

NEWS RELEASE

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VAN METER RECEIVES ROCKWELL AUTOMATION'S 2024 DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION AWARD

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa – (April 9, 2024) – Van Meter was recognized with Rockwell Automation's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Award during the 2024 PartnerNetwork Conference March 20 in Orlando, FL. The DEI Award honors a Rockwell partner that has made DEI part of its business strategy and taken steps to make the industry more diverse. Through leadership development, recruitment, companywide education and community outreach, Van Meter has focused on inclusivity to become a stronger organization.

Lura McBride, Van Meter President and CEO, said, "We're honored to receive this recognition —especially from a respected, global organization like Rockwell who sets a high standard for themselves in the inclusion space."

"Having an all-inclusive culture is a key component of our workforce strategy," added McBride. "We want each of our 850+ employee-owners to confidently bring their best self to work knowing they are part of something special—a workplace where differences are valued and celebrated."

McBride's passion around inclusion extends to the greater electrical distribution industry. In 2021, McBride helped found iBelongHere, a non-profit that provides training opportunities and educational resources to make the electrical industry a more diverse and welcoming place to work. Karmen Wilhelm, Van Meter's Chief Marketing Officer, said she believes McBride's involvement with iBelongHere prompted Van Meter's leadership team to take a closer look at its approach to inclusion.

It led Van Meter to build its "ALL-INclusive statement," outlining what is important to its employee-owners when building an inclusive work environment to attract and retain talented people. The statement says that inclusivity is an expectation regardless of race, age, gender, identity, physical and mental abilities or anything else that makes people different.

How did Van Meter put that statement into practice? Internally, it started educating company leaders in bi-weekly leadership meetings and invited a keynote on diversity to its annual leadership conference. From there, Van Meter started offering education opportunities to all employee-owners, including English language tutoring, inclusion training in new hire orientation and a Women of Van Meter group that provides industry training and connects women throughout the company.

Externally, Van Meter created a Community Impact role to support underserved populations through charitable donations and volunteerism. It also focused on recruiting diverse candidates with a social media campaign called "I am Van Meter." Van Meter published 11 short video reels highlighting topics like a father who took paternity leave, an immigrant joining the team, a woman in sales, a military veteran and more.

Wilhelm said, "We had a ton of fun with the campaign. It was a chance to creatively tell individual stories about why our employee-owners feel included and how Van Meter helps them be their personal best."

Van Meter's company values are referred to as the Five P's (People, Partners, Progress, Place and Profit). "It's no accident that the People P is first in the lineup," said Wilhelm. "When you put people first and are intentional about the experience you create for one another, great things can be accomplished."

In addition to the DEI Award, Van Meter also received Rockwell's 2024 Innovation Award at the PartnerNetwork Conference.

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Headquartered in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Van Meter is an award-winning workplace and the nation's 15th largest electrical distributor with twenty-five locations in seven states. The 100-percent employee-owned company provides electrical and automation products and services to contractor, industrial and commercial customers. Van Meter's offering encompasses lighting, data communications, utility, automation, power transmission, renewable energy, core electrical components and more. To learn more visit www.vanmeterinc.com