

Cooperation, Compassion and Innovation

An Interview with **Le Joyce Naylor**,
Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Cleveland Clinic

EDITORS' NOTE *Le Joyce Naylor champions the goal of fostering an inclusive and culturally competent work environment to better serve patients, caregivers and underserved communities. These efforts have resulted in Cleveland Clinic being recognized as a DiversityInc Top Hospital and Health System for ten consecutive years, most notably ranking #1 in 2019. Naylor previously served as Cleveland Clinic's Division Administrator for Human Resources. Prior to joining Cleveland Clinic, she held various leadership positions in human resources, corporate administration, public relations and consulting services. She holds a master's in human resources from Cleveland State University, a Diversity Management Certificate from Cornell University, and is a Cornell Certified Diversity Professional/Advanced Practitioner. She serves on the National Center for Healthcare Leadership's Diversity & Inclusion Council, Cleveland Medical Association Advisory Board, Celebrate Sisterhood Executive Committee, Member Engagement Committee for the Commission on Economic Inclusion, and the Board of Directors for the American Sickle Cell Anemia Association.*



Le Joyce Naylor

How do you define the role of the chief diversity and inclusion officer and how do you focus your efforts?

In the broadest sense, we look at how we can foster an environment of inclusion for a healthcare system while remaining culturally competent to serve patients, caregivers, and the community.

If you truly want diversity and inclusion to be embedded in every process and every system, you have to take the time to find those integration points and design it in a very collaborative fashion.

While I may identify best practices and trends, we bring many other leaders into the conversation to define the strategy for the system and to identify the metrics and outcomes.

Are diversity and inclusion interrelated?

Diversity and inclusion are often considered to be one concept. They are really two separate areas, and we have to look at both.

Diversity needs to be looked at from the very extensive sense. It requires that we understand that individuals are unique and recognize the whole range of human difference. With all of the changing demographics, diversity is already here and is not something we are going to change. We are going to continue to become more diverse as a nation.

Inclusion is the key, because inclusion is centered around intention. It is discovering how to create a welcoming environment where those of diverse backgrounds can thrive and succeed. This requires strategy that is built with intent in mind because inclusion doesn't happen just because you have diversity; you really have to work on it. Leaders need to identify how to invite others to the table so we can tap into their knowledge, life experiences, and diverse perspectives.

Does recruiting the best and the brightest talent ensure a certain level of diversity?

We absolutely look to hire the best and brightest and we know that they can be found in a very diverse pool. We built strong relationships with professional organizations. We have relationships with colleges and universities – especially some of our historical black and Hispanic serving colleges and universities – to ensure we have that pipeline full of diverse talent.

Is it important to build employee groups to foster a level of comfort and inclusion?

Absolutely – we have 11 employee resource groups and 19 diversity councils at Cleveland Clinic. Caregivers have shared that one of the reasons why they came to Cleveland Clinic is that they could

connect with all of our employee resource groups and diversity councils. They felt that they would be able to immediately join them and begin a dialog that enhanced their sense of belonging and their ability to contribute to accomplishing our vision.

Our employee resource groups work system-wide to help engage and onboard our caregivers, and they also enhance the understanding of our business plans and the strategies of Cleveland Clinic and how we can best use our collective knowledge to impact those strategies.

How important is community involvement to Cleveland Clinic?

Community involvement is a vital part of how we impact and improve the communities where we provide services and where our caregivers reside. As a non-profit organization, Cleveland Clinic provides more than \$906 million worth of value to our community. Our outreach into the community includes a broad spectrum of investments into non-profit organizations and community resource centers, engaging thousands of local residents daily and increasing access to healthcare. It also includes programming such as our "Healthy Community Initiative" which helps community members learn how to improve their health. Additionally, our community outreach includes a variety of programming and support that is tied to economic development and workforce initiatives. We work with non-profit organizations such as College Now Greater Cleveland, the Urban League of Greater Cleveland, Towards Employment and Youth Opportunities Unlimited and provide an array of workforce initiatives and internship programs with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Cleveland is in our name, so we have a responsibility being here. We are very proactive in identifying community opportunities to engage in and other areas where we can have impact and partnerships.

How important is C-Suite support in Cleveland Clinic's diversity and inclusion efforts?

It's extremely important. Our CEO, Tom Mihaljevic, M.D., expresses the importance of diversity and inclusion. He and our leadership team fully support the work we are doing in major areas such as workforce, cultural competency, unconscious bias training, health equity, and economic empowerment.

In order to be successful, we recognize that this work belongs to everyone. While we have an office of diversity and inclusion where we help to set the strategy, the overall implementation and integration lies within every institute, every division, and every caregiver. ●

INSTITUTION BRIEF *Based in Cleveland, Ohio, Cleveland Clinic (my.clevelandclinic.org) is a non-profit multispecialty academic medical center that integrates clinical and hospital care with research and education. It was founded in 1921 by four renowned physicians with a vision of providing outstanding patient care based upon the principles of cooperation, compassion and innovation. Cleveland Clinic has pioneered many medical breakthroughs, including coronary artery bypass surgery and the first face transplant in the United States. U.S. News & World Report consistently names Cleveland Clinic as one of the nation's best hospitals in its annual "America's Best Hospitals" survey. Cleveland Clinic has approximately 66,000 caregivers including more than 4,200 full-time salaried physicians and researchers and 16,000 nurses who represent 120 medical specialties and subspecialties. The Cleveland Clinic Health System includes a main campus near downtown Cleveland and more than 180 northern Ohio outpatient locations, including 18 full-service Family Health Centers and three health and wellness centers as well as locations in southeast Florida, Las Vegas, Canada, Abu Dhabi and London.*