

# If Diversity Is Important, Let's Do This: Let's Support Each Other



*By Neil Foote, President, [National Black Public Relations Society, Inc.](#)*

The [New York Times](#) recently reported that several major brands including General Mills, HP and Verizon sent letters to the world's top ad agencies saying that their lack of diversity is a liability. Diego Scotti, Verizon's chief marketing officer, explained it quite clearly, "We're still in a very male-dominated and non-diverse industry. In order for us to create work that's more connected with the consumer, it needs to come from a deeper connection to what's going on in society and what's going on in culture."

What I'm hoping is that my friends in [public relations](#) will join me in the urgent need for us to bring transformative change in diversity. As president of the National Black Public Relations Society (NBPRS), a 501(c)3 nonprofit, I'm navigating my way through some challenging times. [NBPRS](#) is an association for both men and women. We've prided ourselves on targeting midcareer and senior-level executives who are looking to engage, to learn, to network, and most importantly, to succeed in this business. Our programming is focused on skill development, industry trends and thoughtful conversation. I've heard attendees over the years thank us for quality of our programming, and had professionals thanking us for helping



in the senior ranks at many of these companies. That *must* change. I know there is a huge opportunity for NBPRS **and** the industry to aggressively improve diversity and inclusion at agencies and companies. The PR Council's [The Business Of Diversity](#) website is a good step. We need more proactive efforts. My board and my members are committed to driving success. Are you with me? If so, let's talk. More importantly, let's act!

**About the Author:** *Neil Foote is president of the National Black Public Relations Society, Inc., and a principal lecturer at the University of North Texas' Mayborn School of Journalism and runs Foote Communications, A Dallas-based public relations, marketing and communications strategy firm. The NBPRS Conference took place Oct. 27 – 28 in Chicago. He can be reached at [214.448.3765](tel:214.448.3765) or at [neil@neilfoote.com](mailto:neil@neilfoote.com).*