



2023 ATLAS FORUM RECAPS

GENERAL SESSIONS

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME WITH JACK GRIFFIN

The 54th Atlas Forum in Seattle opened with a real-time, collaborative demonstration through a series of paintings showcasing this year's theme: Beyond Boundaries. Chairman and CEO of Atlas World Group, Inc., Jack Griffin, welcomed attendees to Seattle, strategically chosen because it is a hub for the arts and a city of expression, which is a powerful vehicle for expressing diversity.

Going "beyond boundaries" is recognizing that diversity makes both the workforce and our country stronger. Today, as the mobility industry continues to evolve, we face additional challenges including economic headwinds, rising interest rates, cost pressures, a softening housing market and more. Amid this shifting landscape, Jack reinforced the importance of integrating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) strategies into company priorities, including Atlas' strategic vision.

As Atlas celebrates its 75th anniversary, it continues to lead the industry as a billion dollar, diversified visionary organization, providing resources and tools to support its clients and stakeholders on topics ranging from global mobility, relocation policies, DE&I, remote work, emerging technologies and more. Highlighting Atlas' latest 2023 Corporate Relocation Survey, the industry's first and longest-running investigation into corporate relocation policies and practices, and the Forum program focused on DE&I, Jack reminded the audience that Atlas' purpose and vision is to support its Agents and clients to go Beyond Boundaries. In the midst of change and industry evolution, he graciously thanked the audience for its support of Atlas and its Agent family.

VERNICE "FLYGIRL" ARMOUR

Combat tests you. Being a beat cop tests you. Life tests you. Three brothers and being the only girl...tests you. Vernice "FlyGirl" Armour has been tested her whole life. A gutsy trailblazer, Armour's resume is an impressive collection of "firsts" including America's first Black female

combat pilot. She served two tours of duty in Iraq as a Marine. She was also a diversity liaison officer to the Pentagon for Headquarters Marine Corps.

As the first keynote speaker, Armour set the stage by sharing her goals of delivering simple steps to make gutsy moves and meet tough challenges head-on. In combat, she shared, things are constantly shifting and changing. Today's world is similar — inflation, recession, war, pandemic, the social justice movement — and we do not know what will happen a day, week, month, or year from now. Because of this, it is key to trust your gut and take swift action.

In a dynamic story about how she saved her fellow marines in Iraq, despite challenges she faced amid adversity, like low fuel, low ammunition, and an onslaught of enemy attacks, Armour offered a powerful real-life example of the payoffs of planning, preparedness, and acting on your gut feelings.

The command “You have permission to engage” has a different meaning in combat but can apply to the workplace and everyday life in a similar way. If, when, and how you engage is a choice, and you are the ground controller of your life. If you do not give yourself permission to engage in the face of new challenges, who will? Armour tied this idea back to the theme of “Beyond Boundaries,” giving the Forum audience “permission to engage” in the exploration and advancement DE&I in their own workplaces and lives, bringing minds together to solve challenges in different ways.

LISA LING

Executive Producer and host of *This is Life* on CNN, Lisa Ling shared her insatiable curiosity and hope to inspire others to experience life outside their comfort zones. She got her start in journalism at 18 years old with Channel One, where she was able to travel the world and share stories with students. She remembers returning home from these experiences with culture shock – her hometown residents unable to relate. She quickly realized journalism was the career path she wanted to pursue, and it was important to her to share what was happening both overseas and in her backyard.

An Asian American born in California, Ling lamented over not having learned about influential Asian Americans in school. She was largely inspired to pursue broadcast journalism through Connie Chung, one of the few Asian Americans portrayed on TV at the time. Ling said she encompassed everything save for the typical stereotypes. As a bold and strong Asian American woman, Ling aspired to be like her. Today, Ling strives to report compelling stories that promote inclusivity and to inspire a new generation in pursuing journalism and the power of human connection.

As a working mother, Ling shared that she tries to dislodge the word “balance” from her lexicon because balancing work life with home life is impossible. She acknowledged the importance of equity in home life and shared that, like a business, home life requires equal partnership amongst both partners to flourish. Just as she gained an immense level of compassion and understanding for humans throughout her work, she aims to raise her kids to harbor similar

sensibilities and to go beyond their comfort zones. With this year's Forum focused on going beyond boundaries, Ling reminds the audience that empathy is something you can learn and that the more people are exposed to diverse stories, the more understanding they will have

JEFF HENDERSON

Award-winning American chef Jeff Henderson discovered his passion in prison, where he was first introduced to culinary arts. While serving nearly ten years for drug trafficking and conspiracy, he discovered an untapped passion for cooking that ultimately led to executive chef positions at some of the country's most well-known restaurants. While he does not make excuses for the choices he made in the past, he told the audience that he aims to change the narrative of inclusion and help young people envision promising futures for themselves.

Growing up in south central Los Angeles, Henderson dreamed of experiencing a middle-class lifestyle. He said many students like him failed at school because nobody in their lives had connected education to job opportunities and a path out of poverty. Prison was where he interacted with people from different cultures for the first time, and he began to learn from inmates with varying life experiences. Additionally, Henderson took every opportunity to study anything that might give him an edge, from his fellow inmates' behaviors to books about the possibilities outside of prison.

While incarcerated, he started off working in kitchen prep, and eventually was named head inmate cook. He built a strong reputation with his culinary talent, and when he was released, he aimed to access the high-end culinary world. He studied chefs at fine dining restaurants and rebranded himself to emulate their habits, look polished, and gain access to more opportunities.

Despite his growing culinary resume, almost all the well-known restaurants in Las Vegas turned him down for jobs due to his record. However, Caesar's Palace saw his talent and determination and offered him a spot as the first Black Chef de Cuisine running its restaurants. From there, he hit the ground running and was eventually hired as the executive chef at the prestigious Bellagio. Through his experience, he shares the importance of inclusion and providing opportunities to those with different backgrounds. Today, he speaks of his own self transformation and works to change the lives of young disadvantaged and system-impacted men and women in the Las Vegas community through the Chef Jeff Project.

LEARNING SESSIONS

FOCUSING ON CULTURE IN A HYBRID WORK ENVIRONMENT

Moderator

Samantha Schneider - *CEO and Principal, AmpersandPeople*

Panelists

Veronica Davis - Global Mobility Manager, Plexus

Nicole Crews - Sr. Manager of Organization And Talent Development, Great Lakes Cheese

Billy Ho - Bay Area Mobility Management, Electronic Arts

This dynamic learning session explored talent recruitment strategies and how to cultivate employee engagement and retention in today's business climate. A panel of global mobility experts shared their experiences fostering organizational culture in a hybrid work environment while increasing and sustaining employee motivation and satisfaction from hiring to onboarding and beyond.

Most of the audience members shared that their mobility teams supported more than 100 relocations per year and that their companies have a hybrid work environment. As traditional office culture shifts to make room for more flexibility and new technology, the panelists discussed how their own organizations viewed talent mobility and the changing culture. Panelists discussed the importance of company culture. Some shared their organizations' renewed emphasis on learning in remote settings and bringing in experts to discover how to foster more connections, while creating more opportunities for employees to engage with each other while working remotely.

There was consensus among the panelists that data was vital in demonstrating to their leadership teams the value of relocation and talent mobility. Mobility teams can leverage data that is already available in the human resources system to justify the value of corporate relocation and how they can be an important consideration for career growth and retention. From a talent perspective, companies realize the significance of developing a formalized mobility program when hiring for more challenging locations. Panelists urged the audience to gather data from finance teams, heads of operations, manufacturing, and RMP (relocation management professionals).

Panelists also discussed an increased emphasis on retention after relocation. Cultures are shifting to focus more on mastery and proficiency versus performance KPIs as companies explore unique developmental opportunities. Companies are offering more professional development opportunities for people to come together throughout the year to encourage relocation and connection with potential new employees through the company's mission.

MAKING YOUR GLOBAL MOBILITY PROGRAM AN ALLY TO DE&I: AN INNOVATIVE WORKSHOP

Facilitators

Sandy Beyer, Senior Manager, Global Mobility, Salesforce

Carmen Kelley, Global Director Lateral Attorney Recruiting, Morrison & Foerster

Tricia Sirois, Senior Manager, Global Mobility, Adobe

This innovative, inclusive, and interactive workshop facilitated by Sandy Beyer from Salesforce, along with Carmen Kelley from Morrison & Foerster law firm and Tricia Sirois from Adobe, was designed to help find solutions to push our industry forward in the DE&I sphere, focusing on the visible and non-visible characteristics of diversity. By sharing a series of scenarios, the facilitators and participants took the conversation to a deeper level, exploring the truly transformative and actionable steps participants can take regardless of where their own company is on their DE&I journey.

One important step is reconsidering relocation assignments as a requirement for promotions. This is directly tied to company culture and creating a safe space to share why the decision to relocate may be difficult. This is relevant for individuals with disabilities, visible or invisible, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and more. Further, companies should offer “opt-in” programs where job opportunities, including those requiring a relocation, should be advertised across the company to create equal opportunities. This ties to inclusion efforts, allowing individuals to “opt-in” if they are interested in opportunities that may require relocation.

Companies must also take culture into account when it comes to corporate relocations. For individuals relocating, especially internationally, there are many cultural elements that factor into a decision to move. For example, Europe is behind when it comes to accessibility, so it is important to engage with suppliers on the ground to understand cost and healthcare options for anyone who may need physical assistance. Relocation managers should consider innovative and flexible options for countries with safety risks and offer transparent information. This way, individuals have all the information needed to make an informed decision from the outset. Another major takeaway for companies is to create relocation policies that are inclusive from the outset. Instead of making exceptions for individual transferees, relocation policies should be built with “inclusions” that proactively include examples and scenarios that may need to be addressed.

The global mobility landscape is constantly evolving, and there is always room for improvement when it comes to making your program an ally to DE&I. By factoring in the steps outlined in this workshop, you are already on the right path to creating a more inclusive mobility experience for your company and workforce.

INDUSTRY EXPERT INSIGHTS

Speaker

Bob Costello, Chief Economist & Senior VP, American Trucking Associations (ATA)

To help drive informed business decisions for the Forum audience, the American Trucking Associations' Bob Costello gave a comprehensive overview of the macroeconomic trends as they relate to workforce development and drivers. Costello shared that while a recession is coming, it will likely be short and shallow. However, the timing is more difficult to determine, especially with continued strength in services and the labor market. Real GDP, annual growth and key U.S. employment metrics are already above pre-pandemic levels, while these same metrics took six years to return after the 2008 recession. Because the labor market is so tight, he shared that layoffs will slow down, businesses will begin to hoard labor, and wages will likely go up. With a mild and short recession coming, inflation will remain high and consumer behavior will shift from goods to services, helping to restabilize recent supply chain challenges. At the same time, the ongoing truck driver shortage will continue to have reverberating economic and supply chain impacts if it is not addressed through shifting policies related to drug testing, congestion, lack of parking and wait times, and individual contractor models.

Speaker

Rebecca Brewster, President & COO, American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI)

Industry expert Rebecca Brewster provided a deep dive on the state of the trucking industry, including ATRI's top industry issues survey. She shared that while the price of fuel was the top issue for the first time in 2022, truck parking is still a major concern for drivers, especially women drivers that feel unsafe without reliable parking. The areas with the greatest bottleneck issues are in New Jersey, and Chicago, Illinois.

Diving into another trending industry topic, Brewster gave an overview of ATRI's latest report on zero-emission trucks (ZETs). With the introduction of ZETs, the trucking industry may have viable alternatives to internal combustion engines. On the positive side, ZETs are not powered with diesel, and use electricity that is either stored in batteries or produced onboard with hydrogen to power an electric motor, and they do not produce direct tailpipe emissions during operations. However, from a life-cycle perspective, ZETs are still responsible for generating greenhouse gasses, such as carbon dioxide, which are released during the production of ZET fuels, the production and disposal of ZET vehicles, and their electricity storage equipment.

While the environmental motivation to adopt ZETs is growing, there are several cost considerations, including the replacement of existing Class 8 trucks with significantly higher-priced trucks, which could disrupt the supply chain if the transition is forced too early. Another factor is that an entirely new approach to refueling is needed. It would take over 40% of current electricity production to power the full replacement and adoption of ZETs. Lastly, one must consider changes to the operational structure of the trucking industry due to decreased range capabilities.

Brewster concluded that the core motivations for a shift to ZETs remain environmental, and it may be possible to decrease the trucking industry's emissions through their deployment. However, it is important to consider the cost implications, in addition to the charging infrastructure, which she warned could result in the parking crisis 2.0.

Speaker

Lynn Shotwell, GMS, SHRM-SCP, President & CEO, Worldwide ERC®

Industry expert Lynn Shotwell opened her session with a reminder that today's hybrid world in which we all live and work is driving more opportunities for mobility. Her expert insights focused on three priorities for her organization, Worldwide ERC®, to support the mobility community: research studying workplace flexibility, leadership on environmental sustainability, and public policy advocacy.

Today, 45% of the workforce is hybrid (in office or at home), 39% is full-time in office, and 5% is fully remote. There has been a significant increase in the number of organizations offering their employees self-initiated, short-term transfer options since 2020, with high employee participation. This showcases that talent mobility is key to building the future workforce.

At the same time, government and corporate sustainability requirements are becoming increasingly rigorous in response to consumer demands and climate change. Recognizing that relocation has a large environmental impact, global mobility professionals must be committed to helping meet those standards and goals. Today, almost 90% of senior HR leaders reported their organizations have a sustainability strategy, according to Worldwide ERC® research, with 76% reporting they have measurable targets for their sustainability goals. Worldwide ERC® convened the Coalition for Greener Mobility to create standards around environmental sustainability in the mobility landscape.

Lastly, Shotwell shared Worldwide ERC®'s public policy advocacy priorities, which include moving expense and tax reduction, immigration, the Canadian real estate prohibition, data privacy, and sustainability.