Erin L. Thomas, Ph.D. joins Upwork as head of diversity, inclusion, and belonging

December 3, 2019

Former Paradigm managing director will oversee all strategy, programs and initiatives that foster community and equality at Upwork

SANTA CLARA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 3, 2019-- Upwork ($UPWK), the leading online talent solution, today announced that Erin L. Thomas, Ph.D., has joined the company as head of diversity, inclusion, and belonging. She brings a distinctive mix of research and practitioner expertise to this role, which includes leading diversity, inclusion, and belonging (DIBs) strategy, implementation, and coaching. Thomas comes from Paradigm, a diversity and inclusion strategy firm, where she partnered with companies to embed DIBs into their organizations through culture transformation and people development.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20191203005016/en/



Erin Thomas, Ph.D., has joined Upwork as head of diversity, inclusion, and belonging. (Photo: Business Wire)

"We're thrilled to welcome Erin to the team," said Stephane Kasriel, CEO of Upwork and co-chair of the World Economic Forum's Council on the New Social Contract. "Our mission is to create economic opportunities so people have better lives, and having Erin on board to drive our diversity, inclusion, and belonging efforts, and challenge us actively and often, will help us tremendously on this journey."

"Erin's passion for creating positive change and helping companies become the organizations to which they aspire is contagious," said Zoë Harte, Senior Vice President of Human Resources and Talent Innovation. "That energy, paired with her work advising some remarkable companies as they progress on this journey, is an ideal fit to oversee Upwork's DIBs efforts. Upwork is committed to being a place where people bring their whole selves to work. We know that there is strength in diversity and active collaboration and I am eager to partner with Erin to elevate our programs and help our initiatives evolve to make Upwork all that we can be."

"I'm ecstatic to join Upwork during this time in the company's growth," said Thomas. "Diversity, inclusion, and belonging are intrinsically linked with Upwork's mission and vision, which means that we have an opportunity — and responsibility — to define the future of work by putting people and their experiences first. To realize 'work without limits,' Upwork has committed to cultivating a strong, values-based culture. My role is to operationalize this commitment so that intent translates to impact and aspirations convert to actions."

Prior to Paradigm, Thomas held positions at Grant Thornton LLP and Argonne National Laboratory developing D&I strategies, programming, and metrics. Her work has been featured in Fast Company and the New York Times and recognized by Forbes, Human Rights Campaign, the National Association for Female Executives, and Equal Opportunity Magazine. She has a Doctor of Philosophy in social psychology; a Master of Philosophy in social psychology; a Master of Science in social psychology; and a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and international studies from Yale University.

About Upwork

Upwork is the leading online talent solution transforming professional staffing. We empower businesses with more flexible access to quality talent, on demand. Through Upwork's matching technology and services, companies have access to a global pool of proven professionals so they can scale their teams dynamically to meet business needs. Upwork also provides skilled professionals access to more opportunities.

Upwork's mission is to create economic opportunities so people have better lives. The community of independent professionals working via Upwork spans many categories including software development, creative & design, finance & accounting, consulting, operations and customer support—over 8,000 skills are represented.

More than thirty percent of the Fortune 500 use Upwork. Clients include Airbnb, Automattic, GE, and Microsoft.

Upwork is headquartered in Santa Clara, Calif., with offices in Chicago, San Francisco and Oslo, Norway as well as team members in more than 800 cities worldwide. For more information, visit Upwork's website at www.upwork.com and join us on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.

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