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BUSINESS

KC CHAMBER DIGITAL MAGAZINE



**CPKC STADIUM
OPENING DAY**
KC Current
Makes History



**GETTING
WORLD CUP
READY**



DEI MASTERY
New Program,
New Partnership

BUSINESSES BUILD LEADERSHIP CAPACITY THROUGH DEI MASTERY PROGRAM



The DEI Mastery & Capstone Program, the result of a partnership between Authenticity and the KC Chamber, got off to a brisk start on March 27.

When likeminded people come together to talk about a shared vision, you never know where those conversations will take you. Five years ago, the KC Chamber's Vice President of Diversity Equity and Inclusion Greg Valdovino discussed his hopes of creating a DEI certificate program with Dr. Andrea Hendricks who is a respected leader in that educational space. A few years later, when Dr. Hendricks joined Authenticity, a national full-service, multicultural marketing agency, the two renewed their conversation. The goal was to create an opportunity for deeper learning that pushed instruction beyond the entry level perspective. Valdovino and Hendricks envisioned doing more than

replicating other certification programs - they wanted to incorporate higher level academic learning with real world applications using a capstone project.

Together, Authenticity and the Chamber partnered with Dr. Shirley Davis, president of SDS Global Enterprises, to launch "Strategies for Promoting and Fostering a World-Class Culture of Inclusion," a 16-month DEI certificate of mastery and capstone program. The first cohort begins its in depth learning in March 2024. The blended learning experience offers participants the latest research, thought leadership, meaningful solutions, and applicable strategies for resolving real organizational struggles in the diversity, equity and inclusion,

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and human relations space.

“The hope I have for our participants is that they will all strengthen the personal and organizational DEI competencies necessary for leading across differing perspectives, broadening understanding of the positive impact DEI initiatives have on business, workforce, workplace and marketplace challenges,” said Hendricks. “We want to lift up people and organizations across the region, helping them move faster in embedding diversity, equity and inclusion in everything we do.”

A critical aspect of the program is building capacity for DEI leaders and Human Resources professionals. The program will create a deeper knowledge base as program participants return to work ready to help educate key stakeholders on the importance of holistic DEI strategies, particularly as our communities continue to diversify.

“Demographics are changing throughout our region and certainly throughout the nation,” shared Valdovino. “For companies to have a competitive edge, they must implement DEI initiatives and foster cultures of belonging. As we look to the future, diverse

environments that are inclusive of all perspectives and that create a true sense of belonging will be key to recruiting and retaining high-quality employees.”

Supporting inclusive work environments that honor diverse perspectives and foster economic growth, workforce development and innovative business practices throughout the region has long been a priority of the KC Chamber as part of the inclusive prosperity pillar in the organizational strategic plan. Whether it is through the Allyship series, the Power of Diversity Breakfast and the Champions of Diversity Awards, Welcoming KC initiatives or partnering on this DEI mastery program, the focus is on helping businesses thrive as they embrace a broad range of perspectives and create cultures of belonging for employees. Preparing leaders to sustain comprehensive cultural transformations takes time and intentionality.

As Dr. Hendricks notes, “We grow up in a fast lane, fast food society. Most of us are looking for a quick fix. We do not want to take the time to immerse and invest in learning on how we have been conditioned for the ‘one and done’ programs and the check the box experience. This program is not for those who simply want to check a box. Instead, this is a time commitment that requires dedication to a blended learning experience. This is learning that matters and will make a difference throughout the community.”

If this program sounds like the high-quality learning experience you want leaders in your organization to experience, you can learn more about Authentico at weareauthentico.com. For a deeper conversation about the sustained benefits that DEI Certificate of Mastery and Capstone Program can have on your company, please email valdovino@kcchamber.com. ▾

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Greg Valdovino
VP of DEI, KC Chamber



DEI CERTIFICATE OF MASTERY & CAPSTONE PROGRAM

Are you a Kansas City area professional looking for a deep learning opportunity specifically focused on diversity, equity and inclusion? If so, we have a great new program! The KC Chamber is partnering with Authentico, a national full-service, multicultural marketing agency with a diversity, equity, and inclusion practice, to promote its DEI Certificate of Mastery & Capstone Program.



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