

BREAKING THE BIAS: THE JOURNEY TOWARDS GLOBAL GENDER PARITY



[International Women's Day](#) (IWD) recognizes women around the world, regardless of their national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political affiliations, for their personal and professional achievements. "a time to recognize the positive value and impact women bring into our lives, the achievements made across history, and the future we can look forward to changing," says Humam Jumaa, the area director of Dubai, United Arab Emirates for BMC.

This year, the IWD theme is [#BreakTheBias](#), a global campaign to raise awareness around bias and encourage action toward women's equality. With a focus on building workplaces where women thrive, the campaign seeks to elevate the visibility of women creatives; inspire women to pursue their goals without barrier; forge women's equality in tech; celebrate women solidifying change; and empower women's healthcare choices.

Celebrating the change makers

Here at BMC, we're proud to celebrate our past and present [BMC women inventors](#) making positive impacts as trailblazers in tech and software development, in the mainframe and beyond.

[Tamar Admoni](#)

[Catherine Drummond](#) [Donna S. Lowe-Cleveland](#)

Jeyashree
Sivasubramanian

[Kalpa Ashhar](#)

[Linda C. Elliott](#)

Annette B. McCall

Cynthia L. Sturgeon

[Linda S. Ball](#)

[Irene Ford](#)

Karen Nelson-Katt

[Priya
Talwalkar](#)

[Carla C. Birk](#)

Carol Harper

[Pallavi Phadke](#)

[Elaine Tang](#)

[Maribeth Carpenter](#)

[Priyancka Jaiin](#)

[Soumee Phatak](#)

Melody Vos

Jiani Chen

Roxanne Kallman

Carol Rathrock

[Lori Walbeck](#)

[Kanika Dhyani](#)

[Lisa S. Keeler](#)

[Komal K. Shah](#)

Wenjie Zhu

[Donna M. Di Carlo](#)

[Nitsan Daniel Lavie](#)

[Annie Shum](#)

[Gwendolyn
Curlee](#)

[Komal
Padmawar](#)

Building better workplaces

While we celebrate our own women, we must also acknowledge that corporate female representation took a hit during the pandemic as many women stepped away to attend to their families. Burnout is also an issue. McKinsey's [2021 Women in the Workplace Study](#) found that more women felt burned out in 2021 than in the previous year's study, and that burnout is growing faster among women than among men.

According to the study, "One in three women...have considered downshifting their career or leaving the workforce four in ten women have considered leaving their company or switching jobs—and high employee turnover in recent months suggests that many of them are following through."

To get those women back into the workforce, or keep the ones who've stayed, McKinsey says, "The path forward is clear. Companies need to take bold steps to address burnout. They need to recognize and reward the women leaders who are driving progress. And they need to do the deep cultural work required to create a workplace where all women feel valued."

So how can we create workplaces where everyone can thrive?

Start by establishing a culture that recognizes the multilayered commitments many women have—and that their formal job is likely one of the many jobs they hold. Historically speaking, women are often the primary caretakers for their families, and with the uptick in multigenerational households, that doesn't just mean children, but also parents and extended family. There's no such thing as "off the clock" for these women.

The pandemic-driven ascent in remote and hybrid flexibility is here to stay, and it allows for a better balance of work/family commitments so women can continue a path toward management and the C-suite. If you foster a culture that offers worksite flexibility—and you mean it—that's a terrific way to support women in the workplace who can get the job done, while recognizing that the when and the where aren't really important. You can also reinforce your flexible culture by giving your employees the tools and support they need to thrive in it.

A great next step is tackling [bias](#) in the workplace by recognizing it in yourself and others and being vigilant about correcting it. "Everyone has bias. Saying you don't have bias is doing yourself a disservice," says Tami Reisman, a senior program manager at BMC. "What's important is recognizing your personal bias and acknowledging it. This allows you to actively set it aside in your thoughts and actions and build positive experiences that will broaden and adjust your thinking."

Fostering equality

An important cultural shift is to establish among your entire workforce that including more women in tech and business, and elevating them, —does not equate to a lesser role for men. Acknowledge your gender pay gaps and set clear, tangible goals to reach equal work and equal pay.

"The quote, 'a rising tide raises all boats,' is one that has always resonated with me," says Kelly Hageman, area vice president of Inside Sales at BMC. "There is enough opportunity and goodness in our world to inspire everyone and give us all a chance to be a contributor to a better tomorrow."

"Men shouldn't see the rise of women in tech as a threat, but rather as an opportunity for new technologies and markets to emerge and develop. In time, that will provide more opportunities for everyone," adds Stuart Wright, area vice president at BMC.

"As a ['girl dad'](#), I want to see a more equal and inclusive world for to grow up in. But even if I didn't have a daughter, I've seen the benefit of promoting women within the tech space and specifically at BMC. When we're working on a complex problem, we come up with better answers when we have a team that brings a variety of experiences, perspectives, and ideas to the table."

Ensuring a healthy workforce

Your people are the lifeblood of your business, and their overall [health](#) can have a tremendous impact on the health of your organization. Ensuring equal access to healthcare for all employees, including healthcare for women's health issues, is imperative. It's also important to amplify available resources so employees are aware of them and know how to use them.

You should also be open to talking about your current policies, and reviewing and revising them regularly to ensure support for preventive screenings and progressive care related to women's health. Educate your managers about the unique health challenges women face and give them the resources to be supportive of the women on their teams. That means not just physical health, but emotional health, too.

Here at BMC, our value structure is grounded in prioritizing people and doing the right thing, and our comprehensive [benefits](#) coverage includes resources for our physical, emotional, and financial health. To that end, we are proud that BMC recently earned Silver Level recognition in the [American Heart Association Workplace Health Achievement Index](#) for our culture of health.

A healthy workforce also includes building an environment that instills [psychological safety and resiliency](#) and empowers women. Employee resource groups (ERGs) such as BMC's Women in Technology and Business (WiTB) promote networking, growth through [education](#) and [mentoring](#), and [community outreach](#) for our employees, regional offices, customers, and partners.

Mentoring can pay both professional and personal dividends, as two BMC employees have discovered from their positive experiences as mentees. "My mentors took me out of my comfort zone and made me think out the box. They saw the passion and determination I had every day and used that to inspire . They had inclusive mindset to believe in me regardless of my gender," shares Luciana Cazenave, principal sales operations manager at BMC. "Allyship was key in my career at BMC. Great leaders inspire people, and that has been my experience with the BMC leaders."

"Since I have been partnered with my BMC mentors, I have experienced exponential growth not only in my professional life, but also my personal life," explains Andrika Payne, corporate social

representative at BMC. "I was surprised to find out that mentorship learning can go both ways, which is something I had not anticipated."

Paying it forward

As we celebrate International Women's Day, we invite you to join us in our support of organizations that are striving to help eliminate bias and create a more equitable world for women in the workforce. It's how we're helping create an [Autonomous Digital Enterprise](#) that includes everyone.

- Our [partnership](#) with the [BreakLine](#) organization helps men and women U.S. veterans and their spouses; people from all backgrounds who identify as women; and people of color transition to the civilian tech workforce.
- Our ERGs microlend to women entrepreneurs through [Kiva](#).
- [She codes](#) is supporting the next generation of women software developers.
- The [Lila Poonawalla Foundation \(LPF\)](#) works to help improve digital literacy for girls from economically challenged backgrounds.
- The [Raspberry Pi Foundation](#) is a UK-based charity working to put the power of computing and digital making into the hands of people all over the world.
- [Robotex](#) is an India-based non-profit advancing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEAM), robotics, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and Internet of Things (IoT) to government schools in urban, tribal, and rural areas.

Learn more about IWD events in your community at <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Events>.