

# “You Can Commit to Allyship by Joining a Team Member Network”

OPENING REMARKS BY THE  
CHIEF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION OFFICER  
AT AN AMERICAN COMPANY

PRIDE EVENT | VIRTUAL | 2021

## EXCERPT 1: SPEECH OPENING

“What / does TRUE EQUALITY / mean / to YOU?”

Decades ago, that was a question for  
**Barbara Gittings** – the **mother** of the **LGBTQ+**  
civil rights movement.

Her answer was clear:

**“Equality,” she said, “means more than passing laws.”**

**“The struggle is really won in the hearts and minds  
of the COMMUNITY, where it really counts.”**

Today ... as a **COMMUNITY** ... we gather  
to **reflect** in our **hearts** and **minds**  
on the meaning of **TRUE EQUALITY**,  
and to **join** our fellow Team Members at this  
**ADVANCING ALLYSHIP EVENT** in honor of Pride Month.

Each year, the month of June is dedicated to **uplifting**, **celebrating** and **supporting** our **LGBTQ+ community**.

And that is what we are going to do today.

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## EXCERPT 2

At our July Town Hall, we'll take a deep dive into all six elements of our strategy.

Today, I'd like to talk about one of these elements, and that is ALLYSHIP.

Allyship happens when Team Members actively support each other – including men, women, non-binary, ethnic groups and LGBTQ+ people.

But TRUE allyship is NOT just a one-time event!

Instead, it's a lifelong journey where we continue to listen, learn, evolve and uplift those around us.

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### EXCERPT 3

**And so today, I am inviting every Team Member to make a commitment to allyship.**

Think about it:

- When you are surrounded by people who are **just like you**, **you ALREADY HAVE instant allies!**
- But when you are **NOT** surrounded by people who are **just like you**, you **NEED allies!**

**Making a commitment to allyship** says that while I may not identify as a member of a certain group, **I can still:**

- **Educate myself** to **understand** our differences ...
- Treat all people **fairly** and **equitably** ...
- **Include everyone** in the workplace ...
- And **do the work** to become **a more empathetic** Team Member or leader

**Becoming an ally is an OPPORTUNITY!**

**It's a chance to immerse yourself across a community of difference!**

As you're deciding which Team Member Network to join,  
I challenge each of you to push yourself  
by going into spaces where you might feel  
uncomfortable at first.

Because that is where we all grow.

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When we advance allyship, everyone feels included!

And when people feel included, we know that  
inclusivity will lead to:

- Better business decisions ...
- More innovation ...
- Higher sales ...
- And greater financial performance

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#### EXCERPT 4

Last Tuesday at the beginning of Pride Month, I shared a statement with you that mentioned the Stonewall Riots of June 1969 – an uprising that became a turning point for the rights of LGBTQ+ Americans.

A decade before the Stonewall Riots, activist Barbara Gittings was already on the front lines fighting for true equality for gays, lesbians and other marginalized people.

Sadly, we still have a long way to go – especially if you consider the recent spike in violence against the transgender community.

President Joe / Biden called out these violent acts in his Pride proclamation June 1st, reminding us that 27 trans and gender-nonconforming people have lost their lives to violence so far this year.

**These horrific events fly in the face of what we know is true: That Trans Rights are Human Rights.**

**ALL OF US** are called to **defend** human rights, **support** true equality, and **win the hearts and minds of the community,** where it really counts.

And that is why today's **Advancing Allyship event** **is so important.**