

DIVERSITY

5 BLACK MALE ALLIES OFFER INSIGHTS

WOMAN™

Leadership empowerment for women who mean business

Winter 2021



Meet the Changing Face of Corporate America



CORPORATE LADDER

Embrace Your Power

THERE IS AN INHERENT power in Black women—family power, sista power, spending power, voting power, political power, “ride or die” power. In that fearless power, we galvanize everything we touch. Audre Lorde once said,



With so much at stake, we must continue to be the example and the embodiment of Black excellence

“I am deliberate and afraid of nothing.” That is the essence of Black women and the power that we bring.

Throughout history, we have borne witness to the collective power of our fortitude. On November 3, 2020, as Black women collectively exercised our power and our voice, Senator Kamala Harris became the first Black woman, first South Asian woman, first woman to become vice president-elect of the United States of America. We stand on the shoulders and legacy of our ancestors. Senator Harris’s victory is the shattering of a ceiling—a glass ceiling, a Black ceiling—that has been impenetrable for far too long. The full impact is still to be determined. But what I know in my heart to be true is that it allows young Black women and Black and Brown girls around the world to see that their dreams have the right to be large, bold, audacious, and without limits or boundaries.

Raised as a Black girl, I had to be twice as good to get half as far. It is part of my DNA. That is still a life lesson we teach our children. There is still much work to be done to level the playing field for Black women. But what we saw with this election and Joe Biden’s choice to have Kamala Harris as his running mate was the influence of Black women—Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. galvanizing the entire Divine Nine; the Links, Incorporated; and coalitions of Black women across the country, all energizing communities (anybody want to shout out Atlanta!) to get the impossible done on behalf of this country, its leadership, and its future.

Crystal E. Ashby

Black women are capable of whatever we set our minds to. We are among the most highly educated in Corporate America, and we will con-

tinue to pioneer, whether in the boardroom or in the White House. The legacy has been set, and a pipeline of talent is ready to ascend to the challenges we face today and those that await us tomorrow. We go forward in our power, fully prepared to take on the challenges. That is what is required, and we are always ready. We know it can be done because we act together, in concert, with the support of one another. As former secretary of state Madeleine Albright once said, “There’s a special place in hell for women who don’t help each other.” Surround yourself with women who will mention your name in a roomful of possibilities. We all know that there is enough for each of us.

With so much at stake, we must continue to be the example and the embodiment of Black excellence as we leverage our power to make a difference in the world. Vice President-Elect Harris’s victory allows Black girls and Black women to see that the possibilities are real. Let us continue on the path of victory and leadership for all women, but especially Black women. **DW**

Crystal E. Ashby is interim president and CEO of the Executive Leadership Council, the leading membership organization for Black CEOs and senior executives in major corporations.