The San Diego Business Journal recently held a forum on Diversity and Inclusion at the Rancho Bernardo Inn. We asked five panelists to discuss the business case for diversity and inclusion and several other aspects of the changing workforce. The panel was moderated by Merle Vaughn, managing director and law firm diversity practice leader from Major, Lindsey & Africa.

Excerpts follow.

**Articulating the ROI for diversity and inclusion:** I recommend personalizing the message for your organization. For example, Cubic has been known as an innovative organization since its founding in 1951. Responsibility for innovations such as the nation’s first electronic stadium scoreboard, communication equipment for the Apollo moon landing program, and the “Top Gun” air combat training system. Diversity and inclusion are especially important at Cubic because they support our tradition of innovation, given that diverse teams tend to make better decisions and are better at identifying innovative solutions.

**First steps local companies can take:** Consider starting with a short “white paper” on diversity and inclusion in your organization. What is our current state? What are our early thoughts on the D&I strategy, such as scope and initial actions? This short document can help you open up the conversation with key stakeholders in your organization. I also suggest forming an Executive Diversity and Inclusion Committee, made up of senior leaders representing parts of the business — they can help you refine your strategy.

**The growing presence of millennials impacts diversity and workforce issues:** Millennials seek flexibility, autonomy, and span of control that other generations don’t question. They embrace change and can be serial employees and form an Employee Diversity Council. This can be the first step in a broader culture change by keeping a focus on recognizing and celebrating the differences in the organization.

**How the growing presence of millennials impacts diversity and workforce issues:** Given millennials’ obvious strength in numbers, seasoned businesses will have to identify better ways to attract, retain and ensure that these future leaders are contributing to their full potential. Speaking broadly, these emerging leaders have a different value system and outlook on what they want to make of their lives and careers compared to what was valued in previous generations. Ignoring these changing behaviors and failing to recognize that our future generations “think differently” could have significant consequences.

**First thing a local business might be surprised to know or should do:** Look at diversity as a business success imperative. According to McKinsey & Co., companies ranking in the top quartile for diversity financially outperform those in the bottom quartile by 35 percent.

**Why Diversity, Inclusion Matter?**

**THE BUSINESS CASE:**

**Daryl Albertson**
Chief Human Resources & Diversity Officer, Cubic Corp.

**Sophia Cavalli**
Diversity Director, Balfour Beatty Construction

**Sydney Furibush**
Manager of Supplier Diversity, San Diego G& E Electric Co.

**Rachel Sandoval**
Director of Diversity & Inclusion, Kaiser Permanente

**Carisa Wisniewski**
Partner in Charge, Moss Adams, Balfour Beatty Construction

**Merle Vaughn**
Managing Director and Law Firm Diversity Practice Leader, Major, Lindsey & Africa
WE’RE ALL FOR GOING THE EXTRA MILE.

WE’RE KAISER PERMANENTE OF SAN DIEGO, and we’re committed to helping you achieve total health. We have over 20 facilities throughout San Diego, including North County, and we’re continuing to grow — adding a new state of the art hospital and new medical offices — to provide San Diegans the best care possible, close to home. We’re also staffing those facilities with some of the brightest medical minds in their fields. In fact, you can choose from over 1100 amazing physicians across 90 specialties. Plus, we provide online tools that make it easy and convenient for you to manage your health. When it comes to helping you live well and be well, we’re going the extra mile and then some. To learn more, visit us at kp.org/sandiego.
The San Diego Business Journal was host to a panel discussion about Diversity & Inclusion on Thursday, Oct. 6, at the Rancho Bernardo Inn. Experts from companies that have an exceptional commitment to diversity and inclusion discussed strategies, shared ideas on how to align tactics with business objectives and answered questions from the audience. Sponsors for the program included Balfour Beatty Construction, Kaiser Permanente and Moss Adams LLP.
Groundbreaking men and women

Sure, construction is steel-toe boots and hardhats but it’s also innovation, community engagement, technology, and supplier diversity. Diverse employees and trade partners drive success at Balfour Beatty every day and we are spreading the word to others. *Where will your talent take you?*

No project is too large or too small for inclusion. To learn more about how diversity drives success at Balfour Beatty Construction, please visit:

[www.balfourbeattyus.com](http://www.balfourbeattyus.com)
It takes a world of diversity.

The most successful companies embrace workplace inclusion and benefit from an array of voices and backgrounds. We applaud the San Diego Business Journal’s Diversity & Inclusion forum for fostering the discussions that further this cause. Thank you for joining us.