Forbes names University of Arizona a 'Best Employer for Diversity'

University Communications
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The University of Arizona has made its inaugural appearance on Forbes' third annual Best Employers For Diversity list, placing at No. 241 out of 500 businesses with at least 1,000 employees. The University is one of only four employers headquartered in Arizona to be included on the national list and one of only 30 education institutions to earn the recognition.

"Our vision for the University of Arizona as a global leader in the Fourth Industrial Revolution requires a broad commitment to a welcoming and supportive atmosphere," said University President Robert C. Robbins. "Reaching our goal of a world where all people can achieve their potential, and where we all work together to solve our most pressing challenges, is only possible if we live our core values of inclusion and compassion every day. I am grateful Forbes has recognized our continued efforts to live these values not only for our students, but for each other in the workplace."

The University employs more than 16,000 faculty and staff. According to 2019 statistics, more than 54% of employees are women and roughly half belong to a minority group. In 2018, the University earned the designation of Hispanic-Serving Institution from the U.S. Department of Education for its success in the enrollment of Hispanic students and in providing educational opportunities to them. More than 26% of employees are Hispanic or Latino.

"We are especially proud to be recognized as one of the best employers for diversity," said Helena Rodrigues, vice president and chief human resources officer. "Diversity and inclusion are as much a part of our employee programs as they are a part of how we serve students. Our commitment toward our status as a land-grant university and a Hispanic-Serving Institution means it is vital that our employees reflect and honor the diversity of the students we serve."

The University offers programs, such as child care support and employee advising, that remove barriers for employees to enjoy a fulfilling work life. The Office of Inclusion and Multicultural Engagement, in partnership with the Division of Human Resources and the Office of the Provost, offers the Inclusive Leadership Program to advance leadership efforts in diversity and inclusion, and to develop collaborations among university leaders. In addition, the Disability Resource Center is committed to inclusive workplace practices and implementing universal design.

Inclusive excellence is the concept that drives the value and practice of diversity and inclusiveness at the University. At the center of inclusive excellence is the recognition and acceptance of the talents, worldviews, perceptions, cultures and skills that diverse communities bring to the educational enterprise that can be harnessed to prepare students for
leading, living and working in a diverse world.

Forbes partnered with market research firm Statista to survey 60,000 American employees anonymously, in order to allow respondents to share their experiences and opinions freely. Respondents were first asked to rate their organizations on criteria such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation equality, as well as that of general diversity. These responses were reviewed for potential diversity gaps.

Statista then asked respondents belonging to minority groups to nominate organizations other than their own. The final list, released Jan. 21, ranks the 500 employers that not only received the most recommendations, but also boast the most diverse boards and executive ranks and the most proactive diversity and inclusion initiatives.

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