

Roadmap for Action

An Interview with Gary C. Butts, Executive Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Mount Sinai Health System

EDITORS' NOTE Dr. Gary Butts is a visionary leader with decades of experience in designing, developing, and managing diversity, equity and inclusion programs and strategies. Butts is Executive Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, as well as Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, for Mount Sinai Health System. He also is the Dean for Diversity Programs, Policy and Community Affairs for the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Additionally, he holds joint appointments as tenured professor of Pediatrics, Medical Education, and Environmental Medicine and Public Health, and has been an integral member of the senior leadership team at the Icahn School of Medicine since 1998. Recently, Butts led the effort to launch the Diversity Innovation Hub, of which he is Director and a co-founder. Since 2004, he has directed the Center for Multicultural and Community Affairs (CMCA), which has been recognized as a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Center of Excellence for Minority Health. Butts has held regional and national leadership positions with the Association of American Medical Colleges and the Associated Medical Schools of New York, the National Medical Association, among other professional organizations. In 2020, Butts chaired the MSHS Task Force to Address Racism across the health system and is a key lead implementing its strategies.



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Under his tenure, the medical school and health system have been recognized annually by Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED), the Human Rights Campaign for LGBTQ inclusion and quality care and by DiversityInc for the Top 10 Hospitals and Health Systems for 4 consecutive years, achieving #1 ranking in 2017 and 2018. In addition, MSHS has achieved status as Forbes Top 20 employers for Diversity in the nation in 2018 and 2019 and the Diversity Innovation Hub was awarded the Rock Health Diversity Innovations award in 2020.

He has been recognized for his leadership and service by The Network Journal's Top Black Doctors in New York Metro Area on several occasions; by the National Association of Minority Medical Educators with the Distinguished Service to Health Award; by the National Medical Association for Outstanding Leadership and Service; by the National Hispanic Health Foundation for

Leadership for Improving the Health of Hispanic Communities; and by Our Town Thanks You for his work locally in healthcare. In 2015, he was awarded the Jacobi Medallion, one of the highest honors that Mount Sinai bestows. As a Deputy Commissioner for the New York City Department of Health from 1993 to 1998, he directed city-wide maternal and child health services for planning, clinical services and program development, evaluation, health policy, and national public health research for the largest local health department in the United States. Butts completed his premedical studies at Columbia College before attending Cornell Medical College. He completed his clinical training in pediatrics at The Mount Sinai Hospital and has been part of Mount Sinai since 1980.

INSTITUTION BRIEF Mount Sinai Health System (mountsinai.org) encompasses the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and eight hospitals, as well as a large and expanding ambulatory care network. The eight hospitals – Mount Sinai Beth Israel, Mount Sinai Brooklyn, The Mount Sinai Hospital, Mount Sinai Queens, Mount Sinai St. Luke's, Mount Sinai South Nassau, Mount Sinai West, and New York Eye and Ear Infirmary

of Mount Sinai – have a vast geographic footprint throughout the New York metropolitan region. The Mount Sinai Hospital is ranked #14 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report and ranked in the top 20 nationally in eight medical specialties in the 2019-20 Best Hospitals guidebook. The New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai is also ranked nationally in ophthalmology.

What have been the keys to Mount Sinai Health Systems' industry leadership and how do you define the Mount Sinai difference?

Mount Sinai Health System (MSHS) is the largest academic healthcare system in NYC. In addition to our recognized leadership in clinical care, research, education, and innovation, we have been consistently acknowledged for our leadership in DEI. This is in large part due to several key and distinguishing features of our DEI organization and work:

- Our DEI structures are smartly organized and health system-wide with a single person as system Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and medical school Dean for DEI. This allows for a singular focus and uniform DEI strategy and plan for implementation.
- Our DEI work is full-thickness – including all important elements and areas of focus for a health system and medical school DEI.

“The primary driver for our current system-wide DEI strategy is our Mount Sinai Health System Roadmap for Action which includes 11 strategies, over 55 tactics, and a recommended process to advance the work. Most of our MSHS programs and initiatives can be linked to the Roadmap.”

“CNA has a welcoming culture of inclusion. As a company, we are striving for excellence across all aspects of the organization, continually evolving and improving, with a goal of consistently being a top quartile carrier.”

Will you discuss CNA’s commitment to build a diverse and inclusive workforce?

CNA has been committed to DEI for a long time. The company has been focused on DEI education, recruitment, talent development, partnerships, as well as a continued evolution of our policies and benefits with inclusion and equity in mind. All across CNA, we encourage deeper and more open conversations at work, which ultimately helps all employees bring their authentic selves to the workplace each and every day. Also, together as a global organization, we experienced a year-long learning journey on allyship in which we learned about and practiced four specific allyship habits: Explore different perspectives; Diversify your network; Practice engaged listening; Speak up and stand up for others. Now we are institutionalizing allyship through an elevated focus on equity.

As the old adage goes, the proof is in the pudding. In our DEI employee survey, an overwhelming majority of our employees agree that CNA makes DEI a priority, feel they are treated with respect and dignity at work, and agree that the company is headed in the right direction on our DEI efforts.

How important is it to have diverse perspectives and experiences at the table when making business decisions?

It’s been proven time and time again that a team of people with diverse backgrounds,

experiences and perspectives nearly always outperforms a more homogenous team when it comes to problem-solving, creative thinking, idea generation and performance. As the world continues to evolve and business continues to be increasingly global, the importance of having teams of people with diverse perspectives and experiences becomes more and more critical. One example of this is our DEI Council, which is made up of leaders with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences from different business areas of the organization, such as Underwriting Shared Services, Claims, Risk Control, HR, Talent Management, Legal, and Analytics, to name a few.

How is CNA working to attract more diverse candidates to the industry?

CNA clearly understands the importance of attracting diverse candidates to the industry. There are so many career opportunities that need skills from all different backgrounds. We, as an industry, need to do a better job of communicating that to prospective candidates. At CNA, we take accountability, collaborating across the organization instead of making this solely an objective for Talent Acquisition, HR or the DEI Council. The programs we build and the initiatives that we execute are all in support of creating an environment where those with various skill sets, education and diverse

backgrounds can thrive. For example, we work with various nonprofits to educate and expose more people in the diverse communities they serve about the excellent career opportunities that exist in our industry, as well as provide internship and employment opportunities. CNA proudly sponsors and supports participation, including speaker roles, at major events like Out & Equal. And, in partnership with our Veterans Employee Resource Group, our Risk Control organization designed an all-new program to hire veterans into key positions within our Risk Control business, working with organizations like Hiring our Heroes, P3 and Recruit Military.

What do you tell young people about the type or career the insurance industry offers?

There are excellent careers, not just jobs, in the insurance industry – and they exist for people with diverse experiences, backgrounds, education levels, and interests. Roles are expansive from Claims, Operations, Legal, HR, and Accounting to Loss Prevention, and Sales. There are careers if you have a medical background, a law enforcement background, or an education background. There are roles for people with a high school education, Associates degree, Bachelor’s degree, Law degree, and a Master’s degree. It’s a noble and dynamic industry that is critical to business and society. ●

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