

Fostering a Feeling of Connectedness

An Interview with Jolen Anderson, Chief Diversity Officer, Visa

EDITORS' NOTE Jolen Anderson is also Chief Counsel, Employment and Corporate Responsibility. Since joining Visa in 2005, Anderson has developed a broad understanding of the company's business, having held a variety of roles within legal and human resources and demonstrated a commitment and passion for promoting talent with a particular emphasis on diversity and inclusion. Previously, Anderson served as the lead HR Business Partner for the Client Organization in which she served as an advisor to the President and his leadership team on all "people agenda" and HR-related topics.



Jolen Anderson

COMPANY BRIEF Visa Inc. (visa.com) is a world leader in digital payments. Its mission is to connect the world through the most innovative, reliable and secure payment network—enabling individuals, businesses and economies to thrive. Its advanced global processing network, VisaNet, provides secure and reliable payments around the world and is capable of handling more than 65,000 transaction messages a second. The company's relentless focus on innovation is a catalyst for the rapid growth of connected commerce on any device, and a driving force behind the dream of a cashless future for everyone, everywhere. As the world moves from analog to digital, Visa is applying their brand, products, people, network and scale to reshape the future of commerce.

How do you define the role of a Chief Diversity Officer and how do you focus your efforts at Visa?

As Chief Diversity Officer, I support the development and implementation of Visa's Diversity and Inclusion strategy. Together with my team, we lead initiatives to foster an inclusive work culture in which individual differences, experiences and capabilities are valued and contribute to our business success. I also serve as Chief Counsel Employment and Corporate Social Responsibility in which I help provide legal support to the global human resources organization, the Visa Foundation, financial inclusion initiatives, as well as corporate social responsibility and shareholder engagement initiatives.

Our executive committee is responsible for overseeing our diversity and inclusion efforts together with our CEO. At least quarterly, the committee meets to review, recommend and develop opportunities to enhance our diversity and inclusion

initiatives, model diverse and inclusive behaviors and drive accountability for our program and its results. We want to get at the root causes to ensure that our diversity efforts are sustainable.

Would you provide an overview of Visa's diversity and inclusion strategy?

We focus our strategy on redefining what inclusion means here at Visa, and creating an inclusive culture where everyone feels they belong. This includes investing in community action, internal training, employee growth opportunities and events that celebrate our differences.

We united with other companies in signing the Equal Pay Pledge to affirm our company's commitment to close the U.S. gender wage gap.

Our CEO, Al Kelly, joined with more than 150 CEOs to sign the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion, the largest CEO-driven business commitment to advance diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

We offer a Ready to Return program in Silicon Valley to create opportunities for those returning to the workforce after taking an extended period of time away to address family needs.

We instituted unconscious bias training across our offices for all people managers to help identify and eliminate hidden stereotypes and biases and elevate personal awareness. We are also rolling out Inclusive Leadership in-person training workshops to all people managers globally to help build more inclusive leaders.

Through our new Diversity & Inclusion College at Visa University, we provide employees around the world with trainings and resources that will help them become more informed, aware and inclusive teammates and managers.

We continue to invest in our 11 global ERGs (Employee Resource Groups) that support and encourage the professional development of women at Visa and empower connections with others. We continually explore best practices and innovative ways to bolster our initiatives and bring about positive change.

Visa is proud to be among the 500+ partners with Lean In and hosts over twelve Lean In Circles that meet regularly to share, learn and grow together. We're currently working on an expansion plan to make Circles more broadly available across our global offices.

Executive Edge is our flagship global leadership program designed for women leaders at the VP or higher level. The program components include

self-assessment and strengths discovery, leadership coaching, in-person leadership content delivered by external academic partners, exposure to senior leaders, as well as action learning where participants work together to solve critical business issues facing Visa.

Our investment in leadership goes even broader with the introduction of the Talking Cranes platform that offers a unique, customized training for sustained development that enables organizations to move the needle in advancing women in leadership. The goal for program participants is to fully take charge of their professional development.

International Women's Day (IWD), on March 8, marks an annual celebration of the contributions women have made to societies, economies, cultures and politics. We celebrate this globally all month long with dozens of events to encourage women to become leaders in every facet of life, thanks to support from both men and women, and our success has impacted many.

We also celebrate a variety of other celebration moments at Visa, including Black History Month, Asian Pacific Awareness Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, National Disability Awareness Month, National Military Appreciation Month and more.

How ingrained is diversity and inclusion in Visa's culture and values?

Universal acceptance for everyone, everywhere, is the foundation of our company culture. We foster a feeling of connectedness in the workplace, support diversity of background, thought, culture and lifestyle, fight for important initiatives like Equal Pay and actively work to eliminate unconscious biases that hold us all back.

To that end, we are committed to building and growing a culture where employees can make an impact on the world, invest in their career growth and join an inclusive culture.

We are focused on ensuring that Visa is a diverse and inclusive environment where different perspectives are valued, and all of our employees feel comfortable coming to work every day to do their best.

Earlier this year, we introduced a set of leadership principles to drive accountability for the way we act and the way we lead. The leadership principles are integrated into the performance management process, with every employee evaluated not only on their delivery of strategic goals, but also on their demonstration of our leadership principles.

We proudly embrace individual differences and capabilities, recognizing and celebrating accomplishments and talents, regardless of any dimension of diversity, including gender, race or ethnicity. ●