

LEADERSHIP CHARACTER FORM SUBMISSION - INDIVIDUAL

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Nominee Information

Nominee: Valencia I. Adams
Title: VP, Chief Diversity Officer
Organization: BellSouth Corporation
Category: VP/Manager

Nomination Information

>>>> BRIEFLY LIST WAYS THIS PERSON DEMONSTRATES INTEGRITY: <<<<
Valencia Adams, vice president and chief diversity at BellSouth Corporation; leads the BellSouth Office of Diversity and is responsible for developing and implementing the corporate diversity and inclusion strategies company-wide.

Part of her effectiveness in this position and throughout her career has been her affinity for people. Valencia has been with BellSouth for 36 years. She first distinguished herself by moving up through the ranks of operations where she was an exceptionally capable leader and made inclusion a central part of her management philosophy. Her exceptional way with people, and the relationships she has built at Bellsouth, enables her to perform her job with unparalleled passion and dedication. Prior to becoming Chief Diversity, she was COO of the corporation's Consumer Services Division. Valencia began her career in the 60s as a telephone switchboard operator. She now serves as a role model --particularly for African Americans and women employees -- in the BellSouth Mentor Exchange program designed to support emerging leaders. She knows the company, the culture, and the people.

She seems to possess an innate ability for "connecting" with people and forming the type of bond that immediately puts people at ease. She believes that she have a gift for really listening and hearing what people are saying to me and then sharing her insights and influencing their thought processes for positive resolution and outcome.

She loves a challenge, and seems to thrive in situations where s can be of assistance to those others have cast aside or given up on. And because she was challenged to think bigger and to believe in herself, she believes she must give back to others in return. Her career has always involved working with large groups of people. She takes what seems impossible and helps others see the many possibilities of a situation.

She knows the telecommunications industry and understands its challenges. In her role as Chief Diversity Officer, she has both the challenge and the opportunity to deliver important strategic diversity and inclusion messages directly to our employees on behalf of the corporation. She has an opportunity to create and to experience success everyday, to have people who thought inclusion was just about race and gender to realize and understand that it is so much more than that and how it benefits the company.

She has a long history of community involvement and raising funds for notable institutions. She was the 1998 Chairperson for the Metropolitan Atlanta United Way Campaign. Under her leadership BellSouth raised more than \$4 million dollars in employee contributions. Adams has also served as a departmental coordinator for the Woodruff Arts Center Campaign and a team leader for the Empty Stocking fund. She serves on the boards of the BellSouth Foundation, the Possible Woman Foundation, Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence, and St.

Joseph's Hospital, and *Atlanta Woman* magazine. She is a lifetime member of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce.

She has received numerous honors and awards throughout her career. In 2005, Adams was presented the "Millennium Pacesetter" award by the Atlanta Business League, selected as one of the "Top 100 Blacks in Corporate America" by *Black Professionals* magazine. She is a recipient of the 2004 *CareerFOCUS* Eagle Award for Outstanding Leadership Achievement. *Women Looking Ahead News Magazine* named her their "Woman of the Year" in 2004. She received the 2004 Going for the Goal Award for her work to enrich the lives of girls and young women. Career Communications Group, Inc., publisher of *U.S. Black Engineer and Information Technology* magazine, *Hispanic Engineer* and *Information Technology* magazine recognized her in 2003 with a National Women of Color Technology and Business Award for Diversity Leadership. She has been recognized by Georgia's governor as an outstanding Junior Achievement volunteer for her many years of service. She is a recipient of the American Business Women's Association Business Associate of the Year Award.

She has been featured in *IMARA*, *Ebony*, *Competitive Edge*, *Savoy Professional*, *DiversityInc.*, *Upscale*, *Diversity Journal*, *Women Looking Ahead*, and *Diversity Monitor* magazines. Adams was also featured in the 2001, 2002-2003, and 2004 "Who's Who in Black Atlanta." She was recognized in the July 2002 edition of Business-to-Business magazine as a 2002 "Diva" in business and in the July 2002 edition of *Atlanta Woman* magazine.

I am pleased to nominate Valencia for this prestigious award, because she is the ideal Servant Leader.