview process, racial bias isn't usually blatant, and yet women and minorities can negotiate the exact same way as white males, but the interviewer perceives they are being more aggressive in their negotiations because they expect them to accept less money. Some women and minorities attempt to counteract this perception by attempting to appear softer in their negotiations. The better approach is to be prepared with facts and statistics to show the value you brought to prior companies, and what you will bring to the company you wish to join.

BA: Anything else?

NE: Good luck in your negotiations. And remember to always consult a lawyer before signing anything!

SIX QUESTIONS FOR BOARDS ON DIVERSITY IN THE CORPORATE RANKS

Claudia Pici Morris, a consultant for SpencerStuart based in New York, and Ann Yerger, a senior adviser to the firm's North American Board Practice, have put together some practical advice for making diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) a true priority of governance boards. The pair interviewed nominating/governance and compensation committee chairs to explore the challenges and best practices around oversight of human capital and DE&I programs, and culled the insights into a very readable, actionable and short article.

We encourage you to [read the full article](#), but here are a few key findings:

- Directors agreed that, as a best practice, the full board should own DE&I oversight, and ideally discuss it at every meeting
- DE&I programs must go beyond recruiting to include retention and talent development
- DE&I employee surveys and focus groups can help the leadership team and board track sentiments and progress on diversity
- Boards should oversee regular talent and organizational reviews to understand the diversity of the leadership pipeline and the inclusiveness of the culture