

In Celebration of Black History Month: Two Toyota Employees Reflect on the Power of Diverse Leadership and Volunteerism

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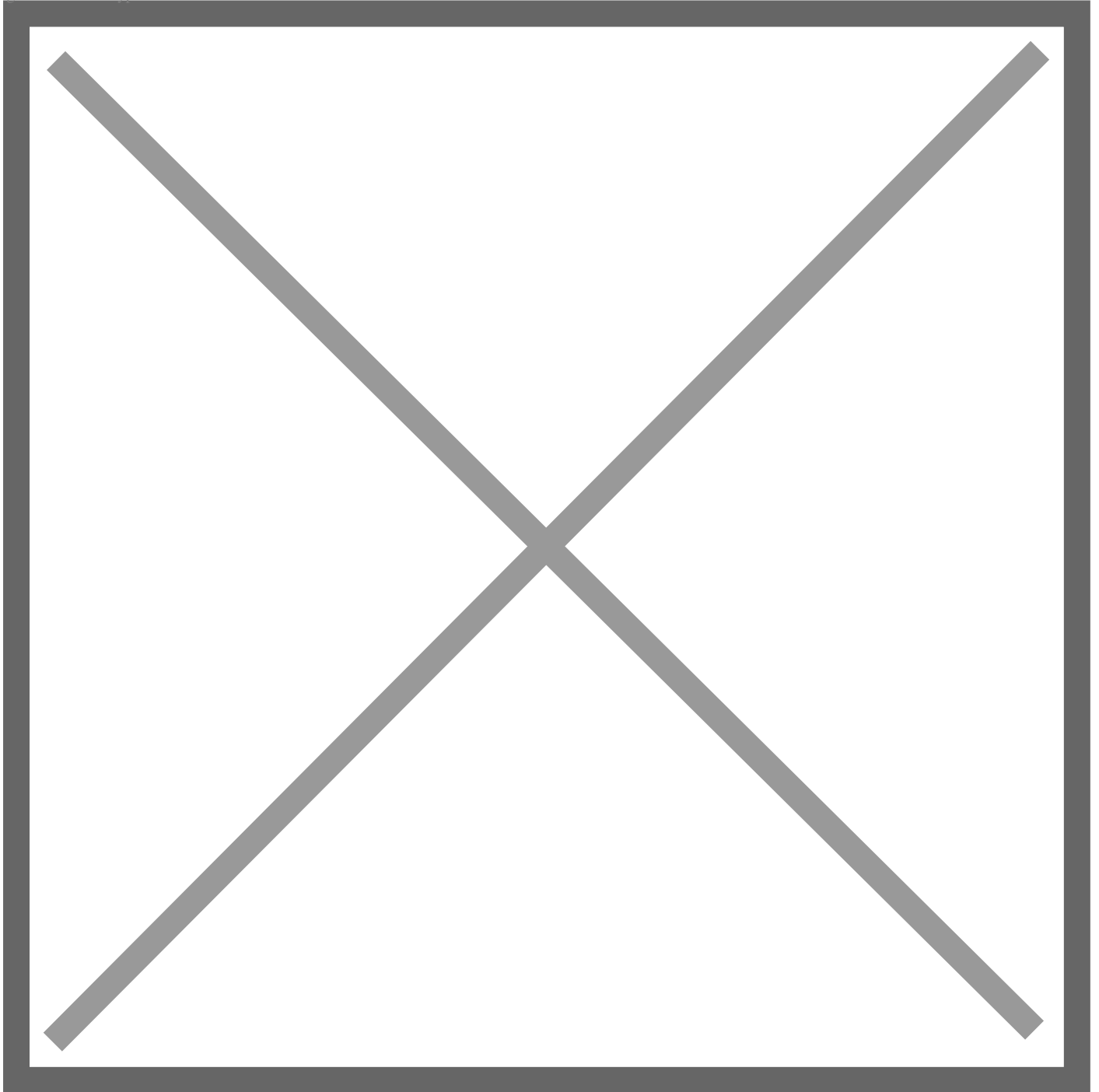
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At Toyota, cultivating an environment where employees can accomplish their professional goals and have their personal endeavors recognized and supported is a priority.

From the company's business partnering groups (BPGs) to its community outreach programs, there are numerous opportunities to share, learn, grow, and give back. It's one of the reasons Pamela Bass and Terence Proctor are proud to work at Toyota.

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Amplifying Diverse Leadership

After seeing the positive impact the African American Collaborative (AAC) had on Toyota Kentucky (TMMK), Bass knew that she wanted to join the group.

Bass, who's been with the company for nearly 30 years, works with the Body Weld Production team. She is an AAC member and currently serves as the group's senior manager advisor.

She said the group's mission is to help and support the development of African Americans, while also bridging the gap between African American communities and the company through community outreach.

The AAC's vision is to ensure African American employees are represented and recognized at all levels of the company and serve as key contributors to the success of Toyota.

“Diversity in leadership is crucial as it brings a greater depth of experience and perspective, fostering innovation and a better understanding of employees,” Bass says. “Diversity in leadership brings enhanced innovation, creates smarter decisions and inclusive leaders, and advances company culture while improving employee satisfaction. Diverse leadership will also attract diverse talent and foster better working relationships.”



Making Time To Give Back

Giving back is a common thread throughout Toyota that extends beyond BPGs — it's woven into the fabric of the company. It resonates and rings true for Terence Proctor, a site services manager at Toyota West Virginia. The longtime Toyota employee is passionate about volunteering his time to help those who are disadvantaged in his community — and around the world.

“While growing up, I was taught that no one makes it in life on their own, especially the disadvantaged,” he says. “I am drawn to paying back the help I received growing up.”

When it comes to volunteering, Proctor chooses to dedicate his time assisting the smallest members of society: children. So, he gravitates toward opportunities that directly support kids, like schools, orphanages, food programs and housing.

Proctor plans two or three mission trips a year to support children. Last year, he supported the education of children by setting up computer labs in local community centers and schools.

“Some volunteer efforts span a weekend, and others cover a couple of weeks, but I support education programs throughout the year,” Proctor says.

Common Ground

Bass and Proctor believe Toyota provides the support and resources to help them accomplish their professional and personal goals. Whether it’s inspiring other organizations to implement more diversity initiatives or encouraging employees to volunteer in the communities Toyota serves, the company is continuously working to improve access to opportunities.

While making an impact is always the driving force behind progress, Bass acknowledges that breaking barriers isn’t always easy. She often refers to Shirley Chisholm’s (the first African American woman to be elected to the United States Congress) famous quote for inspiration: “If they don’t give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.”

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