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## 2023 DEI Awards honoree: AgreeYa Solutions



AgreeYa Solutions is a 2023 DEI Awards honoree.

AGREEYA SOLUTIONS

By Sam Boykin – Contributor

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*This profile highlights one of the Sacramento Business Journal's 2023 Champions for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion honorees. Twelve individuals and organizations were honored in a ceremony on July 20.*

Ajay Kaul founded Folsom-based AgreeYa Solutions Inc. in 1999 with just a handful of employees. Today, the information technology, software solutions and technology worker placement company has some 2,200 employees around the globe providing services to clients across U.S., India, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Mexico.

With 260 local workers, AgreeYa **ranked fifth on the Sacramento Business Journal's 2023 list of software developers** in the Sacramento area.

As AgreeYa has grown over the years, the company's DEI initiatives and policies have grown with it, Kaul said, thanks in large part to the fact that it was a priority from the beginning.

"Being a minority-owned business, diversity was part of the company from day one," said Kaul, who serves as managing partner. "We started as a micro-business and engaging in diversity practices helped us establish ourselves as a player in the space."

As the company evolved and began to have more of a community impact, Kaul said AgreeYa focused on DEI in a more deliberate and thoughtful way. "Diversity within our workforce is a real strength – it brings different perspectives and capabilities and better ideas. It helps drive us forward and aligns with our core values of innovation and engagement."

"I feel like diversity has always been ingrained in AgreeYa, long before DEI started being in the spotlight over the past five years or so," said Krista Sheldon, vice president of human resources and administration. "It's something that the company has believed in since its inception."

Kaul said that as part of its DEI strategies, the company places a priority on accountability and transparency within the organization as well as creating opportunities for underrepresented groups. This involves inclusive leadership training for managers that stresses the importance of diversity when it comes to hiring practices.

Sheldon said this practice helps AgreeYa operate more effectively, as the company engages with a diverse mix of small and medium-sized businesses across the country and the globe.

“It’s one thing to hire diverse employees, but then there’s the whole inclusivity piece of it to help keep everyone feeling engaged and part of a bigger group,” she said. To achieve this, the company hosts cultural events and festivals, including Diwali, an Indian tradition also known as the Festival of Lights, during which employees wear saris, a colorful and flowing women's garment.

In addition, the company has flexible hybrid work policies to accommodate different groups, from neurodiverse individuals to veterans, Kaul said.

The company also sets specific goals and targets to ensure minorities represent an equitable percentage of the company’s leadership teams and workforce. “We've been fortunate to be ahead of our goals for many years,” said Kaul.

AgreeYa also has employee surveys to get a sense of how the workforce feels about the company’s DEI policies and practices.

“Every single employee of AgreeYa has a single point of contact with HR that they can go to at any point,” said Sheldon. “It's two-way proactive and reactive communication. Our team works hard to keep people engaged. And it’s an ongoing practice for us – we’re always looking for ways we can improve.”