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Women's Leadership Day 2023



**Women's Leadership Day**

Presented by  **VersantHealth<sup>®</sup>**

**Thursday, May 11, 2023**

Upper Montclair Country Club



# Itinerary

11:45AM – Event Welcome

12:00PM – Keynote Speaker

12:30PM – Luncheon

1:15PM – Panel Discussion

2:00PM – Networking Happy Hour & Dessert Bar

## Keynote Speaker



**Michele C. Meyer-Shipp, ESQ.**  
CEO of Dress for Success Worldwide

Michele C. Meyer-Shipp joined Dress for Success Worldwide as CEO in February 2022. Michele leads the organization's 144 affiliates in 23 countries as it continues its mission to help women achieve economic independence via a suite of services to include job readiness support, professional development resources, coaching and mentorship, and workplace attire.

Michele joins Dress for Success from Major League Baseball, where she served as Chief People & Culture Officer. While at MLB, Michele led the human resources, diversity and inclusion, and office operations functions for the League Office with an emphasis on launching new programs and policies to recruit and develop talent, advancing diversity and inclusion efforts, and enhancing

workplace culture. She also served as a senior advisor to the Commissioner as well as leaders across 30 major league baseball teams and multiple Minor League teams.

Prior to MLB, Michele served as Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer at KPMG LLP, where she led initiatives relating to talent recruitment, development, and retention; supported the efforts of leaders across KPMG's 85+ national offices; and managed a portfolio of external strategic partnerships. Previously, she served as Global Chief Diversity Officer for both Prudential Financial and the law firm Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP. Michele spent the first decade of her career practicing employment law in both the private and public sectors, where she advised clients on optimizing talent and implementing equitable workplace initiatives. Meyer-Shipp is a graduate of Rutgers University and Seton Hall University School of Law.

Michele is a sought-after speaker and has served as a Yahoo! Finance News Contributor and been featured in top media outlets including the New York Times, USA Today, The Economist, Forbes, Fortune, Business Insider, CNN, The Wall Street Journal, Savoy Magazine, Black Enterprise, The Tamron Hall Show, CORE Magazine, Working Mother Magazine, Diversity Woman Magazine, Quartz, Inc., and more. She is also the recipient of numerous awards, including The Network Journal's "25 Influential Black Women in Business" (2021), Core Magazine's "100 Most Influential Blacks Today" (2021), Black Enterprise's "Portraits of Power" (2020), and Business Insider's "38 Power Players of Consulting" (2020). She is a member of the Boards of the LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association) and the Fritz Pollard Alliance Foundation.

# Opening Remarks



**Rachel Pokay**

Assistant Vice President  
Brand Activation and Market Enablement  
for Versant Health

Rachel Pokay is Assistant Vice President of Brand Activation and Market Enablement for Versant Health, one of the nation's leading managed vision care companies. She is responsible for the acceleration of Versant Health's brand awareness and engagement efforts, along with driving the company's market enablement strategy in partnership with Sales, Client Management, and Provider Network. Rachel and her team oversee marketing, creative services, public relations, social media, and corporate sponsorships.

Prior to joining Versant Health in 2022, Rachel was the Director of Sustainability Communications at MetLife, supporting MetLife's Chief Sustainability Officer, Chief Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, and MetLife Foundation President & CEO. Prior to that, she held various strategic communications roles throughout MetLife's U.S. Group Benefits Business and former Retail Business, as well as at a number of marketing and broadcast communications agencies in the Chicago area.

## Closing Remarks



**Jennifer Wyeth**

Vice President  
Strategic Planning, Program Delivery,  
and Marketing Communications for Versant Health

Jennifer (Jen) is the Vice President of Strategic Planning, Program Delivery, and Marketing Communications for Versant Health, one of the nation's leading managed vision care companies. She is responsible for planning and program delivery, the Enterprise Project Management Office (ePMO), and governance efforts across the enterprise. Additionally, Jen oversees communications inclusive of marketing, brand activation and public relations.

Before joining Versant Health, Jen served as Director of Operations Management at Versant Health's parent company MetLife for their \$18 billion U.S. group benefits business. There she oversaw planning, governance, reporting, training, and business administration for over 1,400 associates. Prior to that, she led Internal Communications for both MetLife's U.S. group benefits business and their former U.S. retail life and annuity organization.

Jen brings more than 17 years of employee engagement, change management, cross-functional planning and business strategy experience to our event today. With a passion for developing talent and inspiring others, Jen serves as a role model to leaders and those who aspire to be, and encourages everyone to bring their whole, authentic selves to work and to life.



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## Moderator



### Christina Lance

Director of Communications for the LPGA.

Christina joined the LPGA in March 2017, focusing on building and enhancing the Tour's work in earned media, tournament promotion and player-focused storytelling. Prior to joining the LPGA, Christina spent nine years at the United States Golf Association, managing communications around the U.S. Women's Open, the U.S. Women's Amateur, the Curtis Cup and the Association's other women's championships.

Christina began her career in sports television, working in production and operations for NBC Sports and ABC Sports. She has worked on

site at numerous world-class events, including Monday Night Football, the Indianapolis 500, the Rose Bowl and the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, and also provided domestic support for two Olympics Games.

Christina grew up in suburban Boston, spent nearly 15 years in Northern New Jersey and now makes her home in Nashville. She is an honors graduate of Freed-Hardeman University in West Tennessee, with a degree in public relations and broadcasting.

## Panel Speakers



### Pamela Axtell

Global Brand Strategy Lead for Sponsorships and D&I at Cognizant

Pamela Axtell is the Global Brand Strategy Lead for Sponsorships and D&I at Cognizant, a technology company that engineers modern businesses to improve everyday life. Pamela has 25 years of experience working across global advertising, experience design, enterprise branding, content strategy and inter-cultural team building. She led the creative teams who built digital brand experiences for top-tier clients including Yahoo!, eBay, Microsoft, YouTube Creator Academy, Sony, AstraZeneca, Bank of America, TD Waterhouse, and Charles Schwab.

In her current role, Pamela assumes responsibility for connecting Cognizant's brand platform and core story points across a portfolio of global sponsorships, focusing on enabling the global marketing team and wider business to get the best value out of these investments. She is also responsible for partnering across corporate D&I to ensure that the organization's key message points and stories are told with authenticity, and a connection back to Cognizant's mission to engineer businesses to improve everyday life. Pamela hugely appreciates partnerships such as PGA and LPGA, where sponsorships and D&I come together in service of positive impact. West Tennessee, with a degree in public relations and broadcasting.



### Stephanie Peareth

Director of Operations, LPGA Foundation & Girls Golf

After experiencing an incurable brain condition that shattered Stephanie's LPGA career dreams, she found a new purpose. She now teaches the largest girls' youth golf program in the LPGA, empowering young athletes to follow their dreams.

Every day, she chooses to lead with light, focusing on positivity despite her diagnosis. Stephanie currently serves as the Director of Operations for LPGA Foundation and Girls Golf.

## Panel Speakers



### Meredith Ryan-Reid

Chief Executive Officer of Versant Health

Meredith Ryan-Reid serves as Chief Executive Officer at Versant Health, one of the nation's leading administrators of managed vision care and a wholly-owned subsidiary of MetLife, Inc.

Under her leadership, Versant Health helps people access the wonders of sight by serving more than 38.5 million of its clients' members nationwide. Versant Health solutions scale across the total eye health spectrum - from routine vision benefits to medical management. Commercial groups, employer plans, and health plans that serve government-sponsored programs such as Medicaid and Medicare are among Versant Health's key stakeholders.

Prior to joining Versant Health, Ryan-Reid served as senior vice president and head of MetLife's Financial Wellness & Engagement organization, which focuses on voluntary benefits growth and new product development in the financial and digital wellness space, including Upwise, a financial wellness app, and Aura, an intelligent digital safety solution for families.

Ryan-Reid spent nearly a decade at MetLife, first leading the buildout of its voluntary benefits product portfolio, then going on to lead distribution development, sales enablement, and marketing. In these roles, she managed P&Ls, distribution teams, external relationships, product strategy and partnerships. She is also a long-time champion for nurturing a diverse and inclusive workplace culture, previously serving as executive sponsor for MetLife's Diverse Abilities employee resource group and Women in Sales program.

Prior to MetLife, Ryan-Reid held a range of leadership positions on both the carrier and brokerage sides of the business, including roles at Starr Companies, Marsh, AIG, and Cigna. Outside of work, Ryan-Reid serves as her alumni class president, is a member of the Johnson School Advisory Council at Cornell University's business school and coaches her local girls lacrosse team. She received her MBA from Cornell and her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Richmond where she played Division I lacrosse and field hockey. She lives in Connecticut with her husband and two daughters.



### Freida Rothman

Founder and CEO, FREIDA ROTHMAN

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Freida Rothman is a second-generation jeweler, a mother of four, and an entrepreneur striving to remind every woman of her inner strength. Taking design inspiration from the city streets around her, Freida's signature sterling silver and mixed-metal pieces elevate Brooklyn grit— from the New York City skyline to the steel and of the Brooklyn Bridge — into effortless elegance for your everyday. Since 2010, she has personally designed each piece of jewelry with the utmost attention to detail and craftsmanship.

Beyond reflecting the spirit of strength and determination in her jewelry, Freida supports new emerging talent by serving as a mentor on the Accessories Innovation Committee. She's also a proud member of the Female Founder Collective, a network of businesses led by women, supporting women. Recognized by the FGI Rising Star Awards, Freida was a finalist in the Accessories category in both 2016 and 2017. In 2019, she received the Centurion Design Award for Designer Jewelry under \$1,500 for a piece from her 2019 Fleur Bloom Collection. Humbled by her accolades, the most rewarding part of Freida's work remains hearing from and connecting with the women who wear her pieces as reminders of their own strength, determination and accomplishments. No matter where you're headed, Freida Rothman jewelry is a constant reminder of the power of strength and courage against all odds.

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