

Celebrating leadership

BDR rewards five for supplier diversity accomplishments

BY M.V. GREENE

The induction of new member companies into Billion Dollar Roundtable Inc. always is a significant moment at BDR's annual summits.

Even for many of the largest and most successful companies in the world, it is a moment they can point to with pride — their corporate supply chains are receiving recognition for spending \$1 billion or more annually with diverse suppliers.

BDR's recent summit in Oakland, California, welcomed four new member companies — Apple, CVS Health, Exelon and Merck, the largest group of new members joining the organization since its founding in 2001. The four companies raised the number of BDR corporate members to 27. At press time, BDR announced that a 28th company, Pacific Gas and Electric Co., would be joining the organization.

BDR Chairman Rick Hughes, President and CEO Sharon Patterson and Chairman Emeritus Don McKneely welcomed the new member companies and their supplier diversity organizations to BDR. Hughes described all the inductees as high-caliber organizations.

"We are celebrating a major achievement by these companies to spend over \$1 billion with first-tier [suppliers]," Hughes said. "We're celebrating the leadership of these organizations — leadership at the business level, leadership at the procurement level and certainly leadership at the supplier diversity level. We embrace the future contributions that all of these inductees are going to make."

Each new member showcased its supplier diversity achievements through video presentations and remarks from corporate supply-chain leaders.

Apple Inc.

Walter Freeman, Apple's director, supplier diversity, said the company's supplier diversity program is a key tool to fulfill a corporate mission to empower future technology entrepreneurs.

CVS Health Corp.

"Our supplier diversity program is designed to actively seek diverse suppliers of products and services to meet our operational needs," said Anna Humberto, vice president, strategic procurement, CVS Health. "We are able to build supply-chain excellence, add distinctive goods and services to our offerings and enhance our brand by tapping into this expanding pool of diverse suppliers."

She told the summit that her company delivers health care services to all 50 states that touch more than 100 million people. CVS

Health customers have unique needs, she said, and engaging and contracting with diverse suppliers within the company's supply chain "reflects the communities that we serve."

Exelon Corp.

M. Bridget Reidy, Exelon executive vice president, corporate operations, noted that the company's diverse spend is approaching \$2 billion annually with certified diverse suppliers, about 20 percent of the company's total procurement. As an energy services company whose core utility business is longstanding in many markets, she said Exelon relies on diverse suppliers as valued corporate partners to help it remain ahead of the innovation curve.

"Diverse suppliers have a better line of sight to new products. They have new services, and they're more nimble and more agile," she said. "They help us find new ways to get things done. We're proud to be a part of the platform that allows those diverse suppliers to build their businesses and be an active partner in investing in the communities that we serve."

Merck & Co. Inc.

Robert M. Davis, Merck executive vice president, global services, and chief financial officer, said as a global pharmaceutical company that supplies life-saving medicines, vaccines and other healing products, Merck also welcomes the technical acumen that diverse suppliers can deliver to the company's supply chain.

"We recognize that through diversity and driving a supply base with diversity, we can promote jobs and innovation," he said.

As a condition of membership, BDR surveys the Tier I diversity spend of its member companies annually. The threshold for membership is annual spend of \$1 billion or more. Each member company designates a supplier diversity leader to serve BDR as a voting board member and member of one or more of the organization's standing committees.

In addition to Apple, CVS Health, Merck, Exelon and PG&E, BDR member companies are: Adient PLC, AT&T Inc., Avis Budget Group, Bank of America Corp., The Boeing Co., Comcast NBCUniversal, Cummins Inc., Dell Inc., Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Ford Motor Co., General Motors Co., Honda North America Inc., IBM Corp., Johnson Controls Inc., Johnson & Johnson, Kaiser Permanente, The Kroger Co., Lear Corp., Microsoft Corp., The Procter & Gamble Co., Toyota Motor North America Inc., Verizon and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. ■





Apple Inc. team members accept inductee award on behalf of their company. Pictured left to right: Don McKneely and Sharon Patterson, both of BDR; Alex Alvarez, Apple; Walter Freeman, Apple; Scott Vowels, Apple; and Rick Hughes, BDR



CVS Health team members accept inductee award on behalf of their company. Pictured left to right: Sharon Patterson, BDR; Monette Knapik, CVS; Raul Suarez-Rodriguez, CVS; Don McKneely, BDR; Anna Umberto, CVS; and Rick Hughes, BDR



Exelon Corp. team members accept inductee award on behalf of their company. Pictured left to right: Vernice Lewis, Exelon; Emmett Vaughn, Exelon; David O'Brien, Exelon; Don McKneely, BDR; Bridget Reidy, Exelon; Rick Hughes, BDR; and Sharon Patterson, BDR



Merck & Co. Inc. team members accept inductee award on behalf of their company. Pictured left to right: Troy Beason, Merck; Sharon Patterson, BDR; Yammel Sanchez-Ocana, Merck; Quentin Roach, Merck; Don McKneely, BDR; Rob Davis, Merck; Tara Spann, Merck; Curtis Scott, Merck; Susanna Webber, Merck; Caroline Maraval, Merck; Darrien Pinkman, Merck; Rick Hughes, BDR