

Rolf: Welcome to the health disparities podcast, a program of Movement is Life exploring aspects of inclusion, diversity, equity, and allyship in health care. My name is Rolf Taylor, your series producer.

Willis: And my name is Willis Steele. I am a charter executive steering committee member of Movement is Life, whose mission is to address the needs of patients we serve, community in health disparities, around musculoskeletal health, and the vicious cycle of diabetes, obesity, and heart disease that become a challenge for disproportionately, women of color and Latino women. And so, we're happy to address the idea of employee resource groups and how they can impact the life of the people who are in our communities. There can be no doubt that employee resource groups are essential to the work that we do. They are essential to a company's lifeblood, but to what extent are ERGs making a difference? Are they benefiting employees? Are they benefiting the employers, other stakeholders, and other engaged organizations? According to Diversity, Inc., ERG's, originally called workplace affinity groups, began in the 1960s in response to racial tensions in the United States. In 1964, along with the company's black employees, Joseph Wilson, the former CEO of Xerox, came up with the idea in response to the race riots that occurred in Rochester, New York, where Xerox was headquartered.

Employee resource groups are a powerful resource for facilitating discussions and providing networks of professionals based on shared identities, experiences, and allyship. These groups have roots and the desire to advocate for employees and give them a space at work to be their best authentic selves. In the past few decades, companies have expanded ERG topics and begun implementing chapters worldwide. Today, ERGs are integrated into business strategies and imperatives. At my company, where I happened to be the lead for diversity inclusion and belonging for Amgen, Inc for J Pack, the Middle East, and Latin America, Amgen has embraced the ERG philosophy, and this has brought benefits to the diverse groups, which we will explore today with some of the chapter leaders. So, please welcome our group, who I'm going to ask to introduce themselves, starting with Patrick.

Patrick: Thank you, Willis. My name is Patrick Hilton and I'm delighted to be here. My job at Amgen is, I focus on our oncology business in China. So, I helped to make a difference for patients there, by helping to commercialize our oncology assets in this very important market. Now, China is the second-largest pharmaceutical market in the world. And we do this in collaboration with our collaboration partner, Beijing. I also serve as the global vice-chair for the Amgen Black Employee Network. So, with both roles I'm thrilled to be here and to be a part of the discussion.

Willis: Nada.

Nada: My name is Nada Obeid-Asad. I am the executive director in the US Value and Access Organization. I oversee the market access regional team responsible for securing coverage for our Amgen brands across our portfolio in gen med and oncology. I'm also the WE2 Global Chair for Amgen's largest employee resource group focused on the advancement of women.

Willis: And Mr. Edmondson.

Mike: Well, how are you today. Thanks for having me. Okay. So, my day job here, I am actually the commercial lead for our diversity inclusion and belonging efforts, okay, that's global. Also too, I lead our global efforts for training, which we call learning and performance. Also, I lead our team's efforts for global field excellence, which is basically the capabilities of our customer-facing teams that includes our sales, medical service liaisons, as well as our account managers, in regard to their capabilities. With regards to ERG, I'm a former lead of the Amgen global black employee network. And I'm also a member of several ERGs to include one data just mentioned, which is the WE2, as well as also a member of the Amgen veteran, ERG.

Willis: And to round out this wonderful circle of panelists, Jennifer Vasquez, Jennifer being the queen of ERGs. Please introduce yourself.

Jennifer: Thank you, Willis, and I appreciate the opportunity to come and speak on a topic that's very near and dear to my heart personal and professional passion, I am Jennifer Vasquez. I'm with Amgen Global Diversity Inclusion and Belonging. I am the liaison essentially for the 11 ERGs that make up our global ERGs across the enterprise, and I'm so happy to be here. Thank you.

Willis: So, let's dive into this discussion and share some insights with our listeners. One that I left out, I happened to have led our Amgen headquarter black employee network for four and a half years. And it is really throwing me into the life of the people that I work with. And I was so happy to do it and still remained engaged with diversity inclusion and belonging in my current role. But what I like to ask Nada first is, so what do you see as the most important role for your respective ERG for WE2, and can you give an example of how that role has been enacted?

Nada: So, Willis, for WE2, our most important priority is that we empower our Amgen community of women so that they can deliver exceptional results throughout the organization, in the various roles and the responsibilities

that they serve in. We focus on a couple of strategic pillars to be able to offer up that responsibility through WE2 and a focus on our workforce development, a focus on business impact, a focus on our workplace culture, and of course, a focus on community. And just the very specific example around how it is that we make investments and how it is that we prioritize our efforts relative to workforce development through WE2 is by establishing formal development programs and educational workshops for our WE2 members. Many of them benefit from having this opportunity to learn outside of their day-to-day work or from some of the coaching or guidance that they might receive from their direct supervisors. They're able to take on various workshops or educational resources that enhance their professional development, strengthen their leadership development, definitely focus on their career development, but also give them an opportunity to be mentored by many of their colleagues or their peers. It's great to be a part of a network where you can ask questions or learn from your colleagues, and you're not necessarily always having to go back in the business to do that.

Willis: Thank you. Mike, how about you?

Mike: Yes. So, in regard to the Amgen Black Employee Network, better known as ABEN, I would say that really our focus is to provide an environment of inclusion and belonging for our black colleagues here, but also too, in

regard to I guess strategic priorities here that we focused on, from a business point of view, we basically support a number of areas here. One example would be our recent success and collaboration in supporting the launch of our clinical trial diversity team, which is now being run by our R&D organization, which is called RISE, which is something we're very proud of. And it's been recognized as the best practice here within pharma, as far as our three-year strategic plan. Above and beyond that, we've also supported several brand teams in regard to supplying focus groups. As far as looking at HTPs, our healthcare providers and patients with respect to material and so forth. In fact, Willis, you've been a big part of it, yourself, having organized several of those for us. So, thank you for your work with that. I would say also too, another pillar would obviously be the people with respect to recruiting and retention. So, there are numerous efforts that we're actually working on in those areas. Patrick may speak more to that, but we were very focused as far as supporting our talent acquisition teams and our HR professionals with respect to recruiting approaches here, externally, but also internally. We're very proud to have grown our membership here by more than a hundred percent in the past year, as far as internal growth. And externally again, we have some pretty, aggressive plans that we're excited about as far as external recruiting. And so, I'll leave it at that, and I'll probably let Patrick speak to more of that based on some of this hands-on work that he's doing.

Willis: Yes, Patrick, give us a little insight into the recruiting efforts that you have gone along with the Global Amgen Black Employee Network and the company, at large.

Patrick: Yes, I'll be happy to because recruiting is what leaders do. And we focus on identifying top talent that we could bring into the organization. So, areas that we're focused on by doing so is partnering with different organizations, for example, historically black colleges are one group that we partnered with across different functions at Amgen to let them know that Amgen could be a great place where their talent within those institutions could think about from a career standpoint. We also want to make sure that we are driving our business performance on the commercial side. So, we do quite a bit of work with different organizations, National Black MBA for example, is one where we want to continue to grow partnerships to, again identify key talent who may be able to help us in our mission of serving patients. So, what we realize though is that it's not easy, especially as we think about attracting top black and African American talent to this organization. Clearly, there's a lot of good work to be done, and the gratification you could get from the work that we do and our mission to serve patients is very broad. However, we want to make sure when people come here, they have a good understanding of why Amgen is a great place for them to work, and we're continuing to build out those abilities to really get them networked once they're here, spicing

them up with mentors and one area that we are very much focused on as well, is ensuring that each talented person has a specific and focused career development plan in place because putting those together, we realize it helps to enable a different approach to selecting talent. What we want to do is make sure we're building relationships with these key talent across the industry so that they know what jobs are available, but we also want to make sure it's right for them, as well as you think about career options at Amgen. So that does take investment. I know Mike works tirelessly to reach out to many top talents as well, to talk about Amgen, and just to partner with them in hopes that there's an opportunity for us to bring them along but ultimately that's what we're trying to do. We're trying to make a difference for black and African American employees and those in our community who join Amgen because we have a way to go. I won't go through a percentage here, but clearly, as we think about the national representation of black and African Americans, about 13% in the US, we're below that at our company. And we want to make strides to continue to move closer towards full representation with black and African Americans.

Willis: Thank you for that, Patrick, and I really appreciate the perspective that you partner, or you match up in terms of new employees with a mentor when they come aboard because that's important. It's a continuum. It's not just identifying them, but it's nurturing them and developing them, and



retaining them and I think that's a unique way to do it. Jennifer, you support the ERGs at Amgen, so why don't you take a couple of minutes and share with us, how do you create a return on investment or ROI with the employee resource groups for the business, for the company, and for the organizations themselves?

Jennifer: Absolutely. I would say in the past year, we've seen the impact of ERGs, particularly at Amgen, really aligning with our business objectives. We've seen their evolution and I would say more broadly as you mentioned, the historical context, the evolution of going from social networks to now becoming more strategic and critical thought partners. They're definitely in a strong position to create ROI and Mike and Patrick mentioned two very key areas as we think about recruitment and retention under our talent acquisition and talent management, but as we think about our consumers and in this case, our patients at Amgen, the diversity of them, how are we meeting them when our mission is to serve our patients, if we don't have a broad understanding of the challenges particularly just the inequities across the health disparities. And so, what we've been able to garner from our ERG is that thought partnership and leadership resulting in very effective programming that is now being adopted more broadly across the enterprise and has become a business-critical objective. So, I would say our ERGs at Amgen are very mature recognizing that there are various phases of maturity for ERGs once recognizes affinity groups, where it

would be a shared interest and shared identities coming together to build community and it's certainly continuing to be grounded in community. And what is established as now, this strong internal ecosystem, not only around communities and historically underrepresented communities but really around allyship and our ERG community has done a phenomenal job coming together, particularly over the past 15 months of the impact that a lot of these communities have faced. And so, we certainly continue to include them around key areas. I would say more broadly when we think about ROI, I always think about the triple bottom line, which is people, profit, and planning. And it's not necessarily in that sequential order, but we think about, what is the impact in the bottom line and to Mike's point around the RISE program that's allowing us to connect with diverse populations for health equity. It is certainly shaping the way that we develop products, but also how we connect with these populations to meet their health needs. I would say within the HR functions, our ERGs are starting to become much more strategic in nature in terms of being diversity ambassadors but also helping us shape policies and practices, not just with our diversity hiring, but how we're developing our diverse talent. And so, Nada, I'm sure will speak a little bit more to this, but what she had mentioned earlier around the programming is certainly a model around supporting women across the organization globally for professional development opportunities. And we often see them as incubators for these programs. So, we're able to test them to see the effectiveness and refine

them accordingly to see the investments. This all leads to the employee experience and employee engagement, which when we think about ROI, could result in a lower employee turnover rate. It can result in increased employee satisfaction, which we know the outputs of both of that. And so, I would go back to you know, just the overall impact of the collective impact of this group. Lastly, I would say the social as we think about the ESG which is the environment, social and governance, huge reporting mechanisms for companies across the globe. The ERGs really, lends themselves to the S, which is social. A lot of their community engagement and outreach can be measured and often is, and that's an opportunity where we're creating ROI across the organization, not just on the partnerships we're developing, but the work that we're doing around health equities, but then it also can be tied to how we're developing talent around that engagement. Those are some key areas as we think about the broader ROI for ERGs.

Willis: Thank you, Jennifer. That sounds like aside from Amgen, there's a business case in multiple multinational corporations for employee resource groups. So, I appreciate that perspective. I want to go back to Nada and ask, can you share with our listeners how participation in ERGs has personally made you feel both positive and if relevant, negative?

Nada: Yes. So, Willis, it's great to say that it's mostly been positive. I can't begin to tell you just, even from my own experience, participating in an ERG and very specifically, WE2, at the time, as well as ABEN, how many new people I met in the organization throughout various parts of the organization globally, in different functions that I don't necessarily believe I would have met if I had not been a part of an ERG. Many of those colleagues developed into trusted confidants, folks that I could pick up the phone and speak to and ask questions about the business, about my career development, about career aspirations. Also, around what I can do to pay it forward and a new and upcoming talent that I could potentially speak to or mentor. But, also, in this ERG role and the responsibility that I have overseeing WE2, Willis, I can't tell you how motivating it is to speak to women all around the world who benefit and are inspired from a lot of our stories, the stories that they hear by participating and being a part of an ERG. Sometimes, when you listen to a leader in the organization and you kind of understand their career journey, their experiences, maybe the very different path that they took; how motivating that is to others in the organization to potentially do the same; to broaden their scope around where it is that they might want to take their career from listening to that story. And so, from my experience, it's mostly been positive, and it motivates me to continue to be supportive in everything that I'm doing in this role.

Willis: It sounds like diversity inclusion and belonging is real and feeling like you belong makes a world of difference. And I've seen you interact with numerous women from around the globe, and I appreciate the work that I've seen you do because it's motivating to me, too, because you always make yourself available.

I want to shift just for a minute, to a business case. Some of you are aware, Mike, I know you are that the ABEN ATON field chapters work closely with one of our oncology teams to do market research, to feed the development of a website that was specifically focused on African Americans and both a branded and an unbranded site. Mike, if you could, and anyone else who can speak to this looking outward to engagement with other stakeholders, such as our families, our customers, our patients, ERG members, how has your organizational commitment to ERG translated to benefits for our external customers, our external stakeholders, Mike?

Mike: Yes, so I would say, Willis, that to this point, and a couple of different areas here, we have actually had some impact with our external stakeholders. We mentioned earlier the RISE work that was done in clinical trials. And that's kind of multifaceted because we're doing some partnering with some plans for some early stage to build the drugs. But we've actually shared some of our best practices and some of our

approaches with pharma, and that's actually been recognized to share with other companies. So, from an external point of view, that's one example in the clinical trial space. I would also say that Willis, some of the efforts that again, you were involved in with the multiple myeloma work that we did as far as with the micro-sites, which by the way, was an award-winning microsite that you Willis went to New York to represent us to get that award. So, that's stuff that's pretty exciting.

Willis: It was exciting. I got a free chicken dinner.

Mike: Hey, you know what free trips and free food, you can't go wrong with that, man and chicken is never a bad choice. So well-played, sir. But what I will tell you though, is that that's another example, as far as impacting our external customers here as far as patients in the community, church-based patients, as well as being a resource for our providers here, as well as, just getting the word out in general, as far as multiple myeloma. So that's another example. But I would say too that from the ERG perspective, I would like to think that a lot of work that we've done, as far as the community, we provided, the support we provided, a set of positive impacts on our colleagues here as Nada mentioned that I think that transcends the workplace. And when you get that kind of support from various people that you meet with the ERG, it tends to kind of flow out to your families and into your community knowing that support exists and a

model kind of exists for that. So, I would say in response to your question, Willis is probably multifaceted. But I do think, that being said, I think that the biggest opportunity is still in front of us, as far as the impact that we can make. I think that we're just really starting to get a feel for what we can do as far as the business goes. I think that ultimately, the goal is for diversity inclusion, and I think through ERGs is a great vehicle for it to happen. You know, it should be a part of how we just do normal business there. One day, there won't be a need, ultimately, for ERGs because, basically, people will be allowed to be their authentic selves there and do more of a natural process. But I think ERGs is a great vehicle to move towards that direction.

Willis: I love the fact that some of the work Amgen ERGs have done has impacted the patients that you serve. I think that's vital. Patrick, you're a marketer. How do you think your ERGs are viewed more widely in the organization? Is it seen as an essential mainstream activity? Do you think people who are involved with ERGs understand what they're all about and the value that they bring?

Patrick: Well, let me just be clear on one thing, and one thing we continue to reinforce throughout the organization, because there's a tremendous amount of data that supports this, and that's this, diversity is good for business. And why that is important, as I think about the commercial

organization is that I challenge and envision our ERGs and specifically I can speak for ABEN to be a catalyst for commercial performance. And I think strategically as Amgen is looking at this opportunity, as Mike mentioned about RISE, for example, excellence in clinical trials, enrolling diverse patients, is critical because not only the enrollment of diverse patients is critical to helping us to live our mission of serving patients, but it also allows us as marketers to talk about those patients when we go into healthcare providers offices, or we have different channels of communicating to our customers to help them to understand what to expect in a certain population when an Amgen product is being used.

Now, if we could do that and be able to talk about subpopulation data within our marketing materials and tools, not only this would be very important for the patients to identify, but I think it's also a very critical capability under Mike's leadership that Amgen is building out and is really taking seriously. So, for example, Mike mentioned your leadership and what you started with the multiple myeloma teams. I'm glad to say that continues today. So, we are continuing to learn and refine because culture is not easy. And what we bring to the table is helping Amgen and some of the marketers understand the culture of the communities we serve and how best to tailor their marketing resources and tools towards these opportunities. We're also working with the psoriasis team with Otezla. We



hope to embark on a community engagement opportunity with the Lumakras team around non-small cell lung cancer and also bone health.

So, as we think about the different opportunities, our goal is to help patients to gain more access to health care, help patients to get the education and the tools and resources that are needed, so they can know all that's available to them as they are fighting against their disease. So, that's an important role that we get to all play at Amgen, but a specific role our ERGs get to play as we tailor and focus and overcome, sometimes some of those cultural barriers that may limit our ability to make an impact and to help patients live longer.

Willis: I love that. Thank you, Patrick, customizing tailoring makes the difference in all that we do in the patients that we serve. Listen, this has been amazing. I love the spirit of all that you have shared with us. And I'm going to ask each of you starting with Mike to give us just one jewel that you would leave our listeners with something that you see as invaluable to continuing to stress the value of ERGs in the workplace and in organizations at large.

Mike: I would just say this, here. It's not rocket science. I would say basically, don't just sign up to be a member. I would say, be involved because one person can make a huge difference and kind of keeping it right there, I've

seen one person's effort just multiply numerous times here, have a huge domino effect and impact on your organization. So don't think that your voice can't matter. It can. And if you had that passion burning aside to make a difference, I think ERGs are great platforms to make that difference.

Willis: Nada.

Nada: You know, I truly believe that ERGs are a resource and give a competitive advantage to companies that have ERGs and support them because they attract and retain talent. You know, I think many of us realize that there is absolutely a war on talent and one of the critical areas of value with up and coming, talent or the younger generation, I would say, or any generation, is their interest and their desire to learn what companies actually do to invest in ERGs. They want to be a part of these networks. They want to be a part of something a little bit broader beyond the organization or the day-to-day responsibilities. And so, I think that it's definitely a competitive advantage when they are well supported and well-rooted, and appropriately utilized in a company.

Willis: Thank you so much, Nada. I'm going to go to Patrick and then Jennifer, when you give us your jewel, please add, if you can, any resources that

our listeners can go to in terms of best practices around employee resource groups.

Patrick: Thanks, Willis. I'll allow Jennifer to share the resources since she could talk more broadly across all the ERGs. When we are judgmental, we narrow down our world and worldview. And what I mean by that is oftentimes we judge people by what we see, and we believe based on those judgments, that people are a certain way and act, and perform or behave in a certain way. And that's completely false. And when you engage upon an ERG, especially if you think about ABEN, there's tremendous diversity and the black and African American population, both political choice in all areas. So, it opens up my eyes to see the difference and to appreciate those differences. And that's also the same if I would join another ERG, such as PRIDE, Triple-A, focused on Asian issues. I need to put my judgments at the door so I can be mindful and listen and learn. So, I think that's the opportunity. Let's not be judgmental, so we can open up our worldview and learn more from one another.

Willis: Thank you, Patrick. Jennifer, you have the last word, and I will thank you all in advance for such a great sharing. Jennifer, the floor is yours.

Jennifer: Thank you. I would just leave with the thought of ERGs being change agents within your organization. How you leverage them can be really

transformative and understanding that companies are in different parts of their journey. What Amgen has experienced again in the past 15 months of the ERG community has been nothing short of amazing. And so, it really speaks to the volume of when you elevate and resource the ERGs and really prioritize them as part of your business objectives, they really can transform the diversity and inclusion efforts. So, there's just a great deal of effort that's happening on the ground, and how you elevate that is really critical to your diversity inclusion efforts. So, really hone in on these, as resources. I would say for additional resources, for those that are getting started in the journey, there's obviously an increase of an appetite for diversity inclusion starting with the ERGs. But for those that are either in the early stages or are trying to group their ERGs, there's a number of resources. I would start with the Society for Human Resources Management. It really goes into not only the research but has some case studies around best practices over the years that have transpired. I would also leverage your HR, start having that dialogue, connect with others that you have that shared identity or interests. For me, the listening really starts at that grassroots because that's where you get the understanding of what the challenges are and how you start building momentum around that and having that important discourse within that group, but also elevating it to management and getting the support from human resources as well as if you have any DIMD leads or diversity and inclusion leads.

Willis: Thank you again, Jennifer. Thank you, Patrick. Thank you, Nada. Thank you, Mike and we are so grateful to Movement is Life for hosting us and look forward to a great, great engagement at another time. You all have a great rest of the day and many thanks to our listeners for tuning in to Movement is Life Healthcare Disparities Podcasts.

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