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Welcome, everyone, And thank you for tuning in to another Leaders Over Lunch Series.

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Today's topic is The Future of Work, and it's powered by Mass Technology Leadership Council.

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Now, I'm doctor Keith Motley, typically serving as Chancellor Emeritus Professor at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

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But today, I humbly serve again as consultant, president, and CEO of the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts.

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But I'm joined today by some incredible colleagues, my co-hosts, of course, the Chairman of the Board, for the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, Attorney Joseph's, the, but also Mass T L C CEO Tom Hopcroft.

0:57

Welcome. We're so glad to see you here.

1:01

Attorney Feaster!

1:03

thank you very much, doctor Motley. And I'm so always pleased to co-host this leaders over the lunch with you. I'm pleased to have Tom Hopcroft with us today. So, Tom, welcome. This is an exciting time and exciting topic.

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We're on workforce development is the mainstay of what the urban league does.

1:26

So I'm excited to have our panelists educate our viewing audience on some of the ways in which they can get into the tech industry, and we're so fortunate to have Tom. He heads the the association.

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And I'm sure that he will have many exciting things to tell us today. So, Tom, I'm going to turn it to you as our fellow co-host of this morning.

1:49

Well, thank you, Chairman, and thank you, doctor Motley. And then, thanks, of course, to all of you who are tuning in to this very special leader's over lunch session today.

1:58

I'd also like to give a quick shout out, and thank you, to ..., Social Justice Underwriter's, Akamai Technologies, and PTC.

2:06

As CEO of Mass Tech Leadership Council, I spend a lot of time, in the community, working with our tech company members to accelerate innovation, growth, and the development of an inclusive tech ecosystem here in Massachusetts.

2:19

And it's forums like this that really help us all gain a better understanding of how we can make progress towards positive change.

2:27

So we have a very full agenda I know today, so I'd like to jump right in, and kick things off by introducing our first speaker.

2:34

As Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Roslyn Acosta and manages the Commonwealth's Workforce Development and Labor Departments.

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She chairs the Workforce Skills Cabinet alongside the Secretary of Education and the Secretary for Housing and Economic Development.

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I've known Secretary Acosta for some time and know her to be a tireless advocate helping to connect talent with opportunity.

2:55

So please join me in welcoming Secretary Roslin Acosta.

3:00

Secretary, or you hear Very sorry, she is not here yet. So, maybe we bring in Africa. We were able to bring her on Wednesday.

3:11

So they tried to Tom. That was a great introduction and we'll have the opportunities as soon as the Secretary children will do that.

3:19

But I'm going to I want to go to if we could bring up the panelists because I wanted to be able to begin the conversation with doctor Aisha Francis doctor.

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Well Beth Chandler from WW and with You Tom.

3:37

I want to be able to have the conversation with you. So, let's get started, you know, and any one of you three can start. I'd like to hit a comment from each of you.

3:48

How cool is it for the tech industry?

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Doc.

3:52

Oh, doctor, the Secretary has joined us.

3:55

No, no. I wanted to make sure that the audience knows a few things before we get started.

4:01

Oh, OK. Well, CEO. I'm so excited with this. And today's panel that I've jumped right ahead.

4:07

so doctor Motley please Well, I'm excited too, because we have an incredible group of leaders here.

4:13

But also, I want the audience to know because they accused us of this, that you put your questions. There's a question feature.

4:21

It's in your toolbox.

4:23

We welcome for you to ask these questions throughout the hour.

4:27

Yes. We will watch it. We have several people doing that for us today.

4:32

Given the tight timeframe, we're going to be answering questions, post program today, which is something new for you, and we'll be sending them to all of the attendees that are here.

4:45

So go ahead.

4:47

Mister Chairman, why don't you get us started.

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Thank you very much, Doctor Motley.

4:53

This is for Aisha, Beth, and Tom, How important is it for the tech industry to get DEI Right?

5:04

I issue. Why don't we start with you?

5:06

Certainly, Well, thank you again for the opportunity to speak, I'm so glad to be here with these esteemed panelists.

5:14

I think, in this, it's been important, too, to get diversity, equity.

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Inclusion, right? I think the question is what does that look like for each institution, and each organization, and that might be different.

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As a minority serving institution, Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology is happy to see this focus on, on equity.

5:45

It's unfortunate.

5:47

The kind of the cause over the past 12 months, that that impetus, and the catalyst is unfortunate.

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But we are where we are, and it is incredibly vital for the economic mobility of our individual community members, and for the economic vitality of our cities, not only Boston, but surrounding cities, that we create an opportunity for more people to become part of the technical economy in an equitable way.

6:24

And Beth, I wanted to come to you, because I know that Y W has a training program. You go in as a consultant and work with companies on their diversity, equity, and inclusion matters. Can you talk a little bit or respond to the same question? How important is it for the tech industry to get the DE and I, right?

6:44

Yeah. It's, it's unfortunate to even have to have that question.

6:48

Right. It's important because it matters to everybody. I think there was an article in the globe today that talks about, if particularly marginalized communities, if that wealth gap was close, what that means for the economy, for Massachusetts, that benefits everybody in Massachusetts, right? So, we all win, when we make sure our organizations are inclusive. So, that's quite right, if we consider ourselves, the city on the hill, if we consider ourselves, you know, wanting to be the best that we can be, that means we need to be, we need to have employees who can be the best that they can be in organizations. Because then, we all thrive. Nobody loses out.

7:24

Alright, So that's what matters, and ways to do that is, we have to acknowledge that there's a problem.

7:29

I have certainly talked to tech organizations that say, we don't have a problem, because look at our numbers. And they don't look necessarily at all diversity. They may have great numbers for folks who identify as Asian and Indian, right? But what about black and LatinX and Indigenous people.

7:45

Right, so, when you lump them all together, yeah, you might look pretty good, but you're not really looking at where there may be a problem.

7:51

And also, where are people in your organization? Because a lot of people, again, who identify as Asian and Indian get stuck in that middle layer, right? They're not moving up at all. So there's still an issue. So what we do with organizations is help them to identify where they are having issues. Because, as doctor Francis says, the issues may be different in different organizations.

8:12

But what is the what is the tool so that you can talk about this within your organization. You can understand where there are pressures and the reason why people are uncomfortable.

8:22

And so, how do you talk about that? And then, how do you identify, really, where are the problems, and where should you focus? so you can really see change within your organization?

8:32

It's an issue.

8:33

I don't know why we have to talk about why isn't it, it benefits everybody, if everyone's able to thrive and be successful, we all win. So, who doesn't want their organization to make more? Because that means more, is going into my pocket and work there.

8:46

And we can't lump everybody together because different groups have different challenges, and so we need to really be targeted in our approach.

8:54

That's one reason why we wanted to target on the tech industry. And of course, having Tom here. As the CEO of the Tech Leadership Council, he certainly has the inflow, which the leadership capabilities to speak to his membership about this. So Tom, I'll put the same question to you. For your industry that you oversee is by being the CEO of the Leadership Council, How important this is for your members to get the D, E, and I. Right.

9:23

So, you know, it's always been the right thing to do. And there are always been people in the company who are the most people know that what I think has been changing lately is the appreciation that it's critical business imperative.

9:35

No, as, you know, whoever your stakeholders, your employees you have, you're trying to attract talent. And we have the history of racism in Boston. Keep some of the best and brightest talent from accepting jobs here. You know, as we think about belonging in a sector that is largely white and largely male You're creating that sense within the companies. I think, you know, things have been changing at a glacial pace. I think this last year has accelerated the awareness and the intentionality of many of our members. So, I think it's a very important issue right now.

10:12

Doctor Motley to you.

10:18

You may be on mute.

10:19

Your muted, doctor Motley?

10:22

Hmm.

10:24

You're still on mute?

10:27

Yes, I call myself not wanting to grieve too heavy into the microphone, so welcome Niraj.

10:34

We're so grateful to see you, but also welcome Rana. We're so grateful to see you as well.

10:40

Thank you both for being here today.

10:43

So this question is for the two of you as executive heads of your companies.

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And so, according to a report from CBN, CNBC dot com dated March 2021, the unemployment rate, of course, fell to 5.6% in February for white workers But for Black and Hispanic workers, the reported jobless rates were 9.89 point 9.5%, in the respectively.

11:15

As the heads of your company.

11:17

Whether your initiatives towards providing opportunities and those that are used to prevent the fall of unemployment or people of color.

11:29

Niraj do you want to go first.

11:31

Sure, I'm happy to, you know what I would say, well, we found.

11:36

So we have kind of a wide set of jobs spread over a wide set of geographies. So we have dozens of locations in the US. And then, we have locations in other countries as well.

11:45

But what we found is that, wanting to have the best workforce, and wanting to have enough people relative to our growth, it really requires that you're really reaching into all all folks in the population, Like, there's just not enough, great people for every company to hire everyone they want to hire.

12:03

And so, what we found is that the way we can control our own destiny is by not worrying about what, you know, others might do, or what they find easy or whatnot, but rather creating, will you call it very ambitious type of recruiting strategies.

12:18

Where we, proactively with our own teams, can, can reach much deeper into whether it be schools or communities Or just through direct sourcing of candidates. To basically be able to get access to the talent that's out there, Tell them about what we're doing at wayfair, get them interested, and get them on board.

12:37

And so, I think the reality is, any company that thinks there's going to be enough people to hire, if they're not more ambitious, I think they're going find that that's going to be a problem, You're even hearing some of that right now. People are saying, Oh, well, I can't hire enough people.

12:49

so, you know, too hard for me to scale my business, or skip.

12:53

I think that's true. But, then, the question is, what are they doing about it? Because, I think, I think that's the way you do it.

12:58

And so, to your point where there's pockets where, you know, unemployment is higher, Well, that's it, that you can do that as an opportunity if you're trying to grow your business by hiring folks. Or, How do you reach in and get more folks aware of your company?

13:09

And interested in working, and then sometimes it also gets you to have to answer questions around transportation, or childcare, or other things that tie into ways that you basically can get folks? Who maybe are going to have a hard time? Working in a certain set up? You know, Maybe if it's a job that they can work from home, or maybe it's job where they're shift? Schedule, flexibility, or things like that? So I think there's a variety of ways to tackle.

13:34

Want to build on that, plus 1 to 2 being flexible. So, I'm the co-founder and CEO of ..., we are an MIT company that is on a mission to humanize technology. So, we're very much an AI first company.

13:48

I'm also on the Board of Mass TLC and what Tom said about kind of diversity, equity inclusion, being a business imperative, couldn't have been more chore for us and So, we're in the business of building AI. and if the voices around the table who are developing, designing, and deploying these algorithms are not diverse, the end product is going to be biased. And that's one of the biggest problems in the AI space today. So, our way of mitigating this bias is to include that, is to make sure our team is both diverse and inclusive.

14:21

We have a very robust summer internship program. We started with high school kids, but we also have undergrads and post grads.

14:29

And also, over the last couple of years, we've really committed to diversifying the pool of, of, of individuals we bring into the internship program. We noticed a pattern that when we advertise, we get the same, we tap into the same pool of talent.

14:45

And we made a very conscious decision to reach into these pools that wouldn't necessarily know about ...

14:52

or wouldn't even think to apply to these opportunities.

14:56

And what we look for isn't necessarily that you have an AI background but it's more that you have, you know, the tenacity, the willingness to learn and grow and we bring these, you know, people in and, and we, we, we really cultivate and train them, and then they are able to take on a job at ... or other tech companies in this space.

15:17

So, yeah, I really think it is a business imperative. It's not just about doing what's right.

15:24

If you want to be a competitive tech company, you have to commit to including diverse voices.

15:35

I'm going to tread into the conversation with ... and Beth and me on this, on this next question.

15:44

We've had in, I guess I'll use an unusual year in far as an employment market.

15:52

Because of the pandemic, we had to do many adjustments.

15:55

And I'm sure I served as a Trustee for Ben Franklin Institute of Technology. So I know you're training your students in order to get them prepared for the workplace. I mentioned about Beth having terms of teaching and DE&I from the form of Y W.

16:13

And of course, Fred, I want to thank you for having a board member and being having Chris serve on our board, so job cases right there with us.

16:22

So the question I have is that because of this strange working environment that we had this year, where most people working remotely, et cetera, and not being in the physical office or the worksite, and certainly some of these arrangements are going to, probably did. And maybe you can tell me.

16:40

Maybe I'm just speculating, but I think I have enough anecdotal data to suggest that it would could exacerbate the existing diversity challenges and highlight unconscious biases that may exist.

16:53

How would you go about planning to bridge these gaps?

16:56

I want to start with you, Fred, because job case looks at a broad array of, of employment opportunities.

17:01

So, Fred, and then ... and Beth, you can chime in as well.

17:07

I appreciate that, and I think your framing, Joseph, is, is wildly appropriate exacerbate something that's already there?

17:15

And so when we think about the extraordinary challenges of remote work, one of the it kind of forces you, especially those early days of Zoom.

17:23

Where you look at yourself speaking back, what a chance to see how you act in meetings.

17:28

And what became clear is, we had a cultural principal at ... job case, for example.

17:35

That's the golden rule. Treat others like you'd like to be treated. This was a foundational principle of ours.

17:41

What we realize is we needed to update, that We call it the platinum rule. Treat others like they'd like to be treated.

17:47

Turns out people who didn't grow up in the mid-west in the seventies of a dad who was a marine that drops F bombs. That's really not necessarily the way other people like to be treated.

17:56

So that acknowledgement helps to not accidentally speak over people in meetings. That acknowledgment helps to as we define a DEI Council to create safe spaces for conversations that might be difficult without having a place in a space for it.

18:12

So I think that there's got to be some purposeful retrospection to make sure as you're trying to do the right thing.

18:19

And I love the way that Beth and Niraj had framed it in terms of when you heard Niraj talk, you can tell that he's the kind of executive.

18:30

That really gets the value of diversity. Here's the challenge for people today, I think.

18:35

We're in a zone where everyone wants to have the metrics right for their company.

18:39

Some really mean it. They get that if you have tight labor markets, look at the opportunity near I seize the opportunity. Oh, my God, we left people out of the labor force, That can help grow my company. I can be better at serving consumers that represent a diverse country, et cetera.

18:52

There's others that, to best point, need to get the metrics right. And so what qualifies for that bucket and doesn't necessarily look if it's in the executive team or not doesn't necessarily look at diversity across many spectrums.

19:05

And so, I think that you have an opportunity for real change, and identify the companies that understand, that, understand that this actually moves their companies forward in a very productive way.

19:18

And the remote aspect just kind of focuses the lens.

19:22

And it focuses it in such a way that if you're a well meaning company, you now have the tools and the, the discovery of where you might have weaknesses to go address, in terms of the culture and et cetera.

19:35

Where, where you may not really walk the walk, it's going to make it worse. And, and I think that one way, it makes it worse, or I pass the ball back to you and Asia.

19:46

And a place that we're concerned is, I forget, who mentioned earlier, I think it was Tom, that we should all acknowledge Boston has got some tough things to come to grips with ourselves.

19:58

We do. We win in a lot of ways.

20:02

We went into technical when you think about great cities in this nation, were either first or second, maybe San Francisco, Stanford, but were, let's say we were either first or second. I'm leading in technology, that's why Niraj is building this great firm here, right, et cetera. Why, we're trying to build this great firm here.

20:19

Um, a big part of that is because we have MIT, we've got Northeastern, we got BC, we've got Harvard.

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So therefore, Moderna's got this problem right here, right? Where you guys are crushing the problem right here, et cetera.

20:34

But where Boston falls down and where we can't do it ourselves as a company, and remote work makes us worse.

20:46

If I look around at cities, I so admire Atlanta, holy smokes, and they got this figured out.

20:52

And I think there is a metaphor here.

20:54

Were great at technology. We got MIT. We got however we got Northeastern.

20:58

They've got these historical black colleges and universities that provide a real good heartbeat to then build around technology. Universities can build a heartbeat around.

21:08

So how can we learn from that?

21:10

How can we make it so that, instead of the risk right now, that, as all of us in the corporate infrastructure are trying to get diversity?

21:20

How do we make sure that we're not reporting to Tom and to you and Secretary Acosta, two years from now? look how great we are in diversity.

21:27

But our diversity is on these remote channels outside of Boston, outside of Worcester outside of Springfield.

21:33

How do we bring it into here? And I don't think that happens, without all the people here, and maybe all the people listening, figuring. how can we get an inclusive community outside of the companies, so that we're not just checking boxes, but we're actually making real growth just for our firms, but also for our city.

21:51

And Beth, I want to come to you, because you, in your training, you obviously have those conversations.

21:57

This album included call a distance learning or distance working in that we have doing Zoom. I'm zoomed out by, now We're having done it over a year. By being away from my colleagues, I get A chance to see doctor modeling, because he's always right. Down the street. But everybody else, I don't have an opportunity to see you.

22:15

So how is that, how has, this has to believe this way of life that we've had the past year does exacerbate what we're trying to do, as far as the DE&I it's a great question, and I don't know if I believe the answer is yes or no.

22:33

All right. I think there has been great opportunity with people being able to work remotely, and it allows for flexibility.

22:40

It makes it a little easier, particularly for people that may have childcare demands. You know, adults, they're taking care of, or whatever, right?

22:47

If you have the flexibility to just be responsible for producing what you say you're going to produce, and not have to have FaceTime that, there's a value there, right? And it can certainly help people, particularly marginalized people, who may have may be single parents or, you know, multi-generational families. So there's value to that.

23:04

I think the questioner a question is, how are organizations leveraging that?

23:10

Right, and how are they being intentional? And so we did a worksheet on how to have intentional meetings, right. And so, working in Zoom, it's two-dimensional. So you can't always see, if I'm trying to give UI contacts, I can't see anybody, really, what they're, how they're reacting, right? So, what are the ways that we are building meetings?

23:28

We are building protocols to allow people to really engage, Alright, how are we using even the chat function to have different conversations? How are we thinking about meeting norms, and we should think about meeting norms? Whether we're in person or online, but particularly online, like, how are we making sure we're including people when you said, Joseph, you get to see that the ..., because you live in the neighborhood, right? Well, how do we, particularly as leaders, think about the staff? We don't see, one of the ways that I operate internally when I'm in the office is I have conversations in the hallway, right? That's just how I hear how people are doing. I can't do that now. So how am I being intentional reaching out to staff that I'm not engage with on a regular basis? Right? Because if I'm not doing that, then I'm leaving out a whole bunch of folks.

24:11

Right?

24:11

And so, I think a part of it is, how do we be intentional with remote working remotely, because there are things that we can leverage. And we've, we've had, you know, in our workshops, we've been doing them remotely. And we were really concerned that people wouldn't engage in conversations, because it's harder remotely in some ways, to create environments where people feel connected to have the deeper conversations they need to have to move this forward internally. And it actually has provided value. Because people have said to us, you know what?

24:41

If we were in the office, I may not have said this thing that was really bothering me, because I was afraid to have to walk into my colleagues right afterwards in the hallway.

24:49

But now, once the workshop's over, I'm off camera, I can do my thing and I don't have to worry about when I'm going to run into somebody immediately.

24:58

I can ease myself back into the office, and so we've had people sharing, some really heartfelt challenges that they've been having in their organizations that they may not have done if we were giving in person. So again, I think there is some value that we can take from this remote world, but we have to be intentional on how we're capturing that and being also intentional about not excluding people. and what are the different things we can put in place to ensure we're creating as inclusive and environment. And seeing people that we may not be able to see on camera, but making sure we're hearing their voices, and reaching out to them, if we haven't seen them.

25:36

Are you, sure.

25:37

So I'm gonna return Fred.

25:40

I feel like your, your comments were really crush it.

25:46

And what I want to point out is that in our area, which is the resource rich in terms of access to higher education, one of the challenges of the greater Boston areas that we have overlooked, the

institutions that most people of color sheets for their higher education. So you read through a litany of Colleges.

26:10

American Councils on Education did a study recently on, you know, where are students of color, and 40 to 45% of students of color enroll in two year colleges?

26:23

So, no. We do not have, historically, black colleges and universities in the Boston area, But we do have minority serving institutions, which literally have the same mission.

26:33

The only difference is that HBCUs were founded before 19, 60, for the express purpose of serving communities of color.

26:41

And there are all these other colleges, like Cambridge College, like mentioned and Franklin Institute of Technology, like Urban College, that have that mission and were founded later.

26:52

And we are here, and, frankly, we've been ignored because Boston is a city, and an area and Massachusetts is an area that, that trades on the currency of prestige, and that's unfortunate, because we, at these kinds of institutions, that's, that's where students of color are.

27:11

And if, you know, to the extent that people are still claiming they can't find them, it's because you're not looking we're literally in your own backyard.

27:19

We are, and we are here, And students are here, by the hundreds and thousands. And so, I think there is an opportunity for institutions here.

27:33

Trade groups, companies to invest in minority serving institutions in our midst, and to do that with the same level enthusiasm that we invest in the IES, and the near IDs.

27:50

And the other institutions that are here, because there's been a lack of investment into your colleges locally. And that's where to the detriment of the economy, and to the detriment of students of color, who choose these institutions as their first choice institutions.

28:08

So, Asia, let me, let me That's awesome. We have 200 employees, and we're here in Boston, but job case is the third largest online destination for career services in the nation.

28:20

So one of the things that's really important to me that I was hoping to learn during this time together, and I think you, you helped landed for me, is, how can we get something done this summer. Like, I mean, yeah, we wanted to do things over the years. How do we, how do we do something now?

28:34

So let Daphne reach out to you right after this, and I welcome anybody else on the call who wants to join this. But let's solve it for, you know, us directly.

28:42

But more than that, how can jog case crescendo what you're saying for your two year institutions and others, and really make an impact.

28:50

I'm making sure that that, when we come to next summer, you're not so saying, we're right here. Nobody knows about us, we have this problem. Because there's, and there's an opportunity right now. We have tight labor markets.

29:01

We have an new appreciation that racial injustice is directly tied to economic injustice.

29:07

You saying, we've got the solution right here. We're not being seen. So this sounds like a great action step and get started, like, tomorrow on?

29:14

I think it's an incredible opportunity. Yeah.

29:18

And I would also - Dr. Motley Tom, put his hand up as well. He wants to have a say, before you get to your next question. - I just wanted to say, this is one of those messages that are most progressive and forward leaning. employers have figured this out, but many have not that you need to change the job, rather, use a four year college. You're basically explaining, you, know, that this entire pipeline of talent that you have in your patients. And so we see a lot of organizations that work with Benjamin Franklin and many of the other Cambridge College and all the bunker hill. And many of the other schools, you know, flowing talent in through the apprenticeship programs, through, boot camps and other training programs, well, but I think it's a really important. Why did you want to double down on it?

30:08

Well, I will still want to double down on the fact that, even when sometimes when you're a four year college, like the University of Massachusetts, Boston, the most diverse, the third most in the country, most diverse in New England.

30:22

But you're in a school.

30:23

We're in a place where private's dominate, and I'm one of those guys who was educated in a private space. But lead a public space.

30:32

So I know the value of that, but let's not go there.

30:36

But also, you have the Urban League of Easter, Massachusetts that has been serving this commonweal for 102 years as an economic first responder.

30:48

And so, brings me to the question, know, I see the reports that McKinsey and others have put out it, talking about 60% of this workforce, particularly the African American workforce is concentrated and five occupational categories. When you talk about automation risks.

31:09

And those are transportation, office, and administrative support.

31:13

Production, food, prep, sales, all great opportunities.

31:18

But what can we do to sort of mitigate this, this kind of placement, move into some of the other spaces?

31:26

And that's something I wanted Niraj and wanted to talk about, if you don't mind, uh, talk about that, because I heard, well, talking about being left out of the workforce, or feeling left out.

31:40

So let's talk about some of the things that we can do to mitigate that displace.

31:45

Yeah, I mean, I, again, we are right smack in the middle of the AI, kind of, you know, the applications of AI across industry. And I do see the risk of some jobs becoming obsolete.

32:00

But I also see that there's a lot of demand for new jobs, right? Completely new jobs and so reskilling becomes really critical.

32:09

Um, I think there's a lot of opportunity in our world where we sit across the machine learning pipeline. So new jobs, like data acquisition specialists, right? You don't have to have a degree in computer science, or data science. You really, just, essentially, you need to be organized and again, a go getter. And that's an entirely new job that's available. And it's very hot right now.

32:32

So across the machine learning pipeline, there's new job opportunities that don't require, you know, of a four year degree.

32:41

And it's just a matter of of making sure that people know about these opportunities, right, like these pockets of the population know about these opportunities.

32:56

No, I would echo. I would echo that.

32:58

The other thing I would say is, one of the things we've been working on, and then separately, my wife through some of the things our family does on the philanthropy side.

33:09

And then, as well as me, and some of the things I do on that, kind of, for the business purpose, but outside of Wayfair, there's a whole, I think there's a challenge. There's jobs. There's a lot of new jobs being created.

33:22

Some of them, as was just referenced, are just not well understood.

33:27

And the skills you need for them, the training is actually can be done while someone is in high school or right after high school, if it's a focus area.

33:36

But the problem is, often, the job pipelines and the educational pipelines are, they're not connected particularly well.

33:44

So, I think there's actually an opportunity, You know, there's general reskilling, which I think can be done in similar manner, which is, have a focus on, what is the large number of jobs? What does that type of job you're trying to actually fill is where this quantity of I'm one of the key skills someone has.

33:58

And then how do you go back and create a pipeline that's tied back to whether it be high school education or, you know, 1 or 2 year program after that.

34:08

Because I think you can get a lot of examples where you can get very good outcomes, and you can get folks into a career path where actually there continues to be upward mobility. The economic outcomes are significant.

34:18

But the disconnect, it's hard to solve when there's a disconnect.

34:21

And so some companies are very good at just proactively reaching and solving it, but I think for every company that's good at that, there's quite a few who aren't.

34:29

And if it's a smaller employer, they typically don't have the resources to try to reach down and solve it on their own.

34:33

So I do think there's kind of continuity of pipeline thing. That's it.

34:37

That's a real opportunity, and I think that's getting, starting to be widely recognized. Because I've, you know, quite a number of different groups.

34:45

Like I'm a member of the Masters to Better Partnership, for example, and a bunch of work we're doing. It's about that concept.

34:51

Because that's how we start saying, Well, how do we create, you know, you know, Why did we get 100,000 folks, you know, 50,000 folks in Massachusetts connected to these good outcomes. You start, you start. This is a type of exercise that makes it seem very possible.

35:05

Where some of the one-off start to not feel like they're going to be that skilled.

35:10

Can I?

35:11

Can I put a plug in for Year Up?

35:16

It's an organization, and they have a data set, like a data track. And we've been able to source talent from, from that group, as well, and that's been really successful.

35:29

I see your hand, OK. I've got this, chairman. I just wanted to also point out that the industry research point of view, your tech, on average, pays twice the state average.

35:39

So, when you look at, you know, you know, income disparities, figuring out this problem is critical, because you're, you won't be able to address it without, you know, high income categories, tech, and other knowledge sectors in the state.

35:55

Yeah, bringing more people into them.

35:57

I'll also add, I think, organizations thinking about the internal trading that they can do.

36:02

Often times, you know, you hire great employee. And it may be great for them to transition to something else internally, but there is no training that happens for them to do that, right? And so, how can employee employers think about, what is, what are the supports? And that we provide internal employees so that they can move up.

36:21

I think the other thing that sometimes gets in the way is the hometown discount, right? We're often, we may hire somebody, and it's, you know, they're great employees, they're ready to move up. And if there's an opportunity, we don't necessarily pay them what that new opportunity is, because we've hired them at a lower mountain, so we say, Oh, hey, we raised them by 20%. That's still looks great for them, but we're not putting them in the right category, so the only way they can really move up economically, they have to leave your organization.

36:50

And why would you want to lose a great employee, right? And so I think companies need to think about how are they, their expectations around particularly entry level employees and how they compensate them and support them in moving up in the organization and not saying, you know, how can I save some box by moving somebody out.

37:09

And this is increasing.

37:13

You are right?

37:15

Yeah, afraid, I can't see everybody who wants to jump and go ahead.

37:20

The whole town discount, I thought that's the direction we're going in with the fact that there's so many local, so much local talent. But we're also it is an area that attracts talent from around the world.

37:36

But, what we know is often that talent leads, and it doesn't mean that we should, you know, shouldn't invest in that talent, but, you know, local kids tend to stay close to home.

37:47

It's, I think that there's that sense that, that it's another way in which, we are perhaps, I'm looking askance at people who are in the neighborhoods, in the neighborhoods, that businesses locally. And we can, you know, spend more time doing that. And sometimes institutions place a premium on the competitiveness of their internship processes or co-op processes, you know, we had 2000 applicants for 20 spots.

38:15

I don't know that that's the best use of time for, you know, the 1500 applicants is to, to drive that type of competition where I think there are other opportunities that they actually, we're, we're purposely being much more focused in our applications. And we're looking for local talent on purpose. And that will be something wonderful to see as well.

38:37

Sounds like it's going to be a serious action plan when you all get together to discuss this, after this event.

38:44

And that's what this is all about.

38:47

So, thank you for that, Chairman. And I'm going to come, Beth, you really read things up when you said, well, why do we have to talk about this at all?

38:57

You know, that was your initial comment at the, at the top of the hour.

39:02

I want to know, well, recently, it was a coalition of leading 37 CEOs and organizations, Merck AMX, IBM and others, came together to form one tent.

39:16

An organization that will combine the power of those companies to upskill hire and promote one million black Americans over the next 10 years in the family sustaining jobs would opportunities for advancement.

39:29

I'm going to come. I'm going to come to Fred. I'm going to come to Tom. I'm going to come to Niraj and then to Rana. And, of course, Beth, you, and Aisha, if you like, but I wanted to start with those four.

39:44

Are you willing to formulate a coalition here in Massachusetts with the same thing?

39:50

I'm going to come to Fred, and then to Tom, and then two, there is, and then tirana. And Ron, I just wanted to say before they respond, I was quite intrigued about what your company does, who's in charge of the human recognition pieces. So you may want to talk about that at some point. So, afraid you're on, and then, Tom?

40:12

Yes, I mean, 100%, I think the million within Massachusetts, we probably just our numbers, but.

40:17

Yes, I think the same mission, and I think it's important to understand why, Right.

40:24

And because I think there's a risk that as we, as we raise awareness of these issues, and there is a moment where more people are hearing it a little differently.

40:35

It's not just, oh, it's the right thing to do. It's the ethical thing to do. It's a moral thing to do, which, of course it is.

40:41

It's, it's a, it's an economic imperative, right?

40:44

We're leaving to, as, as I forget, someone who has mentioned the stat before, there is no shortage of stats, about how much the entire economy has missing out by the fact that we leave out huge pockets of our population, from access to labor forces.

40:58

So, it's, it's just smart thing to do. I think we're seeing that with our own Seth Moulton and him trying to work with Representative Cliburn on the GI Repair Bill Act. Which I'm proud that our Chairman Mark cases is helping through, as well.

41:13

There's a lot we can do, and it's important that we get that message out a thing, Joseph.

41:16

Because we want to make this a priority for all the CEOs, right? That this is how you help your own business and not just, Oh, you're running your business, and by the way, do this and saying, no, this is going to help your business.

41:30

And the only caveat I would have is, I think it's important, because we're seeing this already. There is a lot of CEOs that are thinking about diversity, and we are now opened up to a world of Zoom. Or way more opportunities can be located outside of your headquarters outside of a physical construct.

41:47

And so I would just suggest, maybe we tweak it for people in Massachusetts, to say, what part is awful within Massachusetts, right, that people go home within Massachusetts?

41:56

Because the risk is that we all do this, And we're helping remote areas, which is good.

42:01

But I really think there's an opportunity for us to step up the community here at home.

42:07

I'll say, absolutely, yes, too. Just last summer, we put out a 2030 challenge to double the participation of black and LatinX workers. But in tech occupations, in Massachusetts by 2030, and because we represent the tech community are, now the challenge is really out, it's lawmakers, educators, you know, community groups, et cetera. But our lane is really the tech companies. And so, we established a tech compact for social justice that was really members of our Executive Diversity and Inclusion steering committee, who kind of looked at their own houses and said, you know, we got to do something here before. We start trying to say, stop externally. And, and so we have close to 100 companies signed on, to that already said, the intention is there, And I think we can certainly wouldn't be happy to be brought to the table.

43:01

Yeah. One of the reasons I joined Mass TLC as a board member is because I do believe that we can come together and move the needle when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion in tech.

43:14

I also want to represent the startup ecosystem. So I'm part of an organization called All Rise, and we support female founders and female investors.

43:22

I've raised over \$50 million of funding over the last 12 years, and unfortunately, the investor communities, is extremely non-diverse, and that's a problem, right? So we try to support both female founders and female investors, and we have a really big push, you know, within the female community to support even, you know, diverse, even more diverse, I guess, diverse founders and investors, and we have a number of programs to support the Black community, for example, and it's been wonderful media training. You know how to raise funds training, like, it's, it's, it's been really wonderful to be part of that.

44:04

So, I'm very committed to, again, help move the needle.

44:11

There is, I was so intrigued as well as I was with Affectiva as I was, with Wayfair, when I thought about, I went online and I said, well, I've heard of Wayfair a company, and I just look how you have a global organization. I am not responsible in my household buying the furniture or anything. I just sit on it, or, I just get to use it. So I didn't even know.

44:37

But in any event to this question here with the global, you know, mandated and prospects that you are engaged in, could you bring that locally home here to help put together the similar Coalition of those re-organizations or businesses that formed one tent?

44:57

Yes, so, we, you know, Tom mentioned the 2030 Challenge. I think we were one of the first companies to sign up for that, for example, And so that's a slightly different initiative. But it's the same goal, and so there's a series of things we've done. We actually publish our DEI statistics annually.

45:15

The first detailed annual report for DEI. We just recently published it for Wayfair. We're about to we're actually more diverse than most tech companies on average. And but we don't view that as a success. We have goals, that would be even significantly higher from where we are today. So, we're very much on board with what you're describing.

45:34

And what I would say is that, you know, that the reason we're pursuing it is, you know, as Fred's mentioned, a couple of times, it's not just That we think it's the right thing to do which we do.

45:43

We actually think it's an opportunity for us.

45:45

And if you think about the companies that are the most successful part of what they're able to do, is to really attract incredibly talented people, they're able to retain incredibly talented people.

45:55

Well, those folks that actually have a lot of choices as to where they go work.

45:59

And so folks really want to be associated with a company, that they're very excited about what the company does, how it takes care of its customers, but also the people who are within it, and how it participates in its communities.

46:09

So we think there's a real benefit that the company actually gets out of all these actions, and so it does, it doesn't need to be looked through the lens of it being an obligation, or requirement, or whatnot.

46:20

Then we've been trying to do some other things that allow us to actually be really, really good participants. So like, for example, some of the money that we have on our balance sheet.

46:28

We've found ways to invest some of it that specifically help in disadvantaged communities. So, for example, we that we put about 30, but we earmark \$50 million. We've already put \$30 million into economic development fund, that's specifically targeting businesses that are owned by black, folks. So, it's really, there's a whole series. Our view is that no one thing we do is going to move the needle.

46:54

But our view is that we can actually, we have resources, we can do a bunch of things, and they can all help, and then, if others do a bunch of things, like, it, starts to become an additive thing.

47:02

And so I think that's the only other thing I've mentioned, is just, I think every initiative like this is important.

47:08

But I think the way, I think for companies that really want to succeed, they're going, they're going take an expansive view and do multiple things. They're not just gong view their efforts through one lens.

47:19

So I know that we have about 10 minutes left, Mr. Chairman and Tom.

47:26

I was wondering if the secretary has come on and if not, I do have a couple of question that I think everybody can engage in for this next 10 minutes.

47:37

Uh.

47:39

She has not, No.

47:40

OK, so, talk to us a little bit about, you know, some of the things that go through your mind as leaders.

47:52

I wish that folks with just understand this sort of that.

47:57

So I wish that people would understand.

48:01

This is how you could become a priority partner with us.

48:06

If you just did this, I wish that people would understand this about the future of work.

48:13

You know, what would look?

48:15

What is it that you have just been sitting that just thinking about what's going on and let's tell this audience today and share it, since I have all this talent on the screen.

48:29

Yes.

48:31

Can I share a story? So, our technology essentially recognizes people's faces and emotions and activities. And one of the use cases is for the automotive industry. So, we partner with all these big car companies.

48:43

And, about a couple of years ago, we got an inbound kind of request from one of the global car manufacturers. Like, this is an international brand, right? And they said, we want to test your algorithms. Here's a dataset.

48:59

Go test your algorithms on this data.

49:01

And we looked at the data and it was literally middle aged, blue eyed, blond European men. That was it.

49:09

And we had a decision point as a company. I mean, we're a small company, but we looked at the data, and we could have decided to just run this dataset.

49:16

We would have scored very high, we would have gotten paid, and moved on, But instead, we said, that's not good enough. We have an opportunity to educate the industry and raise the bar for everyone, so we sent the data back.

49:27

And he said, Hey, guys, this is not representative of people who drive your cars.

49:32

Let's do better.

49:33

And we, you know, we ended up spending a good part of a year collecting diverse data that demonstrates kind of what we all look like in the world. And it took longer. It was more expensive, but it was the right thing to do.

49:48

And I think we just, we need, we need, we all need to see this opportunity of educating the industry and raising the bar.

50:00

I'd like to pick up front on the, the part of your story where you said doing the right thing, took longer and was more expensive.

50:10

I would like people to recognize that the impulse to do educational work and job training work and workforce development.

50:19

The cheapest way possible is not always the best impulse.

50:24

Um, everyone wants to be really efficient with their philanthropic dollars and with government dollars.

50:31

We should also balance that with the need to be effective.

50:35

And sometimes, longer training programs for the kinds of work that we're talking about in the, in the tech space, Yes, they're short-term.

50:42

You know, both with Google, and there's free, and there's all of these things that isn't one size fits all, and that isn't going to be the only way to train for the variety of tech jobs that are needed. So I wish people would recognize that when they're comparing that kind of workforce development and training opportunity to college, which grow what.

51:10

Google is not, for example, chime in and say, you know, the challenge is distributed evenly in populations, but the opportunities are.

51:20

And we have a sector here that, you know, is being constrained locally and nationally by our inability to hire enough people to fill the open jobs we have.

51:31

And we have the people here.

51:32

And so, it's crazy, you know, if you can't figure it out of Massachusetts, you know, I always say, where can you throw a quick plug?

51:40

We have a part of our website called MassTalent, where we have listed a lot of the great organizations, you know, the Benjamin Franklin, YW and you know, Resilient Coders and Hack Diversity.

51:51

And many of the groups that are out there that, yeah, I think a lot of times, employers don't realize how many, you know potential partners there are out there that can help them bridge this gap.

52:03

Your partner, the Urban League, of course, as well.

52:10

Doctor ..., and I think, like, it's like, just getting ready to use it. And by the way, yeah, we didn't have you guys on there at first, and it just shows, you know, our blindness as well.

52:21

So you're being willing to say, Yes, I know when people come to you. Say, Yeah, yeah, you know, we missed. And that's why we're partnering with powerful.

52:31

People Like, you know, you and Dr. Francis, and, no, Beth and others on this call, and now, with their edge, and Rhonda and all that will be, will be partnering with all of these in.

52:46

We'll be able to build bridges and market MSIMBO coding programs, and other things that the Urban League has been doing for this 102 years.

52:56

As one of the traditional organizations in this country is consistently making a difference.

53:02

And quite frankly, the one people were running to when they were trying to figure out what to do around diversity inclusion across this country.

53:10

And so our challenges, people were running to New York to our National Urban League, and we need you to stay at home and see what we're doing right here in your back yard as well.

53:23

And so, we're coming up to just a few minutes left.

53:28

Mr. Chair, is there anything you wanted to ask before we close?

53:32

Now, I know if there were any, I know that, you know, whether, Fred, Beth, or Rana, Niraj do you have anything in parting to say, I know we have just looking at the time, and we have three minutes. So, you'd have to be quick, if you wanted to, just add on to Dr. Motley these question.

53:50

If not, and Dr. Motley, the I will give it back to you, sir.

53:54

Now, I'll take advantage of that real quick, Joseph, which is, this is one of those great opportunities that you, the people, listening need to be the change when you say, what are the things I'd like to reach out?

54:05

And, and grab lapels on that. That 1, 10, that's great, that the CEOs say that.

54:10

But you need the managers all around the country to do this. We've seen this before. People say we're going to open up to people with prior court involvement or felony convictions, which they should.

54:19

But you need the local manager to actually pull that trigger to actually get that done.

54:23

It's the same on the job seeker side. This is a moment to lean in, and take ownership of taking advantage of all these free and online education, and access to remote that hasn't been there before. The future of work can be absolutely wonderful.

54:38

If the people that are on the hiring side, really walk the walk and the kind of things we're talking about, and understand the why, which is why we're talking about that earlier, The why. And if the job seeker side understands our own agency, an opportunity about grabbing all this advantage to, if repurpose for I think that was the best. Where somebody's saying intentional, This can be a wonderful future of work, without, it could be pretty scary.

55:00

So let us be intentional.

55:04

Let's invest.

55:05

Invest in each other, We need you to invest.

55:09

And not only these great institutions here, but remember, there is an urban league here in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, that extends, as a collaborative across the Commonwealth, you have one right here in Boston.

55:22

We want to thank all of our leaders for being with us today. You are amazing.

55:28

You are just what we needed as we move to a different phase of re-opening here in the Commonwealth to get our heads focused on what's next. I want to thank the audience for tuning in.

55:41

Look out for our next leader's over lunch.

55:44

May is intentionally Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts month, because we were founded in May over 102 years ago.

55:55

So, invest, Become a member of this movement.

55:59

Visit our website, WWW dot U L E M dot org, for more details.

56:07

Tomorrow morning, just when you want to get up and get your tea, get some coffee and have some salmon or something, is an opportunity to be part of the, the best diversity and inclusion.

56:22

Breakfast fundraiser, that there is online in this the urban league's tomorrow morning at eight o'clock AM be a part of that. Go online. You'll be able to see that. So, thank you, everybody for coming out today. We're so grateful to have you, Tom.

56:40

You're a great host. Panel. Thank you so much, and Chairman Feaster, you all have a great day, and thank you to the audience.

56:50

Thank you all, and have a great day.

56:53

Thank you so much.