



Ken Barrett

Global Chief Diversity Officer, General Motors

Ken Barrett leads General Motors' Global Diversity and Inclusion portfolio including workforce diversity strategy, empowering employee resource groups, and fostering an inclusive culture that promotes diversity of thought, to help GM compete and win in the marketplace.

Since joining GM in 2012 as the company's first Global Chief Diversity Officer, Barrett has introduced key initiatives resulting in increased diversity hiring, greater accountability through actionable metrics, and leveraged employee resource groups (ERGs) to support employees and sell cars among their respective constituencies.

As Ken says, "It's not about counting heads, it's making heads count".

Barrett strives to set the bar high, and is regarded as a thought leader and subject matter expert in global diversity. Under his leadership, Barrett returned GM to DiversityInc.'s Top 50 Companies for Diversity, along with garnering a number of awards including the #1 Diversity Council in the U.S. from the Association of ERGs & Councils, scoring 100 percent on both the Corporate Equality and Disability Equality Indexes, Global Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Award, ranking the Best of the Best Corporations for Inclusion, as well as best places to work for African Americans, Hispanics/Latinas, LGBT, Veterans, Native Americans and People with Disabilities.

Prior to joining GM, Barrett, a retired Navy Captain, served as the Undersecretary of Defense's acting director of the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in Washington, D.C., where he set the D&I agenda for 2.1 million military personnel. Prior to that, he had five years of award-winning performance as the U.S. Navy's Diversity Director, where he achieved historic levels of minority and female officer additions and transformational work-life balance initiatives. Further, through his leadership, the U.S. Navy was selected as the Top Federal Agency by DiversityInc. For his efforts as lead of the Navy's Task Force/Life Work, Barrett and his team were recognized with the Ted Childs Work Life Excellence Award by Working Mother.

A Worcester, Massachusetts native, Barrett holds a bachelor's in political science from Holy Cross, a master's in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College and an executive master's degree in business administration from the Naval Postgraduate School. Additionally, he was Navy's Federal Executive Senior Fellow at Harvard University's Olin Institute and a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College.

Ken serves on several boards including Advancing Minorities' Interest in Engineering (AMIE), National Organization on Disability (NOD), Families and Work Institute (FWI), Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF), New Detroit, Inc. and the editorial board of "Insight into Diversity."