

*Blazing new trails to...***ENSURE THE FUTURE
OF SCIENCE IS MORE
DIVERSE, MORE
INCLUSIVE, AND
MORE EQUITABLE****Quita Highsmith****TITLE:** VP and Chief Diversity Officer**COMPANY:** Genentech**EDUCATION:** MBA, Cornell University; B.A., Telecommunications; University of Kentucky**INDUSTRY AWARDS:** One of the Top 15 Champions of Diversity, Diversity Global Magazine, 2021; Top 100 Diversity Officers, The National Diversity Council, 2021; Trailblazer Award by LEAD360, 2021; one of the 100 Most Influential Women in Business, San Francisco Business Times, 2020; PharmaVOICE 100**GIVING BACK:** Girls For A Change, a nonprofit development organization aimed at empowering Girls of Color; Delta San Francisco Peninsula Foundation, which provides four-year college scholarships for Black girls**HOBBIES:** Traveling and spending time with her family**TWITTER HANDLE:** @execQstyle

In the past two years, Quita Highsmith has been honored with numerous awards, including being named as one of the top 15 Champions of Diversity by Diversity Global Magazine, one the Top 100 Diversity Officers by The National Diversity Council, and as one of the 100 Most Influential Women in Business by the San Francisco Business Times. These accolades are not only well-deserved but well-earned. Quita has been a champion of diversity throughout her whole career, including the 10 years she's been at Genentech. In January 2020 she was named as the company's first chief diversity officer. In this role, as well as serving as chair of Genentech's D&I board, she is dedicated to ensuring that all employees' voices are heard and appreciated. Under her purview, in 2020 the chief diversity office created a monthly internal speaker series called "Of Many Cultures" designed to foster belonging among employees, which was developed to help employees expand their knowledge base by hearing about workplace culture, inclusion, and health equity topics. Her office also created an event called Dialogue Circles, which gives employees a safe space to share their



CHANGEMAKER. BOLD.

QUITA HIGHSMITH

Go bold or go home

feelings about the social injustices happening across our country and other issues. "Some of our most attended events were centered on addressing employee's feelings on the murder of George Floyd, coping during the global pandemic, and dealing with the increase of AAPI hate across the nation," she says.

Every day, Quita inspires others by showing up as her authentic self. "My very presence as a VP at Genentech creates possibilities," she says. "We need more women and people of color seeing diverse leadership, especially in the C-suite, who don't modify their personality to 'fit in' with what is believed to be acceptable. This gives women and people of color the confidence to bring their authentic self to work every day.

"As a Black woman, many times we are told to stay in our lane," Quita continues. "What does that even mean? I will not and I have not ever accepted that. My experience shows everyone that you can be bold and speak up from any seat and make a real impact and change. I aspire to inspire, to be transparent, and to be intentional in driving change. I want to be remembered as someone who backed words with actions and fulfilled commitments to really make a difference."

Quita has always been a changemaker, a fixer, and a fearless visionary. Colleagues say if there is a challenging situation, her ability to think outside of the box is just the ticket to finding the right solution. "Leaning into my changemaker super power, is exactly what we did when we created the chief diversity office," she says. "We were transparent, intentional,

and bold in our efforts to make change. With an inspirational strategy, one can achieve a vision for the future state."

One of Quita's biggest career highlights occurred in 2017 while serving as Genentech's head of Alliance and Advocacy Relations. Quita, along with colleague Nicole Richie, Ph.D., a 2020 PharmaVOICE 100 honoree, co-founded Genentech's Advancing Inclusive Research. The initiative was developed to address barriers to clinical research participation for underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. "As part of this initiative, we founded an External Council for Inclusive Research, which includes physician thought leaders, academic research experts, and patient advocates," she says. "They partnered with us to evaluate and make changes to our clinical trial processes to make them more patient-centric and inclusive of underrepresented groups. Since the founding of Advancing Inclusive Research, we've made progress in diversifying clinical trials and finding solutions to clinical research issues that disproportionately impact underrepresented populations."

As part of this initiative, Genentech conducted a landmark "Health Equity Study" to elevate the perspectives of medically disenfranchised — Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, LGBTQ+, and low socioeconomic status — individuals, which revealed how long-standing inequity impacts their relationships with the healthcare system.

"I am extremely proud to have played a key role in leading both of these initiatives," Quita says. ^{PV}

ESTER BANQUE

Be the change you want to see in the world

Igniting change by...

**EMPOWERING
OUR PEOPLE TO
MAKE A POSITIVE
DIFFERENCE FOR
PATIENTS**

**TRANSFORMATIONAL.
DISRUPTIVE.**

Ester Banque

TITLE: Senior VP & Head Intercontinental Commercial

COMPANY: Bristol Myers Squibb

EDUCATION: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, BSc, Chemistry; UPF Barcelona School of Management, MBA; and Post-Graduation in Pharmaceutical Marketing

PERSONAL AWARDS: MM&M Hall of Femme inductee, 2020; Finalist of Europharma's Lifetime Achievement Award, 2018; Women International Networking – WIN – Conference, "The Global Inspiring Women Worldwide" Award Recipient, 2018; Women Worth Watching Award, 2016

COMPANY AWARDS: Nine awards for extraordinary leadership, innovation, launch, and sales excellence

COMMUNITY AWARDS: NAFE — Woman of Excellence 2020 — Healthcare Champion for Women

ASSOCIATIONS: Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA), Women of Color in Pharma (WOCIP), various cancer patient organizations

GIVING BACK: More Moments, More Memories Foundation, and The Trevor Project

HOBBIES: Cooking (her paella is a particular favorite with her kids)



Ester Banque has been a voice for patients, as well as diversity and inclusion, for more than 30 years. In her current role as senior VP and head Intercontinental Commercial for Bristol Myers Squibb (BMS), Ester heads a diverse region of more than 70 markets across five continents accounting for 39% of the world's GDP.

Two years into her current position, Ester has galvanized the talent of more than 3,000 employees. And, despite the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, she has elevated the performances of her country heads, driving significant innovation and growth.

When Ester arrived at BMS from Novartis, she realized she had to lift the intercontinental region to the right level of priority. "My first task was to develop my direct reports and move from a team of leaders to a leadership team that understood the importance of leaning on and learning from each other as opposed to functioning in silos," she says. "We were then able to develop and execute strategies that drove high performance — double-digit growth and the opportunity to launch more than 10 new assets and more than 40 indications over the next five years."

Colleagues say Ester leads with her heart and executes with her brain, and that she is committed to talent development and a culture of inclusion. The region she leads at

BMS is a testament to her dedication to diversity: 52% of its general managers are female.

Many high-performing executives have been mentored by Ester, as a result creating a worldwide network of individuals dedicated to improving patients' lives. "I try to be more than a mentor," Ester says. "I prefer the term sponsor — someone who not only guides but also advocates. The best part of such a relationship is watching that person grow to his or her full potential. I'm passionate about helping them unleash their power to be transformational leaders. I call it being intentional with an outcome."

To help keep her teams motivated during the pandemic, Ester leaned into her vulnerability, a power she's become more comfortable with as she's grown in her leadership roles. "In the earlier days of 2020, I found myself wanting and needing to care for not only my family but also my team of more than 3,000 employees," she says. "It just wasn't sustainable.

Asking for help became an imperative, and I encouraged others to do the same: to show their needs, their human side, and rely on each other."

In addition to her role as an advocate for women in science, Ester is a member and committed advocate of the LGBTQ+ community. But fully embracing that identity took some time. "It took me years to come out in my professional life," she confesses. "I was afraid I would be negatively judged and it would affect my career, so I hid for a long time that I was gay."

In coming out, Ester was able to release that burden. "For the first time, I felt free, happy, and able to truly engage with people," she says. "In turn, my colleagues also felt encouraged to express themselves freely and feel appreciated for who they are. Coming out allowed me to connect to my true self, and through that personal empowerment, I was able to empower others."

Ester says the best professional advice she's ever received is to put the patient first and results will come. "This became my life compass," she says. This advice also brings Ester back to her parents. "Our family was modest in means but rich in values," she says. "I learned from them that if your values are your North Star, you'll always be able to see the best way forward." ^{PV}

Eve Dryer**TITLE:** VP, Patient Advocacy**COMPANY:** Traverre Therapeutics**PERSONAL AWARDS:** Healthcare

Businesswomen's Association (HBA) STAR Award, 2013, 3-time PharmaVOICE 100 honoree

COMPANY AWARDS: Traverre Rare Award**ASSOCIATIONS:** HBA, NORD, Global Genes, Rare Disease Diversity Coalition Steering Committee, Healing Net Foundation BOD, Sisters Network BOD**HOBBIES:** Connecting people, traveling

At every stage of her career, Eve Dryer, VP of patient advocacy, Traverre Therapeutics, has been passionate about championing under-represented patient populations, improving diversity, and advocating for health equity. For this dedication, Eve has been recognized three times as a PharmaVOICE 100 honoree during the three decades of her consistent and impactful advocacy leadership.

Last year, Eve was a founding leader in launching the Rare Disease Diversity Coalition (RDCC) to address the extraordinary healthcare challenges faced by rare disease patients of color.

"The coalition, led by the Black Women's Health Imperative, unites diversity healthcare leaders from medical organizations, patient advocacy organizations, industry, and government who are committed to elevating rare disease awareness, increasing access to and quality of research and development, and improving patient diagnosis and treatment for rare disease," she says.

The RDCC published the "Charting the Path Forward for Equity in Rare Diseases" action plan, which includes 11-point priority recommendations and has developed solutions-focused initiatives addressing health disparities within the rare disease community. They expect to have achieved significant achievement milestones by year's end.

In 2014, Eve partnered with the national African American breast cancer support organization, Sisters Network, to mobilize teenage girls to become Teens 4 Pink and increase awareness of the relatively high rate of breast cancer among Black women and help narrow the gap between Black and white breast cancer death rates.

These are a few of many programs Eve helped create to increase awareness of and address health disparities within communities of color.

EVE DRYER

Patients-first. Health equity for all.

In 2006, Eve partnered with AstraZeneca, CMS, senior citizen organizations, and local government agencies to create the award-winning, national program, My Medicare Matters, which helped seniors navigate changes with the implementation of Medicare Part D, the biggest change to Medicare in 38 years.

"I believe we can make extraordinary changes happen and am proud to help build catalyst initiatives to inspire people to take action," she says. "I have spent my entire career connecting like-minded individuals and organizations and helping them develop programs that create positive, and often life-changing, differences in the lives of patients."

Eve's primary professional goal has always been to work with clients, companies, and individuals who genuinely put the patient first and always. "I have steadfastly made it a personal and professional goal to strengthen and fulfill that commitment to patients and make it real and measurable," Eve says.

"I'll never forget Dr. Deborah Dunsire saying during her Woman of the Year speech at the 2009 Healthcare Businesswomen's Association annual event, 'while it may take an inordinate amount of time and effort to change

a company, one can be a change-maker, accomplish more, and derive the maximum professional satisfaction when you choose a professional home and a tribe that aligns with your passions and values,'" Eve recalls. "To me, professional happiness comes down to a company's authentic commitment to its goals and its employees, the passion of its people, and how well they treat and support each other. I have found that at Traverre."

As a leader, Eve inspires colleagues by helping them realize what they can achieve. "Once a team member has that 'ah-ha' moment and sees the possibilities, they experience the power of impactful, positive changemaking. That is the moment when inspiration becomes addictive and contagious throughout their team, their colleagues, and ultimately the entire organization," she says.

Leadership for Eve is about being mission and goal-oriented by setting clear objectives, then

*Blazing new trails to...***DIVERSITY**

inspiring team members to believe in their ability to deliver those objectives. "As a leader, you must give your team the freedom to find, articulate and achieve their goals," she says. "They should take pride in and realize the potential impact of their own big ideas, while having leadership and guidance so they always have a supportive safety net."

Eve leads by example and, when necessary, she will jump in and work side-by-side with her team to reach an objective. "We're a team and we win together," she says.

Leadership must be forward-looking, and Eve is committed to encouraging, mentoring, and helping to shape the next generation of leaders as they navigate their careers — not only in industry but in the nonprofit and advocacy sectors. "I am energized by the next generation of leaders — their commitment, passion, and creativity," she says. "I am proud to be invested in supporting and guiding women and the dynamic rising leaders from diverse populations." **PV**

TENACITY. GENUINELY PASSIONATE.



2021 PharmaVOICE 100

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW

Eve Dryer
Traverse Therapeutics



Eve Dryer, a dedicated patient advocate, shares her passion for championing under-represented patient populations, improving diversity, and advocating for health equity.



Eve Dryer (seated at right) with leaders from the Black Women's Health Imperative and Rare Disease Diversity Coalition, Linda Goler Blount (seated left) and Tammy Boyd (standing)

Congratulations to Eve Dryer, our vice president of patient advocacy, for being named one of this year's PharmaVOICE 100 Most Inspiring People!

Your commitment to advocating on behalf of the patients we serve and ensuring their voices are heard and inspiring all that we do are incredible examples of being in rare for life.

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As head of global supplier diversity at AbbVie, Kathy April-Rush has built the company's supplier diversity program from the ground up. "With no structure in place in a newly formed company, building the infrastructure and foundation for a best-in-class program was not only a career highlight but an honor," she says. "Whatever it becomes, I planted the seeds and nurtured it from the ground up."

She was responsible for an enterprisewide plan for small business subcontracting and overseeing supplier diversity within the North America supply chain. She has built and introduced a Supplier Diversity & Development Conference for prospective suppliers, inclusive of supplier development curriculum for capac-

Kathy April-Rush

TITLE: Lead, Global Supplier Diversity

COMPANY: AbbVie

EDUCATION: MBA, Dominican University, Human Resources Management concentration

AWARDS AND ARTICLES: Women's Business Development Center, February 2021, A Moment with Kathy April-Rush; Diversity Professional Magazine, Fall 2020, Rush Power Drive; DiversityPlus Magazine, 2020 Best of the Best Champions of Diversity; DiversityPlus Magazine, 2017 Top 30 Champions of Diversity Embed Supplier Diversity; DiversityPlus Magazine, 2015 Top 30 Champions of Diversity

ASSOCIATIONS: Diversity Alliance for Science; HELIX Supplier Diversity Pharmaceutical Forum; National Minority Supplier Development Council, Healthcare Industry Group; Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council, Board of Directors; Midwest Small Business Liaison Officer Council; Diversity Advisory Board Member, UCAN (Uhlich Children's Home)

GIVING BACK: As a former foster parent, initiatives focused on the well-being and safety of children and youth

TWITTER HANDLE: @KAprilRush

Sparking innovation by...

**CHALLENGING THE
STATUS QUO**

KATHY APRIL-RUSH

In capable hands

ity building. And she designed the Supplier Diversity Exchange, a focus group between incumbent suppliers and purchasing leadership.

She also leads Diversity Alliance for Science Inc., which provides a platform to identify, attract, and develop diverse businesses to drive inclusive procurement practices in corporate, academic, and governmental entities within the life-sciences industry with creative passion.

Navigating the organization through the pandemic was a huge challenge, Kathy says. "Diversity Alliance for Science is a NGO whose mission is to unite suppliers in the life sciences with corporate and academia buyers and when the shutdown happened, the uncertainty that came with it for our organization was daunting," she says. "How do you continue the mission when corporations are focused on transitioning thousands of workers to be full time remote? How do you continue to provide programming that can support suppliers' development and provide activities that will continue to provide access for all parties? Determining what to do to stay relevant was no easy task, and yet we persevered in the minds of our members who ranked our programming during the pandemic top notch."

Through her hard work, the organization

has not only grown under her leadership during the strain of the COVID pandemic, but flourished, breaking records for virtual conference attendance and business matchmaking of diverse suppliers with corporate buying organizations, membership growth, and the introduction of new programming, including Elevate Black, the DA4S response to social injustice regarding Black-owned businesses.

Her career ambition is to build an organization for diverse suppliers second to none and grow it globally. With a tenacious spirit, Kathy never throws in the towel, despite obstacles. "I'm a visionary who has the ability to see into the future long before others can," she says.

Kathy paints the vision and inspires others to join the journey by celebrating wins along the way. She says her preferred and practiced leadership styles are servant and transformational. "It's vital to me to focus on the growth and well-being of the organization to which I belong, and this includes the people in it," she says. "It is important for others to see me serving alongside them. It is paired with transformational as it's imperative to create a vision for needed change that all members of the group can envision and embrace." PV

**TENACIOUS SPIRIT.
CHARGED WITH POS-
SIBILITIES.**



Because there is more to do. Charlotte Jones-Burton, M.D., is on a mission to advance equity so that all patients can access the innovative interventions developed by our industry. As a R&D leader she realizes that she can not achieve this mission alone so she builds inclusive teams who share her passion for equity. To accelerate the industry's progress, Dr. Jones-Burton founded Women of Color in Pharma (WOCIP) with the intent to empower other women of color to excel in their personal and professional development so they can assume critical roles and have business impact.

The role that women of color leaders can play to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in our R&D and commercial businesses is unique. Bridge building to the communities where they live and lead is one way in which women of color can add value. "Unfortunately, we do not consistently have access to networks that can groom and grow us to assume roles of impact," she says. "When I got my first job in industry, I did not have an established network that could help me understand how to navigate corporate politics, advocate for myself, and be visible. With WOCIP, we want to ensure that there is a strategic network that women of color can tap into to grow their careers."

As a physician and an expert in clinical development, Dr. Jones-Burton recognizes that there is not just diversity required in leadership pipelines of life-sciences companies but throughout the entire healthcare ecosystem. "My professional goal is to advance equity in research and development and commercialization," she says. "There are still disparities in our industry and this interferes with the impact that we can have on all patients and health outcomes."

Before joining Otsuka Pharmaceuticals in September 2019 as VP, global clinical development, nephrology, Dr. Jones-Burton was executive director, development team lead, cardiovascular, at Bristol Myers Squibb where she was involved in the development and commercialization of the best-selling brand Eliquis, which she describes as a career highlight.

"At the time I was the clinical lead and development team leader for Eliquis, we had treated 10 million patients and the brand brought in \$8 billion in revenue," she says.

Another career highlight for Dr. Jones-Burton was walking across the stage to receive her medical degree. "The reason this is highlight in my life is because I wasn't supposed to walk across that stage because people who look like me, who come from a background where I come from, which is rural Arkansas with 18,000 people, 85% of whom live below the poverty line, are not the people who walk across the stage at a prestigious institution to

DR. CHARLOTTE JONES-BURTON



Changing
the world
one person
at a time

INSPIRING. FERVENT.

Charlotte Jones-Burton, M.D.

TITLE: VP, Global Clinical Development, Nephrology

COMPANY: Otsuka Pharmaceutical Companies (US)

EDUCATION: M.D., University of Maryland Medical School; A.B., Biology and Psychology, Washington University in St. Louis

PERSONAL AWARDS: 2020 MM+M. Hall of Femme; 2020 MM+M Outstanding Contribution to Healthcare; 2020 NJ Biz Best 50 Women in Business

COMPANY AWARDS: 2015 Galaxy Award, BMS

COMMUNITY AWARDS: 2017 Women Empowering Women

ASSOCIATIONS: Women of Color in Pharma; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority; Visiting Nurses Association of Somerset Hills; Center for Healthcare Innovation; American Society of Nephrology

GIVING BACK: Sisters Network, The Chrysalis Project, Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium

HOBBIES: Cooking, shopping, playing racquetball

TWITTER HANDLE: @docjbinspires

Igniting change by...

EMPOWERING DIVERSE LEADERS TO HAVE AN IMPACT AND BE VISIBLE

receive a medical degree," she says.

Dr. Jones-Burton takes the challenge of changing the status quo required to advance equity in the industry very seriously, knowing change requires a leader who is passionate and laser-focused, as well as one who can inspire others to act. "Through my actions, work ethic, storytelling, and sharing my life experiences and focusing on what matters — patients, improving health outcomes, and advancing equity — I hope to inspire others to take action," she says.

Dr. Jones-Burton is dedicated to changing the world one person at a time, and is committed to doing so by thinking big and dreaming big. She not only mentors members of her teams, but gives back to organizations, such as Sisters Network, The Chrysalis Project, and The Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium.

"The best part of the mentor relationship is helping others see a way forward or potential solutions or opportunities to address a chal-

lenge or desire to do something different," she says. Colleagues are inspired by her passion, intellectual curiosity, and inclusiveness that are the foundation on which she builds her teams.

"It is important to me that I serve my team by working with them, listening to them, and moving them to act and grow," she says.

She sees one part of her role as that of a connector and collaborator. "I want to be the conductor; I want to lead leaders," she says.

She also tries to infuse optimism in everything she does, and along the way change the world one person at a time. **PV**