On December 1, 1955, the local secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) defied a bus driver who ordered her to give up her seat to a white man. When he threatened to have the police arrest her, she calmly replied: “You may go on and do so.” What a simple, yet bold proclamation made by civil rights pioneer, Rosa Parks. Her refusal served as a catalyst for the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which ultimately led to the repeal of segregation laws.

As we celebrate Black History Month, it is fitting to reflect on the power of standing up (or in this case, remaining seated) to ensure equitable treatment. Parks’ actions signal an historical tipping point, and provide a compelling reminder: equitable access and treatment affects everyone—especially in the workplace.

February is also National Heart Month. As a heart disease survivor and the National Volunteer for the American Heart Association’s Go Red For Women campaign, I am committed to ensuring that every woman makes her heart and cardiovascular health a top concern. In keeping with this theme, this month’s DJR explores the inherent connection between employment and health—with emphasis on the benefits of investing in your employees’ health. You will also find our monthly Jobs Index and data outlining the employment situation for diverse Americans in the healthcare sector.

Just as Rosa Parks sought to gain access to her seat of choice, Professional Diversity Network is equally committed to increasing your pipeline of diverse talent. By improving every employers’ ability to identify and recruit qualified women, minorities, veterans, disabled and LGBT professionals, businesses and communities can thrive.

We salute the history makers—from all diverse backgrounds—whose efforts afford us the opportunities to lead free and healthy lives today!

~SJ
HAND IN HAND:  
THE EMPLOYMENT + HEALTH CONNECTION
As explored in previous DJRs, the prevalence of unemployment is much higher among diverse Americans, particularly Blacks and Hispanics (regardless of educational attainment.) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) income, education level, sex, race, ethnicity, employment status and sexual orientation are all related to health and health outcomes for a number of Americans. As employment is a major determinant of healthcare access, the lack thereof negatively affects a disproportionate number of diverse Americans.

**A few facts to consider:**

- Unemployed adults had poorer mental and physical health than employed adults.
- Unemployed adults were less likely to receive needed medical care due to cost than the employed.
- The unemployed were less likely to receive needed prescriptions due to cost than the employed.
- Health insurance is a major determinant of access to both preventive and acute healthcare.
- Most Americans rely on employer-provided insurance. Thus, unemployment affects their access to health services, due to loss of employer-sponsored health insurance and reduced income.

Although more research is needed to understand the impact of employee health-related issues from an employer perspective, experts agree that a strong link exists between health and productivity. When employers invest in prevention, the benefits are broadly shared.

- **Individuals Benefit:** Workers stay productive and healthy—both inside and outside the workplace.
- **Businesses Benefit:** A healthier workforce reduces long-term healthcare costs, increases stability and productivity, and improves global competitiveness.
- **Communities Benefit:** A community offering a healthy, productive, stable workforce is a more attractive place for families to live and for businesses to locate.

**The Long-Term View: Employer Benefits**

Data suggests that companies with successful health and productivity programs have superior business outcomes and financial returns. Benefits are outlined on the following page.
**Lower Healthcare Costs**

According to a recent study by The Milken Institute, even modest improvements in the health status of US workers could increase the nation’s GDP by $905 billion by 2023. With employers covering healthcare costs for 160 million nonelderly American workers, preventing disease and improving health outcomes is a financial imperative for many businesses.

Healthcare costs for workers who smoke, are obese or have medical conditions such as diabetes are higher. By preventing these diseases, employers can reduce health insurance premiums. Research suggests that reducing health risks by as little as 1% can result in significant savings over time. One estimate cites potential savings of $3.7 billion annually in employer medical costs—which would be reflected in lower health insurance premiums—through increased use of preventive care.

**Greater Worker Productivity**

Healthier workers provide continuity for businesses, which results in greater day-to-day productivity. The CDC reports conditions such as depression/anxiety; obesity, arthritis, and back/neck pain are top causes of absenteeism. When absenteeism decreases there are fewer disruptions and improved operational efficiencies. Research from the Milken Institute suggests that reduction in absenteeism due to health issues can lead to a gain of more than $1 trillion annually for US businesses.

**A Stronger US Economy**

American business has long set the standard for competitiveness and innovation. In addition to monetary and productivity costs, a healthy workforce can have a positive impact on GDP growth. In fact, according to a recent study by The Milken Institute, even modest improvements in the health status of US workers could increase the nation’s GDP by $905 billion by 2023. The report shows that as the price and availability of health services improve, labor force participation and hourly earnings increase, benefiting large corporations and small local businesses alike.

The multiple, complex causes of health disparities cannot be fully addressed by employers alone. But, like any successful investment, employers that dedicate resources to prevention can yield steady returns: lower costs and a healthier, more productive workforce.
Go Red For Women is the American Heart Association’s (AHA) national movement to end heart disease and stroke in women, which many think is “a man’s disease.”

According to the AHA, heart disease is the nation’s No. 1 killer. More women die of heart disease than all forms of cancer combined, affecting some 43 million women in the US annually. Cardiovascular diseases cause one in three women’s deaths each year, killing approximately one woman every minute.

The good news is that 80% of cardiac events can be prevented with education and lifestyle changes. Go Red For Women advocates for more research and swifter action for women’s heart health.

For more information visit, https://www.goredforwomen.org/
The Importance of the Diversity Jobs Index and Report

Decades ago, the original impetus for diversity recruitment was to remediate discriminatory practices. As current US demographics shift to reflect a growing multi-cultural population, workplace diversity and inclusion has now become a business necessity. Employers realize that a diverse workforce provides them with a strategic advantage required to remain competitive in today’s global markets. Empirical evidence reinforces this idea. Professor Cedric Herring in the Department of Sociology at University of Illinois at Chicago published an article analyzing the relationship between a company’s revenue and their work place diversity.

“We developed our Diversity Jobs Report and Index to complement the information provided in the Department of Labor’s Employment Situation Summary. We feel it’s our responsibility to provide important economic data for companies committed to developing a diverse and inclusive workforce,” said Star Jones, PDN/NAPW President.

According to the Mr. Herring’s report -- Companies with a more diverse workforce consistently reported higher customer numbers than those organizations with less diversity. In terms of racial diversity, companies with the highest rates reported an average of 35,000 customers compared to 22,700 average customers among those companies with the lowest rates of racial diversity. The difference is even larger for gender diversity rates. That is, companies with the highest levels of gender diversity reported an average of 15,000 more customers than organizations with the lowest levels of gender diversity. Herring also found that the smallest incremental increase in levels of racial or gender diversity resulted in more than 400 and 200 additional customers, respectively.*

In the growing healthcare sector, research suggests employing a workforce reflective of the patient population results in improved access to care, patient satisfaction, patient-provider communication and overall health outcomes.

As reported in the December 2014 DJR, the US is expected to experience a shortage of nearly 90,000 physicians by the year 2020. Healthcare providers face the challenge of identifying and recruiting candidates to fill open positions for doctors as well as those in nursing, healthcare IT and practice management.
**Employment Data by Segment**

- **In Millions**
  - Unemployed
  - Fulltime
  - Parttime

**Unemployment Data by Segment**

- **By Percentage**
  - Veteran
  - Women
  - Disabled
  - Asian
  - Hispanic
  - African American
  - All
The Diversity Jobs Index for the January 2015 report is 48.18, indicating a 10.9% increase in demand for diverse talent as compared to the month of December.
The Healthcare sector offers a bright light to diverse job seekers, particularly women and minorities. Healthcare job growth is expected to range from 2% to 3% annually.

Employment in healthcare increased by 440,000 jobs in the past year and represents one of the most reliable sectors for job gains over the past half decade. Job gains in recent months have also been strong. This is due in large part to hiring increases in clinics with less than 100 workers.

Despite overall employment gains, average healthcare wages have risen nominally (+1.5%) compared to last year. Lower salaried occupations at small to medium-sized companies account for most new hires.

Overall, the healthcare sector has generated new employment for all diverse groups in the past year.

In recent months, the industry has also increasingly offered access to higher wages, particularly to diverse candidates with college degrees. Private sector healthcare has been a good source of employment for African Americans over the past two years. Education continues to be a critical driver in healthcare hiring, as African Americans with college degrees are three times more likely to land a job than non-degreed African Americans.
ABOUT

PROFESSIONAL DIVERSITY NETWORK

We are America’s leading relationship recruitment network for diverse talent, with over three million registered users, including: Veterans, African Americans, Women, Hispanics, Asians, Disabled Persons and LGBT professionals. Professional Diversity Network is committed to providing employers who value diversity and inclusion with access to diverse professionals via online recruitment communities and integration with leading professional organizations. Our mission is to provide economic opportunity to all Americans. By efficiently connecting diverse talent with employers, we seek to attack the wealth gap in this country.

We believe that by providing free access to online affinity networking communities for professionals, we can help diminish the professional network gap that is limiting career opportunities for millions. Professional Diversity Network has created online communities for diverse talent that enable professionals of common cultures and interests to connect with the purpose of working towards a common goal of professional development.

In an effort to connect employers who value diversity with diverse talent, Professional Diversity Network provides career services to many of the nation’s leading professional diversity organizations. Organizations like the NAACP, National Urban League, National Black MBA Association and ALPFA, as well as numerous other leading not-for-profit diverse professional organizations, all use Professional Diversity Network’s relationship recruitment affinity networking and job board to power their career centers. In addition to our significant online presence, we also conduct approximately 20 annual professional networking conferences focused on career development seminars and networking opportunities to promote engagement between recruiters and candidates in a unique face-to-face setting. We deliver significant diverse applicant flow to employers who have affirmative action plans, ensuring recruitment value for their compliance budgets. Professional Diversity Network has a suite of products and services designed to address the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) regulatory requirements in a manner that delivers proof positive evidence of an intensive diversity outreach campaign. Results are defined in an annual effectiveness assessment report detailing job views, apply starts and engagement points such as recruitment advertising.

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Professional Diversity Network DIVERSITY JOBS REPORT AND DIVERSITY JOBS INDEX is provided in partnership with Job Search Intelligence (JSI). JSI’s data are principally derived from: U. S. Department of Labor, U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Census Bureau, U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, National Center for Education Statistics, U. S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, U. S. Federal Reserve, and proprietary resources. All data and methodologies are protected by copyright, patents and pending patents. All rights reserved.

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