



Staying the Course on Health Equity Amid Murky DEI Terrain

Desirée Duncan, Vice President of Health Equity & Inclusion, BPD Healthcare

Elleni Almandrez, Vice President of External Affairs, Children's Hospital Association



What we'll cover in today's session

- The Current DEI Backlash and Healthcare Implications
- The Business Case for HEDI
- Examples of Standing Firm on HEDI
- Strategies for Moving Forward
- Learning Objectives
 1. Learn how to continue to make progress on your HEDI efforts despite environmental pressures.
 2. Learn unique strategies and language that will enable you to share your health equity efforts with your community and stakeholders.

With You Today: Desirée Duncan



Desirée Duncan, VP, Health Equity & Inclusion, BPD Healthcare

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Desirée is a versatile strategist and powerful storyteller with an ear for insights from the human experience. With a 15+ year background in content development— PBS series, broadcast production, podcasts, and documentaries including the recent film *Everybody's Work: Healing what hurts us all* supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation—she serves as a lead “showrunner” in her projects, putting the puzzle pieces of various messages, content, assets, and channels together to weave a narrative.

She is also a convener of health equity and inclusive practices, providing counsel to clients and internal teams to address health inequities, create inclusive marketing campaigns, and reach consumers of all lived experiences.

With You Today: Elleni Almandrez



Elleni Almandrez, VP of External Affairs,
Children's Hospital Association

[Elle Link](#)

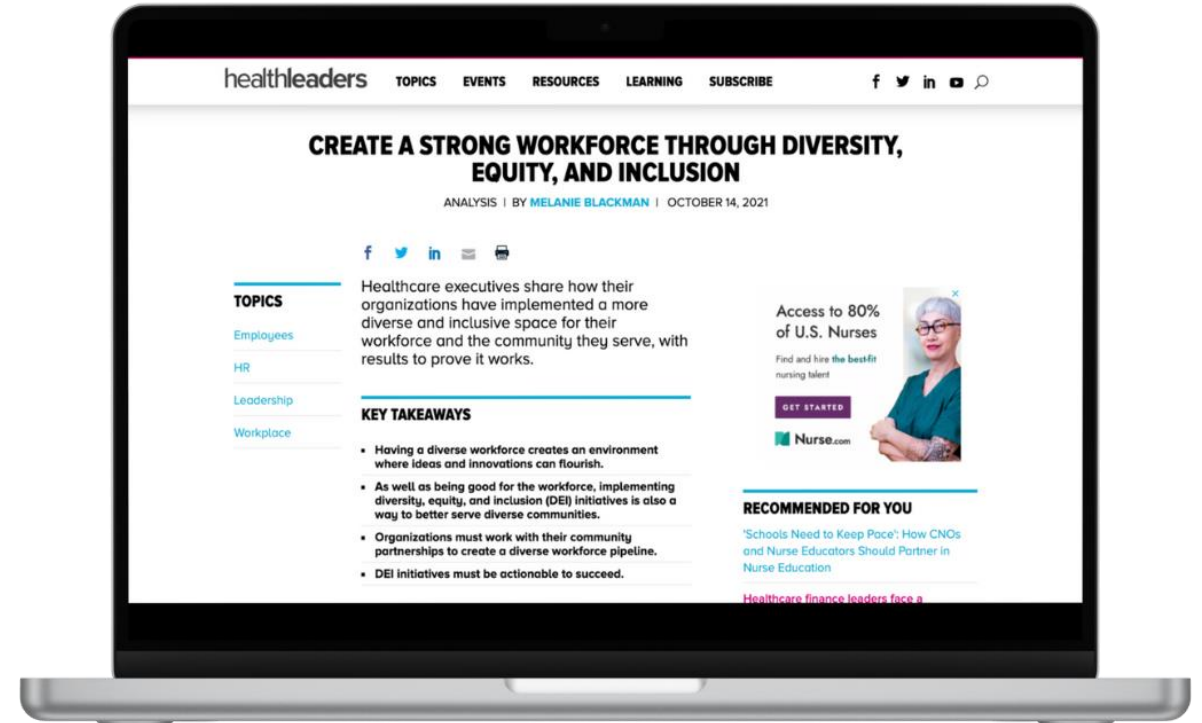
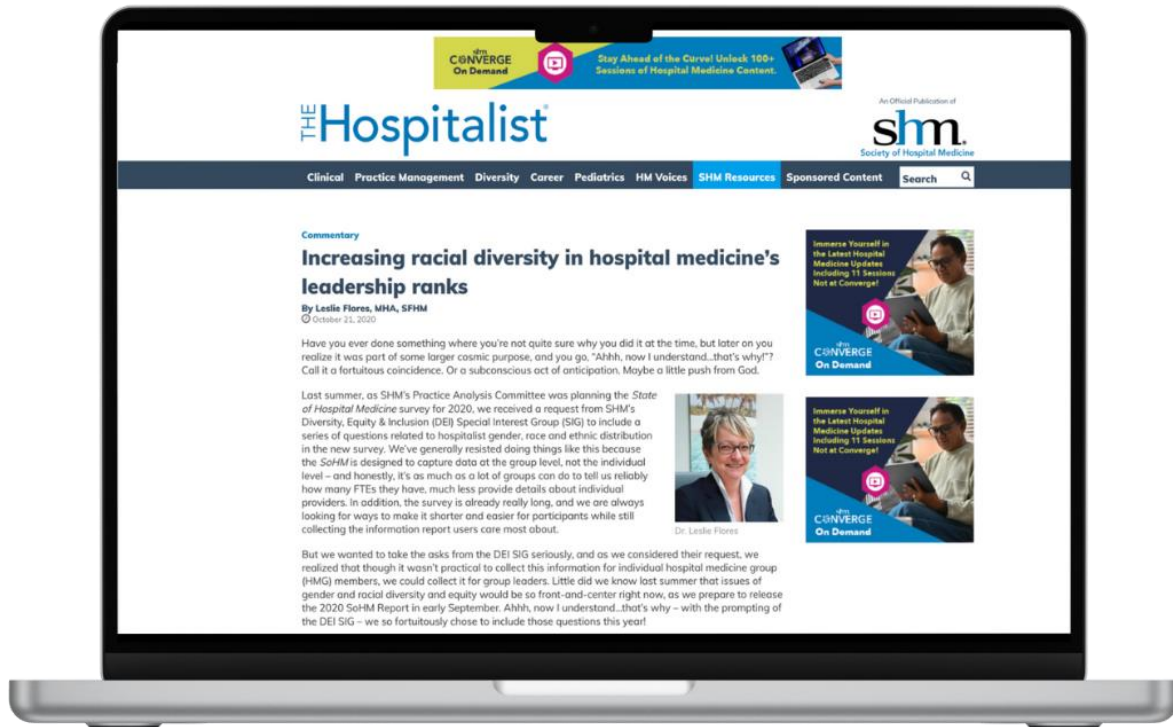


CHILDREN'S
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ASSOCIATION

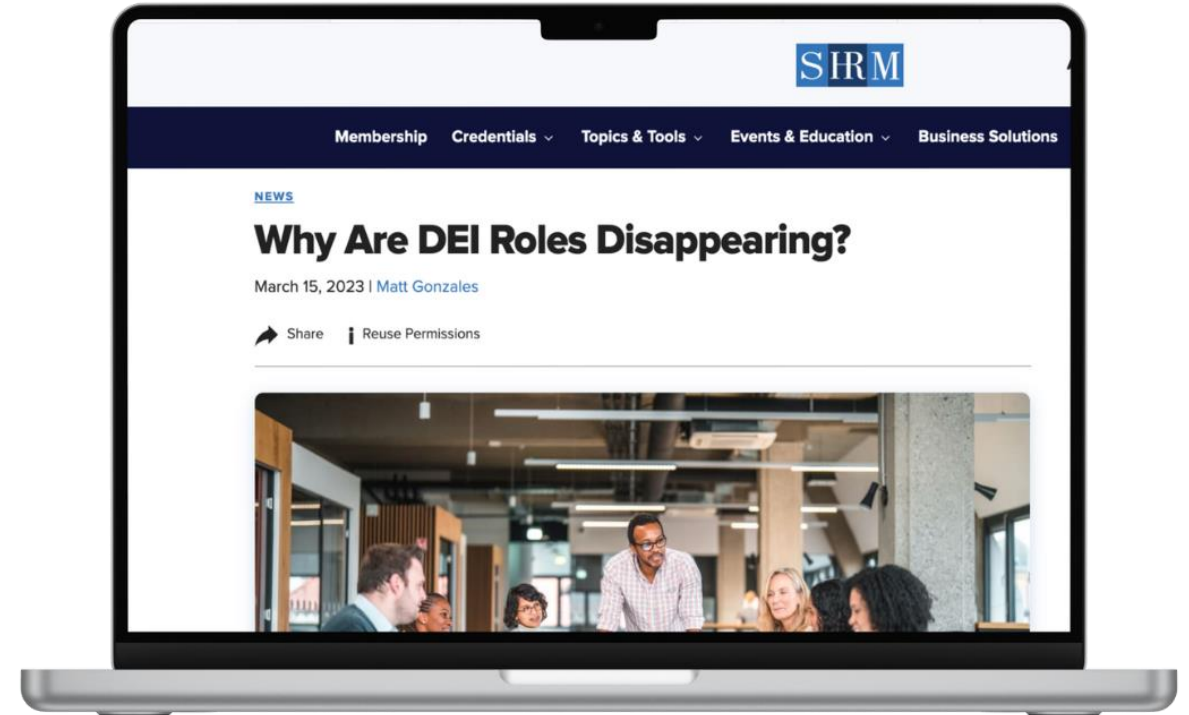
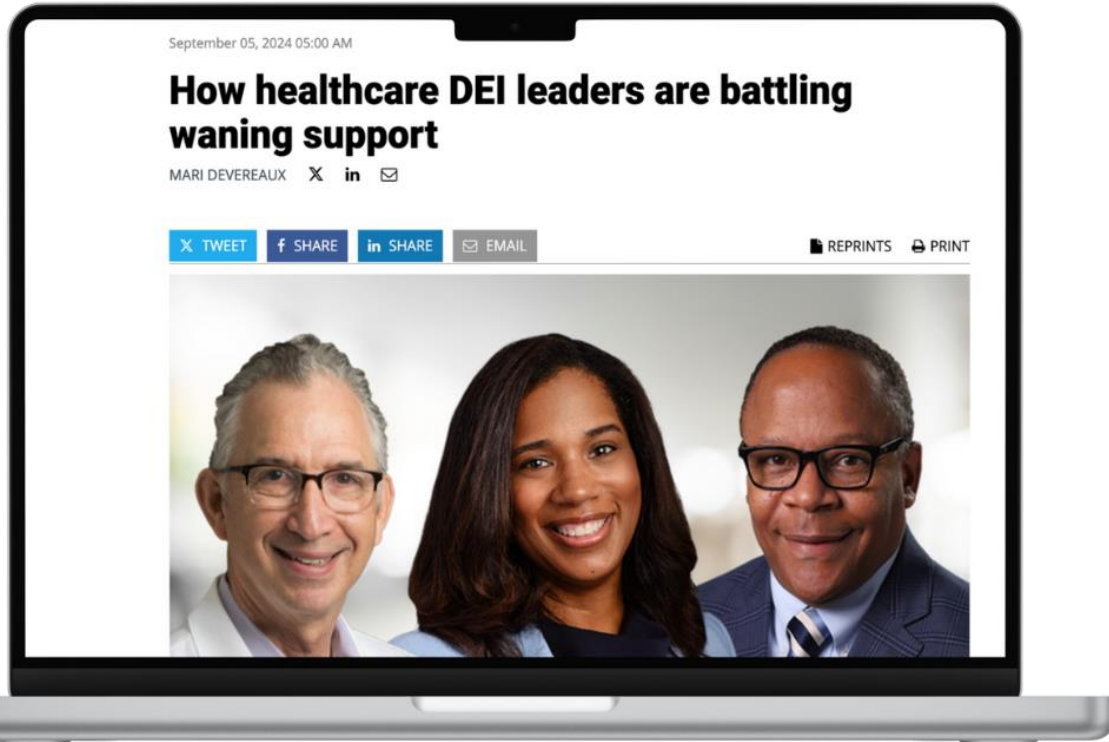
Elleni Almandrez is the VP of External Affairs for CHA where she leads the communications department which includes advocacy, public relations, community health, and social media. Previously, she led advocacy campaigns on recycling and sustainability working with members like Coca-Cola and John Deere. She also worked at a social change PR agency with clients like JNJ, Annie E. Casey Foundation, National Parks, and more. At the start of her career, Elleni was a Finance PAC Consultant, where she worked on political fundraising campaigns for a number of Congressional Black Caucus leaders. A Maryland native, Elleni earned her Masters in Public Relations and Corporate Communications from Georgetown University and a Bachelors in Journalism from Howard University.



2020-2022: DEI & Health Equity on the Rise



2023-2024: DEI Experiencing Backlash



Top News Impacting Healthcare

LAW



Supreme Court guts affirmative action, effectively ending race-conscious admissions

UPDATED JUNE 29, 2023 · 7:52 PM ET ⓘ



Nina Totenberg

NEWSLETTER

On Politics

The New York Times

It's Groundhog Day. It's Anti-Woke Week. It's Messaging Bill Fall.

Lawmakers are forcing each other to take unpopular votes on bills destined to go nowhere.

Anti-‘woke’ backlash forces health industry to adapt DEI efforts

Modern Healthcare

BY KARA HARTNETT

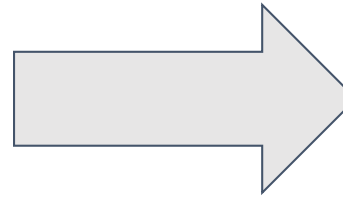
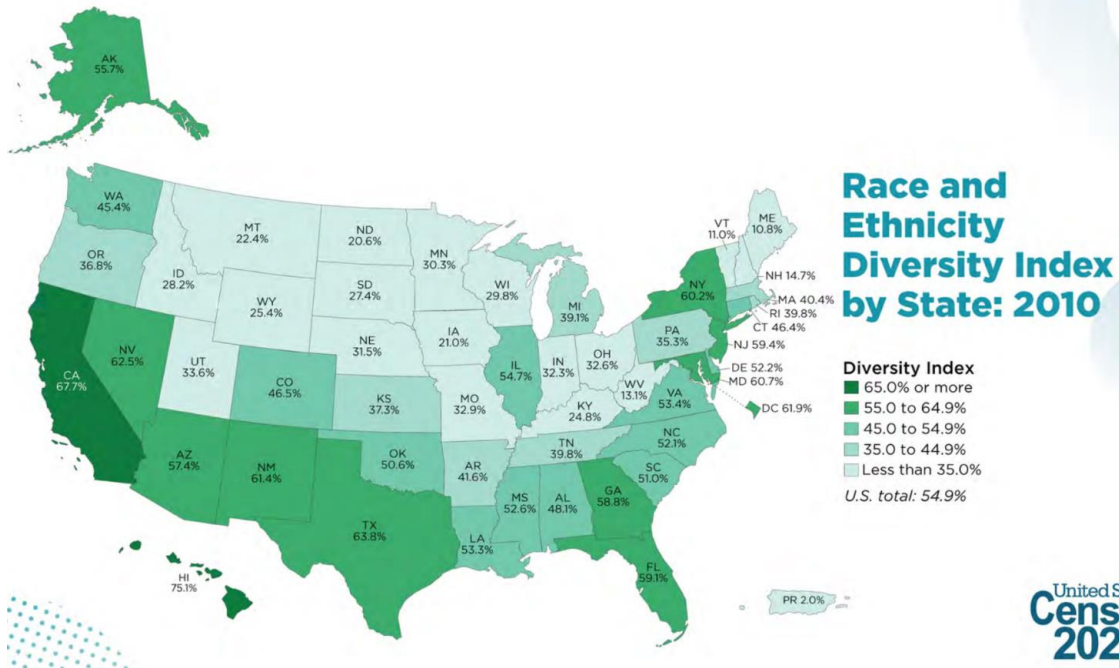
F

ollowing years of investment in diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, the healthcare sector is now grappling with the anti-"woke" movement.

U.S. Race and Ethnicity Diversity Index Growth

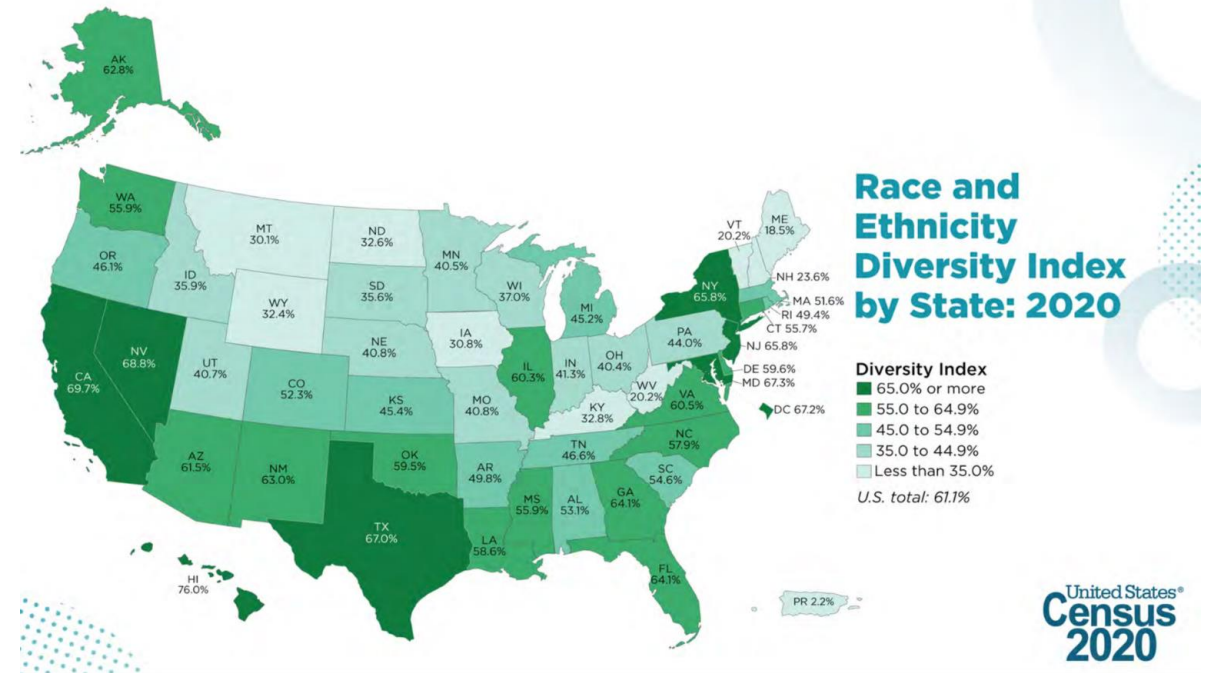
Diversity Index by State: 2010

United States: 54.9%



Diversity Index by State: 2020

United States: 61.1%



United States[®]
Census
2020

United States[®]
Census
2020

The Looming Implications for Healthcare

*The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **define** disparities and inequities in care and practice as **"preventable differences in the burden, disease, injury, violence, or in opportunities to achieve optimal health experienced by socially disadvantaged racial, ethnic, and other population groups and communities."***



Gateway to Health Communication

Health Equity Guiding Principles for Inclusive Communication

[Print](#)

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The Business Case for HEDI



**Employee
Experience**



Innovation



**Patient
Satisfaction**

The Business Case for HEDI

By fostering **better communication and efficiency** through HEDI initiatives, hospitals can not only enhance care delivery but also **reduce costs and improve financial performance**, all while **expanding their patient base**.

Expanded Market Reach

Implementing inclusive care practices helps hospitals connect with diverse patient populations, boosting patient satisfaction and loyalty.

Improved Financial Performance

Focusing on health equity can lower costs by reducing preventable issues, while HEDI initiatives drive patient satisfaction, leading to improved financial performance, higher margins, and increased reimbursements.

Enhanced Reputation

Hospitals recognized for health equity efforts, like [Mount Sinai with the AHA's 2022 Carolyn Boone Lewis Award](#), strengthen their reputation, attract more patients, and enhance financial outcomes.

Adapting HEDI Messaging

Rather than inequality, barriers to health, or systems of factors working against those with economic challenges...

Move away from phrases like:

“Equality/ Equal levels of health”

“Unjust”

“Uniform health”

“Ending disparities”

“Closing the health divide”

“Insured vs. uninsured”



Focus on language that conveys the lack of options, choices, tools, resources, or opportunities in poor neighborhoods.

Opt for language of fairness and choice:

“Fair chance for good health”

“Opportunities for better health choices”

“Giving a fair shot in all communities”

“Enabling people to choose the path best for them”

“Giving tools to make healthy decisions”

“Ensure everyone can afford to see a doctor when they are sick”

Examples of Standing Firm on HEDI





Inclusive Hair Care Options: Sourcing Products for Inpatients

A curly hair program at [Advocate Children's Hospital](#) began as a grassroots effort among staff at its Park Ridge campus who wanted to provide patients with equitable hair care options.

Along the way, the Illinois hospital's journey took an unexpected turn.

Same Family.
Different immune systems.

Your never know who is at risk.



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Healthy, or
immunocompromised?
Impossible to tell.



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The Jefferson sisters' back-to-school checklist:

- ☒ Colored pencils
- ☒ Notebooks
- ☒ New backpack
- ☒ COVID-19 vaccine



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A COVID-19 vaccine
protects more than
just you.



CH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

Armani Jefferson
Healthy

Amaya Jefferson
Immunocompromised



CH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

Back-to-school checklist:

- ☐ Colored pencils
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- ☐ New backpack
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CH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

High-Cost Therapies for Pediatrics



Fast Facts

Pediatric HCTs, including cell and gene therapies, are innovative, potentially curative, and lifesaving or life-altering treatments for children with chronic, rare, and complex conditions. Treatment is most effective before the onset of symptoms or irreversible damage.

>HALF

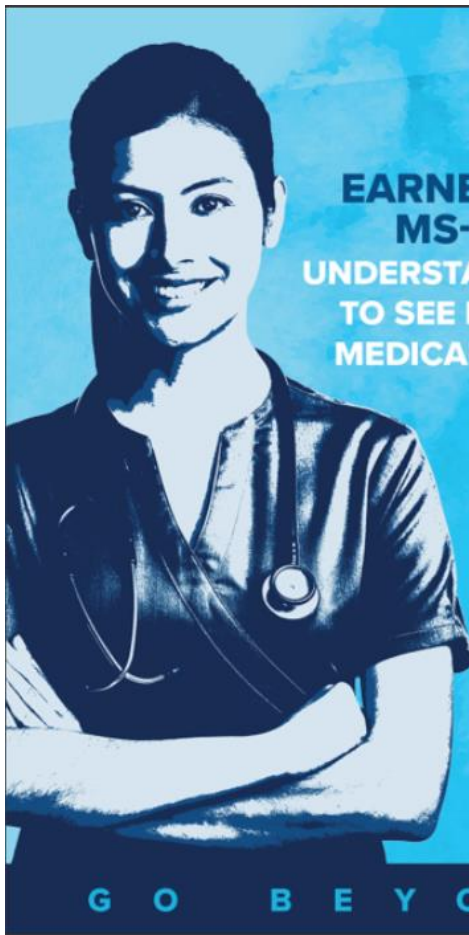
of HCTs approved since 2017 are for children.

Many HCTs cost

>\$1M.



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Kayla Medina goes beyond by constantly thinking about the issues patients face that are unrelated to their medical care. Like if they have running water or whether they can afford their medication. She learned these critical thinking skills and more at UC Davis. Learn how you can grow and go beyond today. For more information, visit nursing.ucdavis.edu.

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EARNED HIS DNP.
BECAME AN INVALUABLE NURSING LEADER.

To Rayne Soriano, being a leader means going beyond bedside nursing to see the bigger system of health care. His experience at UC Davis gave him the courage to lead, to be bold, and to ask the questions he needs to make the best decisions for his patients and his team. Learn how you can grow and go beyond today. For more information, visit nursing.ucdavis.edu.

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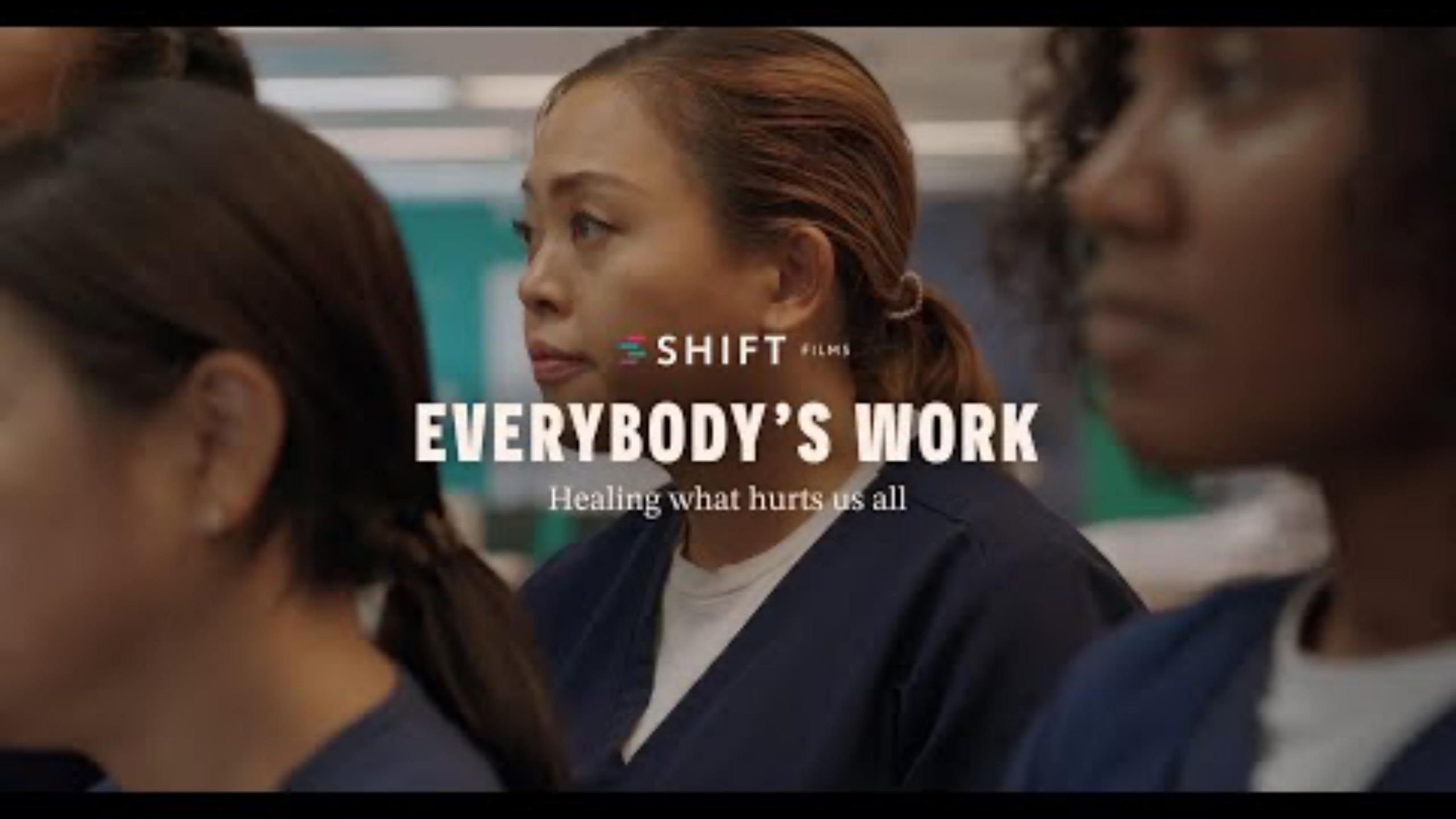


EARNED HER PHD.
LEARNED HOW TO TRANSFORM A COMMUNITY'S HEALTH.

Michelle Camicia realizes going beyond means being able to affect change where it's needed most. UC Davis prepared her to transform health care through nursing leadership. She believes this investment in herself resonates throughout the world and influences what she's now able to do. Learn how you can grow and go beyond today. For more information, visit nursing.ucdavis.edu.

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G O B E Y O N D



 **SHIFT** FILMS

EVERYBODY'S WORK

Healing what hurts us all

The CHA DEI Collaborative



55 members
representing
29 children's hospitals

Seven state associations
are represented in the
collaborative by the 13
children's hospitals

Strategies for Moving Forward



Adapting HEDI Messaging

DON'T USE

Language that focuses on inequality, barriers to health, or systems of factors working against those with economic challenges.

INSTEAD, TRY

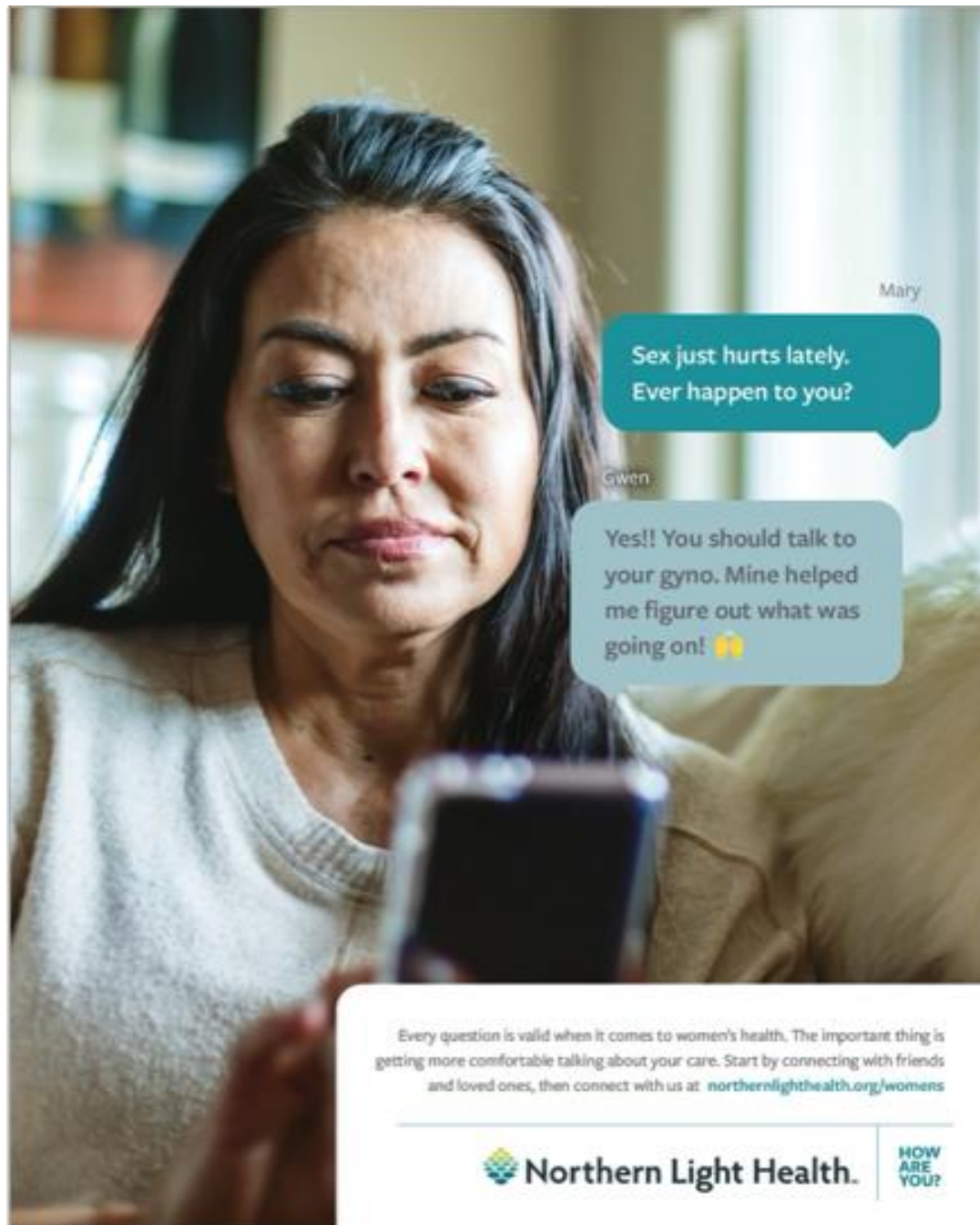
Language that conveys the lack of options, choices, tools, resources, or opportunities in poor neighborhoods.



Tapping into the Culture

Reflecting on Dr. Marcus Collins' book "For the Culture"

- Immerse Yourself in Cultural Understanding
 - Conduct in-depth research on target cultural groups, including their values, norms, and behaviors.
 - Ex. NLH Women's Health
 - Analyze successful cultural marketing campaigns across industries for inspiration
- Craft Authentic, Culturally Resonant Narratives
 - Develop brand stories that align with the cultural values of diverse audiences
 - Use culturally appropriate language, imagery, and references in marketing materials
- Implement Inclusive Marketing Strategies
 - Diversify your team to include members from various cultural backgrounds
 - Regularly assess and adapt your marketing approach based on cultural feedback and demographic shifts in your area.
 - Ex. If there's a growing population in your community, build a relationship with them



Every question is valid when it comes to women's health. The important thing is getting more comfortable talking about your care. Start by connecting with friends and loved ones, then connect with us at northernlighthealth.org/womens

 **Northern Light Health.**

**HOW
ARE
YOU?**

SHSMD

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Engaging Stakeholders

When engaging with stakeholders who may be skeptical on driving HEDI forward, partner with internal health equity leaders to emphasize the financial impact of health systems with better patient-reported experiences perform better financially

- Improved Financial Performance
 - Track and report on the correlation between patient satisfaction scores and profit margins
 - Measure the impact of HEDI on employee retention rates and calculate associated cost savings
 - Analyze market share growth in diverse communities as a result of HEDI efforts
- Enhanced Patient Outcomes and Satisfaction
 - Check on culturally competent care programs and measure their impact on patient satisfaction scores
 - Create targeted health equity initiatives and monitor their effect on reducing health disparities that you can communicate with consumers about.
 - Assess the relationship between improved patient outcomes and reduced readmission rates



Engaging With Communities

- Foster partnerships with community organizations to better understand and address local health disparities.
- Engage with community leaders and cultural experts to gain authentic insights
- Establish partnerships with culturally relevant influencers and organizations to build trust.
 - Ex. Divine Nine Black Greek Orgs
- Highlight successful community engagement initiatives with existing patients and consumers

Takeaways & Action Items

- Takeaways

1. Adapt HEDI Messaging
2. Tap into the Culture
3. Engage with Stakeholders and Communities

- Action Items

1. Join CHA's DEI Collaborative to learn more and get involved on solutions
2. Review the language on your website surrounding HEDI & DEI
3. Talk to your community. Understand what's important to them.



Questions?

Please be sure to complete the session evaluation on the mobile app!

References

- [Inclusive Hair Care Options: Sourcing Products for Inpatients \(childrenshospitals.org\)](https://childrenshospitals.org/inclusive-hair-care-options-sourcing-products-for-inpatients)
- [Hospital's Hijabs Promote Inclusion and Better Medical Outcomes \(childrenshospitals.org\)](https://childrenshospitals.org/hospital-hijabs-promote-inclusion-and-better-medical-outcomes)
- [High-Cost Therapies for Pediatrics \(childrenshospitals.org\)](https://childrenshospitals.org/high-cost-therapies-for-pediatrics)
- [It's Your Choice: Vaccinate With Confidence \(childrenshospitals.org\)](https://childrenshospitals.org/its-your-choice-vaccinate-with-confidence)
- [Northern Light Health Case Study](#)
- [Igniting Greatness: SHIFT - Everybody's Work Pt. 1](#)
- [Igniting Greatness: SHIFT - Everybody's Work Pt. 2](#)