PRESS RELEASE

Media Contact: **James Rector**
Publisher, Profiles in Diversity Journal
440-892-0444 (office)
Publisher@diversityjournal.com

For Immediate Release

***Profiles in Diversity Journal*® Announces the 18th Annual Innovations in Diversity & Inclusion Awards for 2021**

CLEVELAND, OH – (November 15, 2021) *Profiles in Diversity Journal* is pleased to announce the winners of its 18th Annual Innovations in Diversity Awards competition, honoring corporations, organizations, and institutions that have developed innovative solutions in the area of workforce diversity, inclusion, and human equity. Their winning innovations will be featured in *Profiles in Diversity Journal*'s 4th quarter issue, scheduled for publication December 15, 2021 online at diversityjournal.com.

"With this award, we recognize those outstanding organizations that work relentlessly to find ways to improve diversity, inclusion, and equity within their ranks and across the communities they serve," says James Rector, *Profiles in Diversity Journal* publisher. "We are proud and delighted to honor these innovative organizations."

This year's Innovations in Diversity Award recipients (in alphabetical order) are:

- Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP–**Shaping Your Future** virtual recruitment series

  In 2020, Akin Gump's Firmwide Resource Groups (FRG) developed Shaping Your Future, a career development series for law students offered in a virtual format and open to all law students, allowing for a greater reach. Series programs were hosted by lawyers from the firm's Asian, Black, Latinx, Women's, and Parents and Caregivers FRGs, who provided advice and guidance. The Shaping Your Future series allowed the firm to interact with a larger group of diverse students from a wider selection of law schools than would normally be reached by arranging only in-person visits to campuses.

- Dechert LLP– **Increasing Transparency Around the Use of Force by U.S. Police**

  Following the death of George Floyd in 2020, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the largest U.S. human rights coalition, set out to create the first national database of police "use of force" data. Dechert provided, pro bono, a team of 20 attorneys who gathered data at the state level, and the Leadership Conference launched its **Accountable Now** database in February 2021, which now contains data from 143 law enforcement agencies in 14 cities. Dechert's involvement in this project sits squarely within the firm's longstanding efforts to fight police misconduct.

- The Estée Lauder Companies–**Value Chain Conscious Inclusion (VCCI) Series**

  At the start of 2021, a cross-functional group of Value Chain employees gathered to consider how the company could enable a deeper dialogue about ID&E. This led to the creation of the Value Chain Conscious Inclusion (VCCI) Series. Globally driven, with equal participation from all levels of the organization, VCCI uses virtual events, storytelling, and active engagement to drive conscious inclusive leadership behaviors. To date, more than 60 executives and individual contributors have been active in the series and more than 300 participants have attended each event.

- New American Funding–**New American Dream**

  In 2016, New American Funding formed New American Dream, which seeks to raise awareness and increase homeownership within Black communities by building consumer confidence through home buying education programs and increasing accessibility to a variety of loan programs. The committee that heads New American Dream helps to identify and remove roadblocks that can detain or prevent the dream of homeownership. In 2020, the company's percentage of purchase lending to Black borrowers was 85% higher than the industry average.

- Sephora–**Sephora Racial Bias in Retail Study**

  In mid-January of 2021, Sephora released the results of the first-ever large-scale U.S. study of Racial Bias in Retail, which had been commissioned in 2019. Not only did the company spearhead a study that has never been done before, it also shared actions that would be implemented across the business and general steps the retail industry at large could consider. In collaboration with Open to All, Sephora is launching #Mitigate Racial Bias in Retail Charter, leveraging insights from the Study that will encourage retailers to foster inclusive experiences for BIPOC shoppers.

- Stoel Rives LLP–**Move the Needle Fund**

  Stoel Rives is a founding firm of Move The Needle Fund, the first collaborative effort designed to test innovative initiatives—"bias interrupters"—that will result in a more diverse and inclusive legal profession. Working in partnership with Diversity Lab, other MTN Fund founding firms, and more than 25 founding General Counsel members, Stoel Rives is implementing trailblazing bias interrupters over the course of five years. The firm's goal is to improve the retention rate of its diverse attorneys to be at least equal to the retention rate of its non-diverse attorneys by 2025, with the ultimate goal of increasing diversity among the firm's partnership.

The goal of sharing these innovation initiatives is to honor organizations that are putting and keeping diversity, inclusion, and human equity front and center, to help all organizations progress toward greater understanding, and to bring about positive change in those areas. *Profiles in Diversity Journal* congratulates the extraordinary participating companies for their commitment to diversity and inclusion, and applauds their imagination and initiative.

About *Profiles in Diversity Journal*:
Profiles in Diversity Journal, now in its 23rd year, is a quarterly B2B magazine, focusing on diversity, inclusion, and human equity in business, government, nonprofit, higher education, and military settings. The focus of the *Journal* is senior leadership, best practices, workforce diversity and inclusion strategies, and the recognition of employee contributions.

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Contact:
James R. Rector, Publisher
Profiles in Diversity Journal®
Phone: 440.892.0444
Email: profiles@diversityjournal.com
Web: www.diversityjournal.com