

8 Tempe organizations working to close the wage gap

Jerod MacDonald-Evoy , The Republic | azcentral.com 7:02 a.m. MT April 7, 2017

What do mechanics, architects, bankers and the city of Tempe have in common?

They're among eight businesses and organizations designated as equal pay businesses working to close the wage gap.

"This is truly remarkable for everyone in this room," Mayor Mark Mitchell told a small crowd gathered in the council chambers on Wednesday. "The inequality in women's wages doesn't just affect women, the wage gap affects us all."

The announcement of the equal pay partnerships in Tempe came a day after the national Equal Pay Day, which signifies the number of days on average it takes an American woman to earn the same amount of money as an American man.

Starts with self-assessment

The companies and organizations designated as equal pay business partners are the "beta group" of what Tempe hopes will ensure equal pay based on gender.

The group of eight partners include:

1. GoDaddy
2. Mountain Park Health Center
3. Express Employment Professionals
4. Architekton
5. Mulligan's Manor
6. Landings Credit Union
7. Dinos 2 Personalized Auto Sales
8. City of Tempe

The program requires companies to complete a worksheet to help determine if they are paying equally. Companies do not have to provide the city with payroll information, but the city does offer assistance in working to become an equal pay business.

Once a business is designated an equal pay business partner, they can use the city's equal pay logo on their hiring materials and websites.

The mayor put the logo — a pink circle with a white equal sign in the middle — outside the council chamber on Wednesday.

Tempe also lists the equal pay businesses on its website at www.tempe.gov/EqualPay.

The logo and self-assessment worksheet are only two parts of the program.

The city also hosts wage-negotiation classes that are open to anyone, but are especially helpful for women.

"Men are often more comfortable asking for a raise than women," said Jenny Diaz, executive director at non-profit Mulligan's Manor, a group home for at-risk youth.

Retaining Talent Scottsdale

Essen Otu, senior director of diversity and community affairs at Mountain Park Health Center, said the designation will help the organization keep and retain talent.

"I think we were pleasantly surprised," Otu said about the results of the equal pay self-assessment. More than half of its board of directors are women, 82 percent of its employees are women and 65 percent of its managers are women.

"This is really a move and step in the right direction," Otu said. "We hope to be a leader in creating momentum that encourages businesses to self-access."

Lamar Daniels, head of employment brand at GoDaddy, said the designation is a step in the right direction but there is more "work to do."

Of the approximate 1,000 employees at GoDaddy in Tempe, about 20 percent are women, which is below the industry standard of 25 percent, Daniels said.

"Diversity doesn't happen overnight," Daniels said, adding that the company plans to hire more women, including in leadership roles.

How to sign up

The city continues to offer free negotiation training classes to anyone who lives, works or studies in Tempe. The classes are in partnership with the American Association of University Woman and the goal is to train at least 8,000 women in five years.

Each class is the same and takes place in the Business Resource and Innovation Center inside the Tempe Library.

The next classes will be:

- 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 29.
- 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, May 16.
- 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, May 30.

Register for a class at www.aauw.org/work-smart-tempe.

Instructions on how to download the self-assessment tool can be found at www.tempe.gov/city-hall/strategic-management-and-diversity/equal-pay-for-equal-work