



The Silent Pandemics in a Post-COVID Workplace

June 23, 2021

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION ON
DISABILITY

 The Institute for
WORKPLACE EQUALITY

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Nikki Alphonse

Nikki Alphonse has over 20 years of human resources experience and in her current role she has responsibility for enterprise-wide Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action planning, government regulatory reporting, Department of Labor Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs Audits, Diversity Non-Financial Metrics and Program trends and gap analytics, as well as in recent years launching Enterprise wide Disability Inclusion, Workplace Accommodations and Accessibility initiatives. She began her career at Northrop Grumman in 1996 as an employment and employee relations representative in Human Resources and has held progressive positions of responsibility within the company at the site level, business area level, shared services level, sector level, and the corporate office and Enterprise levels.

Prior to joining Northrop Grumman, she worked for AlliedSignal Technical Services Corporation (now Honeywell) in HR generalist and labor relations capacities. She has also previously provided EEO/AA services to a variety of government contractors while employed by two nationally recognized labor and employment law firms. A graduate of the University of North Florida with a bachelor's degree in pre-law / criminal justice, she completed her internship at the Jacksonville State Attorney's Office and obtained her master's degree in Human Resource Management from Webster University while working full-time. Ms. Alphonse is a member of Disability:IN focused on Best Practices for People with Disabilities as well as the Jacksonville Industry Liaison Group (JILG) with a focus on Equal Employment and Affirmative Action Equality and partnership with the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.

Diego Gonzales

Diego currently serves as the Senior Director of HR Compliance for Raytheon Technologies (formerly Raytheon and United Technologies), leading the company's equal employment and affirmative action initiatives across several hundred locations in the U.S., as well as providing guidance in HR foundational policies.

Diego's experience includes serving as Director of HR Compliance for the Collins Aerospace division of United Technologies, and several roles across the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs; including policy development, jurisdiction review, and internal audit and training with the OFCCP's National Office, and as the Assistant District Director of the Hartford District Office. Additionally, Diego served as a compliance officer in two regions, and brings a range of insight from the full scope of OFCCP's program operations and enforcement practices.

Kurby Hodges

Kurby Hodges is a diversity, equity and inclusion manager at Northrop Grumman, with a specialty of Strategic Partnerships and Achievement Conferences Manager. She has worked for Northrop Grumman for over 18 years. In this role, she is responsible for managing Northrop Grumman's sponsorship and participation at over nine diverse achievement conferences held annually around the country. She is also responsible for staff operations in developing and managing diversity initiatives at the corporate level. She provides expertise to her customers by understanding their needs and developing programs and initiatives to broaden understanding and awareness on diversity and inclusion. She manages a team that leads projects on behalf of the corporation, such as diversity surveys, award nomination packages, and provides DE&I research to the larger diversity, equity and inclusion team, and much more.

Additionally, she is the DE&I lead for the Enterprise Services and Corporate sector. In this role, she facilitates the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council meetings and leads the sub-groups within the council. She provides DE&I leadership and support to the business groups within the sector and provides expertise on a variety of topics including transition education, self-identification, unconscious bias and much more.

She is also responsible for leading the corporation's bi-annual diversity and inclusion conferences that provide education, awareness and information to the attendees from across the company as well as from our global offices. This two-and-a-half-day conference features subject matter experts, world renowned speakers and leaders from across the corporation who provide knowledge and education on a variety of diversity & inclusion topics.

Prior to this role, she served as the diversity & inclusion specialist for the Technology Services and Information Systems Sectors respectively, where she led the sector's participation at 11 national diversity conferences. She started with Northrop Grumman in 2004 as a Human Resources professional within the Information Systems Sector.

Prior to joining Northrop Grumman, Ms. Hodges managed a multi-practice health care facility in Orlando, FL where she was responsible for a multi-million dollar group of physicians and health care professionals providing services from obstetrics/gynecology; pediatrics; family practice; internal medicine; mental health counseling; x-ray and laboratory and diabetic education.

Ms. Hodges holds a master's degree in Human Resources and Change Management and a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Central Florida. She received her certification of CCDP (Cornell Certified Diversity Practitioner) from Cornell University.

Felicia M. Nurmsen

Felicia M. Nurmsen serves as Managing Director of Employer Services, where her responsibilities include development and delivery of NOD's suite of Professional Services providing consulting to Fortune 100 companies, the Disability Employment Tracker, Corporate Leadership Council program development and NOD's innovative program, Campus to Careers, developing a pipeline of professional-level talent with disabilities for business.

Felicia is a sought-after speaker and subject matter expert on issues regarding the employment of people with disabilities, has addressed audiences at national conferences, corporate forums and higher education institutions, among others and has provided training to thousands of corporate, government and NGO employees. During her tenure with NOD, Felicia has provided consulting services and assisted a number of corporations mount successful disability employment initiatives, such as Footlocker, Toyota, United Nations, Sutter Health, Stanley Black and Decker and many more.

Throughout her career Felicia has served on various boards including the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy Circle of Champions, U.S. Business Leadership Network Corporate Advisory Board, National Association of Colleges and Employers Disability Employment Task Force and been recognized for her work with the Massachusetts Governor's Exemplary Employer Award, National Economic Development Commission of the American Legion Veteran Employer of the year and others.

Previously, Felicia founded her own consulting practice focused on providing services to advance corporate disability inclusion as a pillar of diversity as well as support for the public sector. Prior to founding Inclusive Workforce Strategies, LLC, Felicia was Government Solutions Executive & National Access2Ability Leader for ManpowerGroup where she developed and directed their national disability employment strategy, leading to ManpowerGroup being named a Disability Equality Index "Best Places to Work in the U.S".



NOD

Passionate Expertise

CONSULTANTS WHO CARE

38 Years

INNOVATING DISABILITY SOLUTIONS

Data Driven

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT BEST PRACTICES

National Visibility

YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR SUCCESS

PATHWAYS TO ADVANCE DISABILITY INCLUSION

- **EMPLOYMENT TRACKER**
Free + confidential assessment
- **NOD LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**
Network with peers and learn from experts
- **DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**
Tools + services to advance disability inclusion in the workplace
- **DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY**
Advocating for change
- **SPONSORSHIP**
Support premier programming, while earning brand recognition
- **PHILANTHROPY**
Support innovative disability employment models



t of time so we were able to make
r semesters adding on a month or

CONTEXT: COVID AND DISABILITY



People with disabilities are the most disproportionately affected

- 90% of all COVID hospitalized: underlying conditions (disabilities)
- Social isolation = reduced direct support = nursing homes: 1/3 of all COVID deaths
- Medical rationing based on age + disability or perceived “lower quality of life”



CONTEXT: COVID RECESSION

“COVID Recession” most unequal in modern US History

- Low skill, low wage jobs lost @ 8 X high wage jobs
- Mainly service sector, will be slower to rebound
- “Occupational Segregation:” Filled by BIPOC and PWD
- PWD: Pre-pandemic: 30% labor force participation vs 70%
- Pandemic: LIFO: 1 million PWD’s lost jobs



How many of us are caregivers?



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Caregiver Crisis

- More than 1 in 6 working Americans: The “sandwich generation”
- Disproportionately women
- 70% suffer work-related difficulties due to dual roles.
- 50% perceived harmful consequences to disclosure
- About half (49%) of all employed parents said they “felt like they could not give 100% at work since the outbreak began” and 30% said they needed to reduce their work hours because of child-care demands.



How many of us know someone who had/has covid?



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Long Haulers

- A new category of disability
- COVID-19 patients with continued symptoms long after COVID is gone.
- Affects memory, digestion, severe fatigue, headaches
- We do not know the permanent disabling effects



Why does all this matter now?

1 in 5
has a mental
illness



More than
half
don't receive
treatment





SILENT PANDEMICS

Mental Illness

- Most common of all disabilities: 1 in 5 Americans
- Most stigmatized disability
- Costs US \$210 billion annually in the U.S
- 217 million lost workdays
- Post COVID-19 US Census shows tripling of pre-COVID numbers
- Inexpensive to treat, costly not to



Workplace practices that work

- Flexible work arrangements/hours and Telework
- Paid sick days
- Family leave
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Leadership disclosing and modeling the right behaviors
- Make Mental Health visible

77% feel more productive when working remotely, and 30% feel they've accomplished more in less time. [Flex workers](#) take shorter breaks, fewer sick days, less vacation time.



Companies RTW Considerations

- Safety
- Recall Process
- Employee Benefits
- Compensation
- Remote Work
- Communications
- New Hire Paperwork
- Policy Changes
- Business continuity plans
- Unions

Source: SHRM Back to Work Checklist

Upcoming Corporate Leadership Council Events

Jul 22, 12:30 – 1:30 PM ET

Webinar

Put The New Tracker Scorecard To Work

Aug 12, 12:30 – 1:30 PM ET

Community of Practice: ERG/BRGs

The Value Of Allies For Maximum Impact

Sep 30, 12:30 – 1:30 PM ET

Webinar

2021 NOD Annual Forum:

“Disability Inclusion is the Next Normal”

Nov 30, 12:30 – 1:30 PM ET

Webinar

Accessibility In The 21st Century

An aerial view of a city skyline, likely New York City, with the Empire State Building prominently visible in the center. The image is overlaid with a blue rectangular box containing white text.

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NOD.org

info@nod.org