Progress Appoints Dr. Shirley Knowles as First Chief Inclusion and Diversity Officer

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New hire to champion company's inclusion, equity and diversity practices as part of its larger corporate social responsibility program, Progress for Tomorrow

BEDFORD, Mass., June 14, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Progress (NASDAQ: PRGS), the leading provider of products to develop, deploy and manage high-impact business applications, today announced that it has hired Dr. Shirley Knowles as its first Chief Inclusion and Diversity Officer. Dr. Knowles will be responsible for leading Progress' inclusion and diversity initiatives designed to build, foster and grow a culture where all employees feel valued, safe and successful.

"Many companies have worked hard to ensure their inclusion, equity and diversity practices not only meet but exceed industry standards and become a business imperative. We are no exception," said Progress CEO Yogesh Gupta. "While we've made great strides in this area, we recognize the importance of having an internal champion who brings the ... and is ideally suited to build upon our current achievements and work to make Progress a more inclusive place for all."

In her new role, Dr. Knowles will partner directly with Progress' executive leadership team and Board of Directors, chair the employee-led Inclusion and Diversity Committee and work closely with Progress' employee resource groups (ERGs) to develop strategies, initiatives and practices that ... she will serve as a spokesperson to advance these practices and representation within our local and tech communities.

Dr. Knowles joins Progress as a seasoned leader in the inclusion, equity and diversity space. Most recently, she was the first diversity and inclusion (D&I) officer at Boston-based Homesite Insurance, where she led initiatives to promote inclusivity and appreciation of cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, socioeconomic and educational diversity. Before moving to her role in D&I, she helped lead the company's corporate communications initiatives.

Dr. Knowles earned her bachelor's degree in communications from Marquette University, a master's degree in leadership studies from North Central College, a master of arts in gender/cultural studies and a master of science in communications management from Simmons College, and a doctor of education in organizational leadership from Northeastern University. She also holds a certificate in multicultural leadership from North Central College.

"I was attracted to Progress because it was obvious to me that the company, its leaders and its people truly care about ... to the communities it serves and taking a leadership position in social justice issues within the technology space," Dr. Knowles said. "The company has a strong desire to grow its programs and to make the meaningful strategic investments. That is why I'm thrilled to take on the role of CIDO and to leverage my skills and expertise to bring Progress forward in its journey."

Dr. Knowles will help shape Progress' corporate social responsibility (CSR) program, Progress for Tomorrow, which is organized ... diversity and social justice, Our Communities—our philanthropic efforts, and Our World—environmental sustainability.

To learn more about Progress and its corporate social responsibility program, Progress for Tomorrow, click here. Read the company's 2020 Corporate Social Responsibility Report or explore career opportunities at www.progress.com/careers.

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