



**SHARPENING OUR
COMPETITIVE EDGE**
INSIDE SIMON BUSINESS SCHOOL'S
#1 DIVERSITY RANKING



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If you're looking for job candidates who are prepared to lead in a rapidly diversifying business landscape, start with **the most diverse business school in the U.S.**



Simon Business School at the University of Rochester claimed the #1 spot on the 2021 U.S. News and World Report's list of the most diverse MBA programs. Among the Top 50 MBA programs in the country, we educate the highest percentage of Black, Hispanic American, and Native American students enrolled in a full-time MBA program.

To understand how Simon reached this milestone, we have to go back more than 50 years to an era when acronyms like EDI, DEI, and D&I had yet to be coined. As the corporate world slowly began to wake up to the strategic and moral imperatives of equity, diversity, and inclusion, business schools like Simon initiated a parallel effort to prepare their students to lead in more diverse settings. In 1968, Simon was the fourth business school to join the Consortium for Graduate Study in Management, which works to enhance diversity and inclusion in global business education and leadership. Through forging partnerships with like-minded organizations at an early stage, Simon's leaders invested in a more kaleidoscopic future, a future that welcomed underrepresented minorities into the C-suite and boardroom as well as the classroom.

In no sense did Simon wake up to a #1 diversity ranking. The diversity of our community reflects many years of backbreaking effort: to drive a shovel into the hard ground of precedent, dig out

the weeds of prejudice and exclusion, and plant seeds of hope requires tremendous perseverance and unity within our faculty, staff, and student body. While we are enjoying the fruits of our labor, we recognize how much work remains ahead of us.

We have created this document to provide an inside look at the intentional strategies Simon has employed over time to embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within our community. We will present data that illustrates how far we have come and personal narratives from members of our community. We will also draw a straight line between the diversity of our community and the impact that our students make in a workforce that has also undergone enormous transformation.

If you're looking for job candidates with a uniquely rich set of perspectives and experiences to bring to the table, you've come to the right place. At Simon Business School, we're proud of educating the most diverse group of students at any top business school, but we're even more proud of the impact they go on to make for the companies that drive our world forward.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sevin Yeltekin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sevin Yeltekin
Dean, Simon Business School

Our Story in Numbers

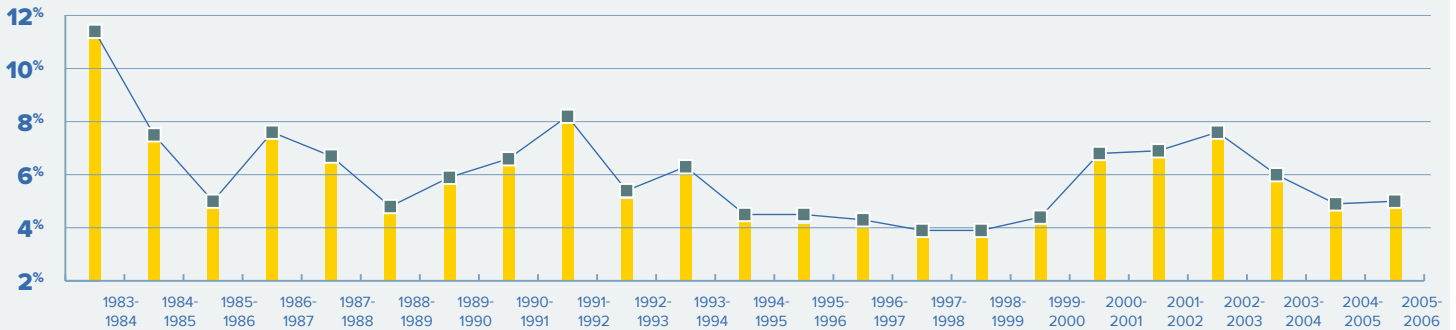
“We’re building a supportive community one person at a time, one year at a time, one step at a time. This has been decades in the making.”

- *Rebekah Lewin, Senior Assistant Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid*

An Upward Trend

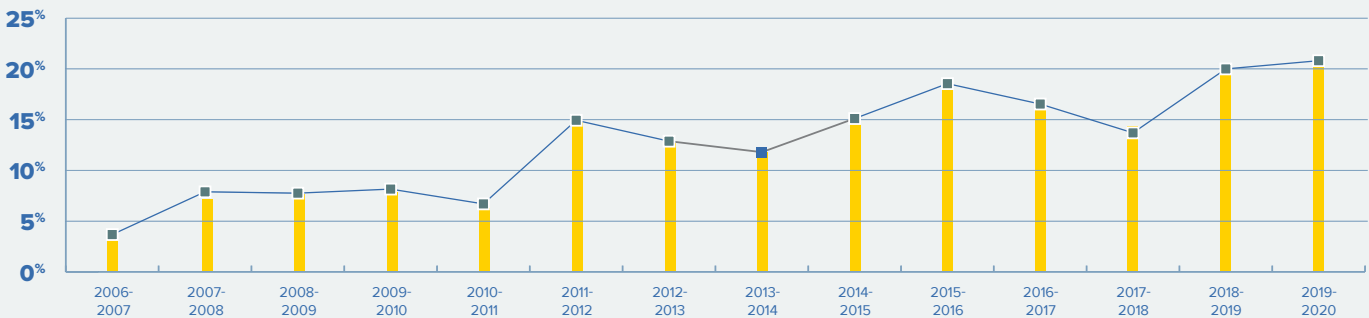
Between the early 1980s and early 2000s, historically underrepresented students from Black, Hispanic, or Native American communities comprised between **4-8% of our full-time MBA program.**

Percentage of historically underrepresented students enrolled in full-time MBA program, 1983-2006



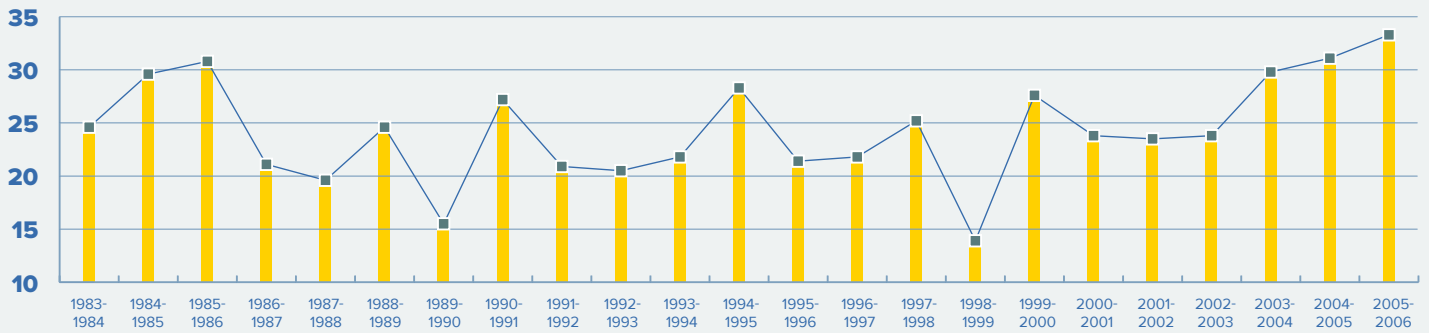
Over the past 15 years, the percentage of underrepresented minorities has increased to **more than 20% of the total class size.**

Percentage of historically underrepresented students enrolled in full-time MBA program, 2006-2020

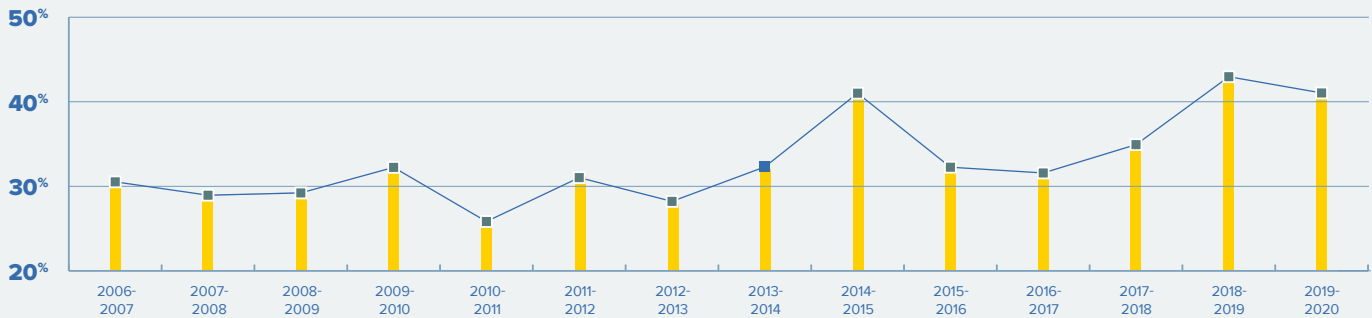


At the same time Simon has welcomed a higher percentage of historically underrepresented students into our ranks, we have also celebrated a **significant increase in the percentage of women enrolled in our full-time MBA program.**

Percentage of women students enrolled in full-time MBA program, 1983-2006



Percentage of women students enrolled in full-time MBA program, 2006-2020



While these numbers indicate a positive trend toward diversity, we recognize that numbers can only hint at the student experience, not illuminate it.

In a survey conducted for Bloomberg Businessweek’s 2019 MBA rankings, **students from the top 40 business schools in the U.S.** answered questions about their student experience. In the estimation of the students themselves, Simon consistently outperformed peer institutions.

| The Simon MBA class of 2022 hails from **19 countries of origin.**

Bloomberg Businessweek’s 2019 MBA Rankings individual School Report Rochester (Simon)	Simon School	Average Score - All Schools	US Tier (21-40) Average	Global Tier (21-40) Average
<i>Survey Questions: “Climate” Questions: 1 = Extremely Negative, 2 = Mostly Negative, 3 = Somewhat Negative, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Somewhat Positive, Mostly Positive, 7 = Extremely Positive</i>				
Climate for international students	6.83	6.41	6.35	6.53
Climate for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities	6.85	6.55	6.50	6.54
Climate for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds	6.78	6.30	6.45	6.45
Climate for people with physical disabilities	6.69	6.30	6.44	6.37
Climate for racial, ethnic, and religious minorities	6.76	6.45	6.44	6.55
Climate for women	6.85	6.53	6.53	6.56
I would recommend my school to a friend because of the diverse makeup of my class and the school’s open culture	6.29	6.32	6.02	6.40
Internal students were easily accepted and integrated into the class	6.08	6.40	6.25	6.50
The diversity of the class contributed to the quality of my education	6.16	6.24	5.96	6.30
The diversity of the faculty contributed to the quality of my education	5.82	6.01	5.67	5.99
The student body at my school was diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic background	6.37	6.31	5.95	6.32
The student body at my school was diverse in terms of nationalities	6.50	6.32	6.21	6.50

Leading the Pack

Inspired by iconic leaders in the University and surrounding Rochester community—including **abolitionist Frederick Douglass, women's rights activist Susan B. Anthony, and corporate leader and philanthropist Joseph C. Wilson**, Simon Business School began to lay a foundation for greater diversity and inclusion as early as the 1960s.

More than half a century later, we can look back and take inventory of the strategies that changed the face of Simon for the better.

EMBRACE THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS.

“A lot of us are looking to these partner organizations to let us know where it's safe for us and where there is investment happening in our success.”

- Keenan Heyward '21

Our ability to identify, recruit, and nurture diversity at Simon Business School depends on building strong relationships with national and local partners.



The Consortium for Graduate Study in Management

The Consortium is an alliance of leading U.S. business schools and leading business partners. Since its founding in 1966, it has enhanced diversity in business education and leadership by helping to increase Black, Hispanic, and Native American representation in the enrollment of member schools and the ranks of management.

Partnership history:

- In 1968, Simon became the fourth business school to join the Consortium. Today, Simon is one of only 21 participating schools.
- More than 20% of current Simon MBA students are members of the Consortium.
- The class of 2022 includes 35 Consortium students—an enrollment figure that has almost doubled since 2018.

In 2021, the Consortium recognized Rebekah Lewin (Assistant Dean of Admissions and Programs) with the prestigious Sterling H. Schoen Achievement Award for her role in advancing opportunity for underrepresented minorities in American business.

“Something about Simon was different in the way they brought in prospective students—there was a familial aspect. From the minute you set foot on campus, there is a strong network and support system. As a Black man, having a cohort of Consortium students and alumni to lean on was particularly helpful in navigating the business school environment. After two years of being in an environment where I felt like I could be myself, I was comfortable stepping into a management position with authenticity.”

- Gavin Hall '19



Management Leadership for Tomorrow (MLT)

Equips and emboldens high-achieving women and men from underrepresented communities—African-American, Latinx, and Native American—to realize their full potential, make a mark and a difference. MLT has transformed the leadership pipelines of more than 120 leading companies.



More Women Leading

Forté

Launches women into fulfilling, significant careers through access to business education, professional development, and a community of successful women.



PROSPANICA

Prospanica

Empowers and enables Hispanic professionals to reach their full educational, economic, and social potential.



Bringing Diversity to Life

Robert Toigo Foundation

Addresses the lack of diversity within the finance industry by providing benefits to minority MBA candidates committed to careers in finance.



REACHING OUT

Reaching Out MBA (ROMBA)

Increases the influence of the LGBT+ community in business by educating, inspiring, and connecting MBA students and alumni.

SUPPORT STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS.

Travel stipends: For the past decade, prospective MBA students have had access to travel stipends to visit the University of Rochester and attend recruitment events specifically geared toward underrepresented minorities.

Alumni & current students: Simon identifies alumni and current students from diverse backgrounds and invites them to participate in the recruiting process so that prospective students have a built-in resource to answer questions about the student experience.

“I visited Simon Business School because of all of their outreach. I felt like they wanted me here. I’m so glad that this is where I ended up, because this environment has opened my eyes a bit wider to understand other people’s experiences. Now I’m prepared to be the kind of leader who understands that there is more than one way to approach things, one who is prepared to identify barriers to success and help others.” - Dayana Cevallos ‘22

CHAMPION STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT ADVANCE EDI.

Diversity & educational clubs at Simon Business School:

- Latin American Students of Simon (LASOS)*
- Simon Africa Business Club*
- Simon Club Europe*
- Simon Black Student Alliance*
- Simon Spectrum*
- Simon Women in Business (SWIB)*
- AsIAM: Asians in America*

At Simon, student diversity and educational clubs serve a dual purpose. They provide a safe, affirming space for underrepresented minorities to make connections and share their experiences, and they also educate the wider community. Through investing time and resources into these clubs, Simon staff, faculty members, and alumni support students in their mission.

Global Student Experience Task Force

In addition to EDI-centered student clubs, Simon MBA students have created a Global Student Experience Task Force to elevate the global Simon experience for every student, empowering them through programs oriented towards cross-cultural awareness and community engagement, academic support, and career preparation.

In 2020, the Task Force expanded an existing initiative called “Broaden Your Horizons” to bring social and educational programming on global topics to the entire Simon community. From celebrating cultural events like Diwali and Lunar New Year to hosting discussions about doing business in different countries, the Task Force is committed to helping students develop global fluency.

“I’m racially black but ethnically Latinx. When I came to Simon, I found that many of my Latinx classmates were international and had never celebrated Latinx Heritage Month, so I planned an event surrounding our heritage. I didn’t expect so many people to show up and demonstrate their support. At Simon, people are excited to embrace and learn about your culture.” - Juceliz Batista ‘21

SUPPORT CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES THAT PAY IT FORWARD.

“If you’ve never experienced barriers to success, it’s hard to believe they exist. The process of becoming a leader in a global workforce starts with learning what it’s like to live in other people’s shoes.” - Janet Mejias, Director, Equity and Inclusion, Simon Business School

Simon Vision Consulting

Since 2012, Simon Vision Consulting (Vision) has provided pro-bono consulting services to for-profit and not-for-profit businesses throughout the Greater Rochester area and beyond. The graduate students who lead Vision bring diverse cultural and professional perspectives to the table as they help local employers hone their brands, develop financial plans, and implement go-to-market strategies.

Of the 21 local clients who have received support from Vision in 2020-21, 11 are women-led and 9 are owned by people of color.



P.I.E.C.E.S.

Throughout the academic year, a group of Simon students visits local Rochester schools to teach 5th and 6th grade students the basics of business, finance, and entrepreneurship while helping them construct a mock business plan.

Habitat for Humanity

During orientation, Simon students spend a day building houses with Habitat for Humanity in Rochester. The activity includes an educational component that invites students to learn more about redlining and housing policies that have shaped communities throughout history.

INCORPORATE EDI INTO THE CURRICULUM.

EDI in management

A new course focuses on EDI in management through case studies, group discussions, and guest speakers.

Case studies

Simon's curriculum provides countless opportunities for faculty members to choose cases that illustrate advantages, challenges, and pitfalls surrounding EDI.

OFFER PERSONALIZED CAREER SUPPORT AT EVERY STEP OF THE STUDENT JOURNEY.

“Everything was so new for me when I moved to the U.S. to pursue my MBA at Simon. I had to learn to network in a new context, do interviews in my second language, and even change the format of my professional documents. Thankfully, the Benet Career Management Center provided me with the support to overcome these obstacles in my journey. My career advisor and student peers helped me practice interviews and connect to alumni all over the world. After graduation, I moved forward in my career with a full-time managerial role at Microsoft.” - *Gabriela Pacheco '21*

Recognizing that students from underrepresented minorities face a different set of challenges in their career journey, Simon offers comprehensive career services along the way.

Pre-MBA support: established corporate partnerships and our affiliations with the various national MBA inclusion organizations, Simon ensures that students have opportunities to learn about a diverse range of career paths and network with industry leaders even before they arrive on campus, including pre-MBA career and diversity conferences.

Mentorship opportunities: Students are assigned to MBA directors as well as peer mentors who stay in close contact throughout the program to offer job search strategies, career action planning, and resources, monitoring progress along the way.

Personal development workshops: From interviewing to personal finance planning, workshops give students confidence in their value and their skill set before transitioning into a full-time position.

“It’s important that our students not only have access to a wide array of employment opportunities but also that they feel confident in their abilities to identify roles that align with their experience and interests, articulate their unique value proposition during interviews, and demonstrate their market readiness as they begin their new career. The Benet Career Management Center is committed to ensuring that all students have this access and confidence.” - *LaTanya Johns, Assistant Dean for the Benet Career Management Center*

DEDICATE SPECIFIC THOUGHT LEADERSHIP RESOURCES TO EDI.

Simon's Diversity and Inclusion Center of Excellence: This student-led group fosters a community atmosphere of mutual respect by promoting cultural awareness, leading responsible dialogue, and inspiring social change.

Annual Diversity Conference: Gives candidates a chance to learn more about the opportunities available at the school, as well as meet with students, alumni, staff, and faculty.

IDENTIFY ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT.

Action Plan: Simon Business School recently released its first EDI Action Plan to reaffirm our commitment to building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment and present a strategy for recruiting and retaining diverse talent.

Key strategies for success:

- Continue to adopt best practices in recruiting to attract students representing racial and ethnic minorities, women, LGBTQ+ identified people, military, and disabled individuals.
- Prioritize the development of pipelines of qualified staff, faculty, and PhD candidates from diverse backgrounds and improve retention strategies.
- Provide opportunities for staff, faculty, and alumni to develop, build, and support professional development initiatives related to EDI.
- Track metrics that measure progress against these goals and report to the Simon community twice a year.

Racial Equity Task Force: A team of student leaders from diversity clubs and organizations gathers to provide actionable feedback to Simon leadership on EDI initiatives.

“I’m proud to be part of the Racial Equity Task Force to address racial inequality at Simon. Changing a university on a systemic level

is not easy work, but Simon is open to the conversation. Dean Yeltekin has definitely stepped up and put her time and energy into this. The message we consistently receive is this: ‘We know we’re not there yet, and we need your help to get there.’” - Chey Savoy ‘21

“Simon is looking more and more like the corporate world in that it’s a true melting pot of demographics, cultures, and personalities. By teaching me how to navigate a diverse environment, my Simon experience helped set me up for success as an investment banker in New York.” - Mark Matthews ‘20



The Difference Diversity Makes

A diverse learning environment prepares students to lead in a rapidly changing business environment. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that one in four Americans identifies with a race or ethnicity other than white, and that percentage is on a steady upward trajectory. **By 2045, the majority of the U.S. population will be non-white.**

Job placement, ROI, and base salary numbers all point to the value Simon graduates bring to their employers:



As they evolve to meet the needs of a changing consumer and client base, leading U.S. employers are waking up to the importance of building diverse teams.

Digging into the data

Recent data illustrates a strong connection between diverse teams and profitability.



Quick facts

- Companies with above-average diversity on their management teams reported innovation revenue that was 19 percentage points higher than that of companies with below-average diversity.
- Both gender and ethnic diversity are clearly correlated with EBIT margin and value creation.
- Effectiveness in decision making is strongly correlated with financial performance, and inclusive teams make better business decisions up to 87% of the time.

1 <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2018/how-diverse-leadership-teams-boost-innovation>
 2 <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity>
 3 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/eriklarson/2017/09/21/new-research-diversity-inclusion-better-decision-making-at-work/?sh=579e0f514cbf>

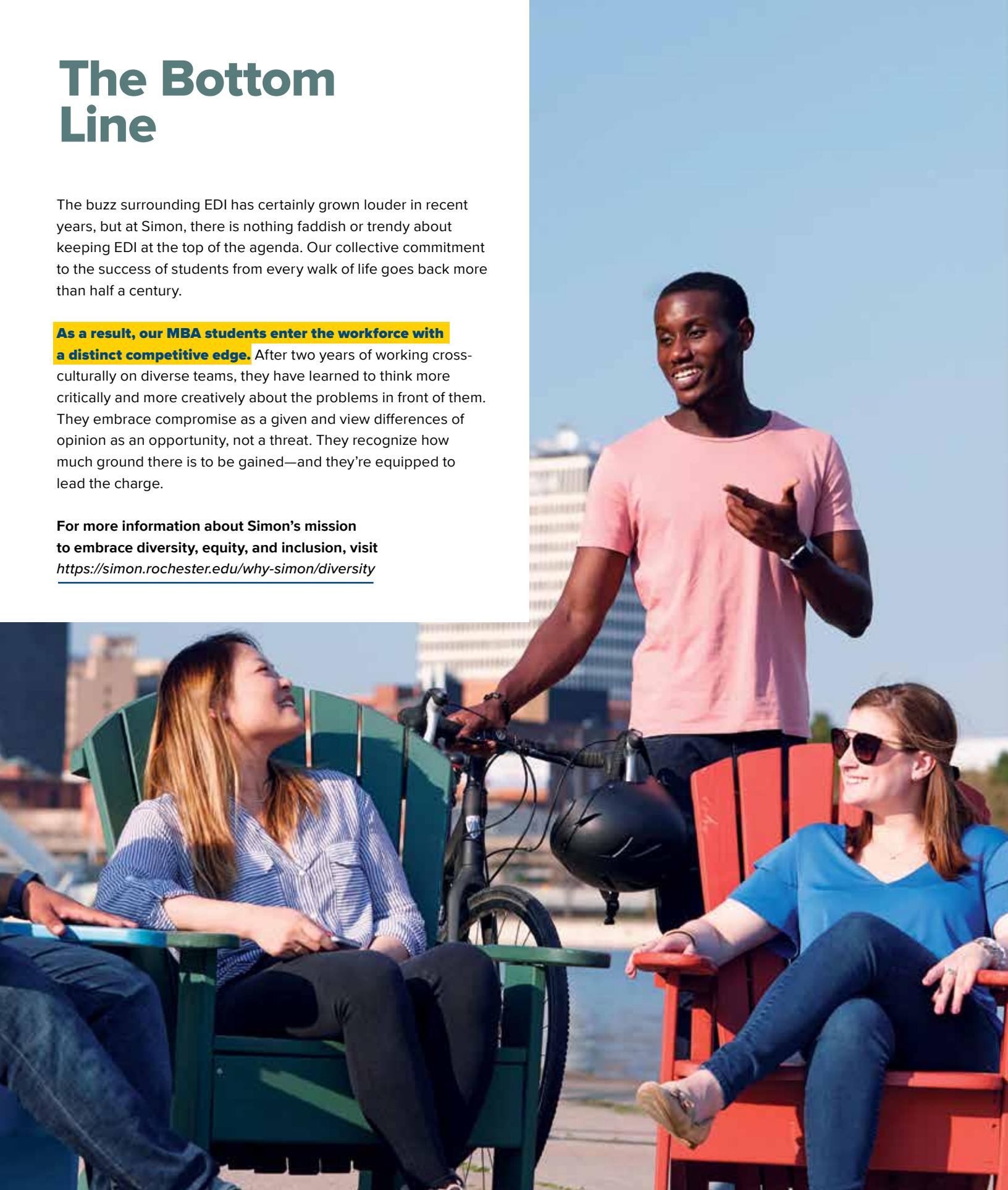
“In my role as a product manager, I have to be able to put myself in other people’s shoes in order to solve problems. Because of my experience in a diverse setting at Simon, leading with empathy has become second nature to me.” - Candace Pugh ‘20

The Bottom Line

The buzz surrounding EDI has certainly grown louder in recent years, but at Simon, there is nothing faddish or trendy about keeping EDI at the top of the agenda. Our collective commitment to the success of students from every walk of life goes back more than half a century.

As a result, our MBA students enter the workforce with a distinct competitive edge. After two years of working cross-culturally on diverse teams, they have learned to think more critically and more creatively about the problems in front of them. They embrace compromise as a given and view differences of opinion as an opportunity, not a threat. They recognize how much ground there is to be gained—and they're equipped to lead the charge.

For more information about Simon's mission to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion, visit <https://simon.rochester.edu/why-simon/diversity>





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