

## America's Department Store

**An Interview with Shawn Outler,  
Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, Macy's, Inc.**

**EDITORS' NOTE** *Shawn Outler has held her current post since October 2018. During her career at Macy's, she has been Executive Vice President Licensed Businesses, Food Services and Multicultural Initiatives; Executive Vice President Licensed Businesses, Pricing and Multicultural Strategy & Operations; Senior Vice President - Lease, Pricing and Multicultural Initiatives; Senior Vice President - Weddings, Gifting Strategy and Multicultural Business Development; Group Vice President - Fashion Forecasting and Operations, Leased Businesses and Multicultural Development; Group Vice President - Multicultural Merchandising and Vendor Development; and Divisional Vice President-Merchandise Manager Better Traditional Sportswear. She has also served as Divisional Vice President - Merchandise Manager Updated Classic Sportswear and Buyer-Better Dresses, Status Denim, Women's Casual Sportswear, Suits, and Leather Outerwear for Lord & Taylor. She received her B.S. in Marketing and Transportation/Distribution from Syracuse University.*



Shawn Outler

**COMPANY BRIEF** *Macy's (macys.com) is one of the nation's premier retailers with fiscal 2018 sales of \$24.97 billion and approximately 130,000 employees. The company operates approximately 680 department stores under the nameplates Macy's and Bloomingdale's, and nearly 190 specialty stores that include Bloomingdale's The Outlet, Bluemercury, and Macy's Backstage. Macy's operates stores in 43 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico, as well as macys.com, bloomingdales.com and bluemercury.com. Bloomingdale's stores in Dubai and Kuwait are operated by Al Tayer Group LLC under license agreements. Macy's corporate offices are located in Cincinnati and New York.*

**How do you define the role of the chief diversity officer and how important is it that the role is engaged with business strategy?**

As Chief Diversity Officer, I have the unique opportunity to shape Macy's culture by fostering a diverse and inclusive environment, developing top talent, and effectively responding to the needs and expectations of our customers. In my role, I also work with our Employee Resource Groups, our Store and Customer Service teams, and the People Leaders throughout the organization to ensure that we are thinking about diversity and inclusion in

the most broad and far-reaching ways – from how we recruit and develop talent and how we treat customers, to how we work with community partners and make each of our 130,000 colleagues feel empowered to contribute to their fullest potential.

At Macy's, we know diversity is a key driver in the long-term success of our business and is critical to our business strategy.

**Will you discuss Macy's diversity and inclusion initiatives?**

At Macy's, diversity and inclusion are essential to our culture and core values. As one of the world's leading retailers for fashion, beauty, and home, we recognize that we are strongest when we are representative of the many communities we serve. We believe that no one should be discriminated against because of their differences, including, but not limited to, age, ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, religion or sexual orientation. Our vision is to be a beacon of diversity and inclusion for our colleagues, customers, and communities. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is embedded in all areas of our business – from our colleagues, suppliers we do business with, community engagements, to our customer experience and marketing. Our differences and experiences drive our innovation, which is the source of our competitive edge and sustainability. Each of our focus areas have specific strategies and we track our progress against KPIs, as we do in every other aspect of our business.

**What is the focus and mission of Macy's Diversity & Inclusion Business Council?**

I serve alongside our CEO, Jeff Gennette, as the Co-Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Business Council, which is a group of cross-functional leaders throughout the organization who ensure our D&I strategy and work are integrated into our overall business practices. The DIBC's mission is to propel Macy's to best-in-class in the D&I space.

**What do you see as the impact of having a diverse and inclusive workforce on business outcomes?**

D&I is so important and so connected to our business success. Studies show that there is a direct correlation between diverse and inclusive workplace environments and strong business outcomes. As America's department store, having a strong group of leaders from diverse backgrounds injects creativity and an innovative vision into our business. We're able to best serve our customers when

our workforce reflects its diversity. Diversity and inclusion are key ingredients in propelling Macy's on its path to growth.

**How critical is diversity and inclusion in attracting talent and how do you engage Macy's employees in its diversity efforts?**

Research shows that companies whose colleagues feel accepted by their employer and peers will be more successful. Employee Resource Groups are an integral piece of our diversity and inclusion practice at Macy's. Our ERGs are strategic business drivers, as they help develop future leaders, foster colleague engagement, build alliances across differences in the workplace, drive innovation, and cultivate an inclusive culture. We are proud to have built a culture of inclusivity and have found it to be one of our strongest attributes in attracting talent. Macy's is a place the best and brightest want to work and stay because they feel nurtured and challenged.

**Are there opportunities for women at senior levels in the industry and what advice do you offer young women interested in retail?**

Across the Macy's, Inc. workforce, women represent more than 70 percent of the company and more than 60 percent of those at or above the manager level. Helping our colleagues thrive and creating rewarding and challenging opportunities at every stage of their career is part of our culture and how we operate. My advice for young career women is to create meaningful alliances that can help you along your journey, always advocate for yourself, and do not put limits on what it is that you can achieve.

**You joined Macy's in 2006 and have held a number of leadership roles within the company. Does it feel as if you have had the opportunity to have a number of different careers within the same company?**

Over the past 13 years at Macy's, I've had several opportunities to meaningfully contribute to our success as we've journeyed on our path to growth. The different roles I've held have been both challenging and exciting and have kept things fresh and new. I recognize that leading several business functions during my tenure has well prepared me to address the needs of our diverse workforce.

In my first months on the job as Chief Diversity Officer, I had an opportunity to attend a few D&I conferences, meet several D&I leaders, and dig into some of the very impressive work being done at home and in the field. I came away inspired and energized by the opportunity to lead Macy's efforts in becoming best-in-class. ●