

Working Together to Achieve the Dream

When women are empowered to fully participate in society and have equal access to opportunities, it improves the quality of life for them, their families and their communities. As BlackHistoryMonth 2022 comes to a close, we want to reinforce how crucial it is for communities to support and uplift one another as we work to achieve individual and collective dreams. Along with advancing racial equality, working together to advance gender equality, especially within the Black community, is an ongoing and multifaceted effort.

At AT&T, our value to *Stand for Equality* is reflected in our work year-round, driving tangible change and opening doors for women in the Black community. Achieving equality for Black women requires providing young girls with vital educational resources; ensuring young professionals have access to necessary tools and opportunities; investing in women-owned businesses and careers; and advocating for women's advancement in male-dominated industries. Through our internal and external programs, we are listening to women and investing in their ambitions, be it at AT&T or within their neighborhoods.

The work driven by women leaders at AT&T is instrumental in helping people achieve their dreams and will continue to strengthen Black futures for generation. **Exa Whiteman**, vice president of service delivery, is paving the way in a technical and operational role, having overcome obstacles and stereotypes throughout her career:



“I’ve worked at AT&T for over 20 years and have held many different roles. In addition to performing the job at hand, I’ve also had many opportunities to be a mentor and a mentee – both experiences have shaped my professional and personal growth. I strongly believe that the only way we are going to make progress in diversity and equality is for all of us to be champions and make way for people of color at all levels. As a company, we understand that investing and nurturing talent is crucial for our success, but intentionality is key.”

Opening the door to opportunities is just the first step. Ensuring talent retention and advancement for young Black professionals is crucial to a journey towards success. **Michelle Jordan**, Vice President of Leader Lab, has proven the benefits of providing access to economic empowerment opportunities. Michelle, on how Leader Lab has created a ripple effect throughout communities:



“I don’t take lightly the role I have in connecting and investing in future Black leaders. At AT&T, we know the importance of connection – connecting with each other, with what people need to thrive in their everyday lives, and with the stories and experiences that matter. I’m able to leverage this powerful network to implement professional development programming that influences future AT&T leaders, including providing enrichment and engagement opportunities to rising Black leaders across our company and efforts like the [HBCU Future Leaders Program](#), a multi-year mentoring and workforce readiness initiative for HBCU students.”

The inclusive environment cultivated at AT&T is a result of intentional investments within the company and in the communities we serve. **Cassandra Lee**, Senior Vice President and Chief Audit Executive, has been a role model in using her platforms to uplift Black suppliers and drive economic empowerment to local communities across the nation:



“I’m proud to be part of a company that is committed to championing equality and supporting the Black community. I understand the importance of entrepreneurship and community-based businesses, and how these can help drive economic growth. As part of its commitment to economic empowerment, AT&T has spent more than \$3.1 billion with Black-owned suppliers in the last 2 years – our largest investment since we launched our supplier diversity efforts.”

AT&T will continue our commitments and investments beyond the end of February, creating lasting and meaningful touchpoints in Black communities. Just remember: Your dreams help us imagine what better world we can live in and keeping them alive and helping them come to life is part of how AT&T lives out our company values. Looking ahead to Women’s History Month, our women leaders at AT&T will continue empowering other women and inspiring us all.