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

June 14, 2021

New form 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 (ELCIRE 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 good strides in this area, we recognize the importance of having an internal champion who brings the expertise and experience we need to accelerate our efforts. Shirley is a forward-thinking leader 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 support and advance a respectful, equitable and inclusive workplace for all employees. She will also lead the company's ongoing efforts to attract, retain and grow diverse talent and drive strategies to enhance the employee experience and ensure inclusion and equity throughout the company's practices. Finally, 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 Hannaford Insurance, where she led initiatives to promote inclusivity and appreciation of cultural, social, 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 doing the right thing—being inclusive, giving 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 around three pillars: Our People—inclusion, diversity and social justice; Our Communities—our philanthropic efforts; and Our World—environmental sustainability.

"It team 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.

Additional Resources

- Follow Progress on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn
- Read the Progress blog

About Progress

Progress (NASDAQ: PRGS) provides the best products to develop, deploy and manage high-impact business applications. Our comprehensive product stack is designed to make technology teams more productive, and we have a deep commitment to the developer community, both open source and commercial alike. With Progress, organizations can accelerate the creation and delivery of strategic business applications, automate the process by which apps are configured, deployed and scaled, and make critical data and content more accessible and secure—leading to competitive differentiation and business success. Over 1,700 independent software vendors, 100,000+ enterprise customers, and a three-million-strong developer community rely on Progress to power their applications. Learn about Progress at www.progress.com or +1-800-477-6473.

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