

JUNE 16, 2021

A photograph of a rainbow flag flying on a pole against a brick building. The flag is the traditional six-color rainbow flag, with the colors from top to bottom: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The flag is waving in the wind. The background shows a brick wall and some greenery.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Keys LGBTQ+ Action at Breckinridge

The LGBTQ+ rights movement has made progress over the past few decades, drawing heightened attention to issues confronting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ+) people. Pride parades and festivals have been essential to elevating worldwide consciousness to LGBTQ+ causes. Most cities around the world now hold pride celebrations in the summer of the northern hemisphere and, in particular, during June. In the U.S., June is recognized as Pride Month even though some cities may hold their pride events on alternate dates. In addition, educational efforts during June and throughout the year are essential to increasing continued progress on understanding, and inclusiveness.

*Breckinridge Capital Advisors is a Certified B Corporation. As a B-Corp, Breckinridge works toward reduced inequality, lower levels of poverty, a healthier environment, stronger communities, and the creation of more high quality jobs with dignity and purpose. Several of the actions that the firm undertakes, including those with respect to LGBTQ+ issues, are consistent with the goals it pursues as a B Corp. **Dominica Ribeiro**, chief marketing officer, and **Kelly Wight**, director, corporate sustainability, discussed actions at Breckinridge to increase understanding and responsive management of LGBTQ+ and broader diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) issues.*



Authors



DOMINICA RIBEIRO
CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER



KELLY WIGHT
DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

Ribeiro: Kelly, how are you, human resources, and members of the sustainability committee approaching Pride Month?

Wight: Gay pride or LGBTQ+ pride is the promotion of the self-affirmation, dignity, equality, and increased visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people as a social group. LGBTQ+ Pride celebrates sexual diversity. It also is a way of expressing opposition to discrimination and violence. Pride is the predominant theme that bolsters most LGBTQ+ rights movements and we want to be consistent with that affirmation in our own activities.

Ribeiro: Specifically, how has Breckinridge responded from the perspective of policy and practice?

Wight: While DEI had been a meaningful element of our activities for as long as I can remember, it was just this January that the sustainability committee and our human resources team committed to our approach in a published strategy. It might be helpful if I cited a couple of the outcomes of that effort.

We aim to interview at least two diverse candidates for each open position. We are working with our network of recruiters to ensure they're sourcing a diverse group of candidates for each open role. We also are developing partnerships with various organizations that serve underrepresented populations, including women; Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC); and the LGBTQ+ community. We are reviewing the wording and structure of our job postings to ensure descriptions and skills requirements do not inadvertently favor or exclude any group of candidates, and we're in the process of updating our internal voluntary self-identifying survey to include more gender identity options.

Ribeiro: The organization has significantly enhanced its educational programs around implicit bias. Tell us about that?

Wight: We have worked on delivering education to our community inside the company, primarily for two reasons. First, broader knowledge of DEI-related topics will increase awareness and build a more inclusive culture where people are allies and are more comfortable having difficult conversations. Second, DEI education will also provide all employees an opportunity to have a seat at the table to learn, share their experiences, and take ownership for making Breckinridge more inclusive.

Ribeiro: What were some highlights in the first half of 2021?

Wight: We just hosted a powerful session with Greater Boston PFLAG on Allyship and, as part of that, heard personal stories and explored the use of pronouns as a means of expressing our awareness and support of LGBTQ+ family members, friends and colleagues.

Ribeiro: Are there plans to build on the foundation established in those sessions?

Wight: Yes. As we did earlier this year following our educational series on racial equity, we plan to conduct another series of what we have called DEI Deep Dives, where attendees all consume the same piece of content and come together to discuss what they've learned. After our first deep dive we surveyed attendees to gauge their reactions and issues they might want to pursue further. About 95 percent of respondents said they would attend future sessions. LGBTQ+ and BIPOC were tied for the next topic on the agenda, followed closely by Intersectionality.

The next session will be based off of the Allyship program. DEI Deep Dives are part of our effort to get all employees to develop a broader understanding of various cultures, identities, experiences and backgrounds. The intent is that greater understanding along with other DEI initiatives, will continue to move our company to be more inclusive.