Silicon Valley Diversity Done Right

"We're delighted to attract such amazing talent and to help accelerate women's careers. I spend a lot of my time working with women, especially women of color, figuring out how to broaden their professional opportunities," said McKinnon, a former BlackRock Managing Director, founder of strategic consulting firm LMC17, diversity consultant, and passionate advocate for under-represented talent. "We're definitely on to something here."

The Incubator program sits within The CLUB Silicon Valley, a diverse community of inspiring, professional women helping each other accelerate their leadership journeys. The year-long Incubator curriculum is filled with actionable ways to improve career development, enhance personal brand, build public profile, expand networks, confirm board readiness and give back to the broader community. Once an 'Incubee' has completed the program, they become part of an active alumnae group, "a cohort of bright, ambitious, resilient women who are an important part of the future of Silicon Valley," according to McKinnon.

Executive coach Kristi Royse of KLR Consulting administers the career development component, using the DiSC® assessment. "Not only is our group diverse in terms of industry, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and educational background, but we also boast diversity in leadership styles."

The Incubator is in its third year, and keeps paying dividends, McKinnon said. "We've had a fantastic run over the past few months for the women who participated in 2016. Anuradha Gali and Leedjia Svec were both recognized as "Silicon Valley Women of Influence" by the Silicon Valley Business Times; Svec was also named STEM Influencer of the Year" at the WiSTEM conference. Joselle Deocampo-Gautam was honored as "40 under 40 Silicon Valley," and Olga Mack and Heather Jerrehian are winners of this year's Watermark "Make Your Mark" Awards. Mack was also awarded the 2017 Corporate Counsel of the Year: Rising Star."

Gali, an experienced Engineering Leader has recently been snapped up by UBER to run their finance data platform. Svec, a Ph.D. and military officer, serves as liaison between NASA Ames Research Center, the US
Navy and the US Department of Defense. Deocampo-Gautam co-founded and led global operations for the Global Financial Service Innovation Center at PwC; Mack is general counsel at ClearSlide, start-up advisor, and founder of the Women Serve on Boards movement; and Jerrehian is an entrepreneur who runs custom products for Massdrop, a community curated commerce startup.

Early wins are evident for the Incubator's class of 2017 too: Sherry Hashimoto Main was named Advisor to the Board of Regents of the University of California, the governing body of the university system, and Nancy Poon Lue was selected by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative to co-lead a philanthropic collaboration to find better research and development technology for the education sector.

"These women are each incredible on their own," McKinnon said. "We just showcase their expertise so they get bigger and better opportunities: a promotion, a big new job, a leadership position on a board."

According to Kristiane Koontz, Co-Founder and President of The CLUB, "the Incubator program is the embodiment of what we are trying to do at The CLUB: founded by a CLUB member (now board member) to help other high achieving women get to the next level - with measurable results. It's been a phenomenal success for many women."

Sponsors of The CLUB Silicon Valley may earmark donations to the Incubator. Women who have developed their expertise and are looking to take their career to the next level are encouraged to apply: www.theclubsv.org/incubator-program

About The CLUB Silicon Valley:

Founded in 2012, The CLUB is a diverse community of inspiring, professional women helping each other accelerate their leadership journeys. Our community is hundreds strong and made of professionals who are leaders in their industries – tech, finance, engineering, marketing, legal, rocket science and beyond. We connect women with one another in order to provide them with critical, multi-disciplinary peer groups and mentorship opportunities that strengthen their careers and keep them at the top of their game. www.theclubsv.org

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