

Axon's New Ethics and Equity Advisory Council to Deliver Input from Community Voices on the Development of Public Safety Technologies

Independent council will advise Axon on issues relating to the ethical and equitable development and deployment of new technologies

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz., Sept. 1, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- [Axon](#) (Nasdaq: AXON), the global leader in connected public safety technologies, today announced the formation of its Ethics & Equity Advisory Council (EEAC).

This newly formed, independent advisory council is critically important as Axon seeks to ensure that ethics and equity are at the forefront of our services and product development. The council will be spearheaded by Regina Holloway, Axon's VP of Community Impact and Relations.

"Since our inception, we've been committed to the responsible development of new technology with both law enforcement and communities across the country," says Rick Smith, Axon CEO and Founder. "We are committed to leading the way through an ethical design framework for all of our products. To do this, we must consistently seek feedback from diverse populations on our product design. The EEAC will be a valuable thought leader and partner to us, helping us to weave community voices, ethics and equity into everything we do. They will advise us on a host of internal and external issues through a racial equity and ethics lens, centering the needs and perspectives of communities in the creation of future products."

The EEAC will combine [Axon's AI Ethics Board](#), (established in 2018) and its [Community Advisory Coalition](#) (established in 2021) to create one independent council to advise Axon on issues relating to the ethical and equitable development and deployment of new products and services, including the development of AI technologies.

With the establishment of the EEAC, Axon is reaffirming its commitment to listening to diverse communities, particularly those most directly affected by policing technology. The company is also acknowledging the importance of creating proximity between Axon's leadership and product teams and representatives from marginalized communities. The EEAC will work closely with Axon product teams, including with Axon's Chief Product Officer and EVP of Software, Jeff Kunins, who serves as Ethics and Equity Champion. In this role, Kunins will ensure that ethics and equity principles are embedded in the product development cycle. Additionally, A.J. Angus, Axon Sr. Product Manager of Justice R&D, will serve as Ethics and Equity product liaison. Angus will facilitate the partnership between Axon's product teams and the EEAC to ensure the principles of Axon's equity framework, along with insight from the EEAC, inform responsible product development.

"Axon has always embraced a bold vision for the future of public safety, and we also recognize that communities are the ultimate end-users of the technologies we develop," says Regina Holloway, Axon's VP of Community Impact and Relations. "I look forward to working with this group of community leaders and academics with lived experience who will help us develop fresh ideas to impart the principles of justice and equity into the product development cycle. We are committed to establishing a community voice within our technology and using outreach to educate communities on our products."

Current EEAC members include:

- **Dr. Desmond Patton**, PhD, MSW, Brian and Randi Schwartz University Professor and the thirty-first Penn Integrates Knowledge University Professor. Dr. Patton has joint appointments in the School of Social Policy & Practice and the Annenberg School for Communication along with a secondary appointment in the department of psychiatry in the Perelman School of Medicine. Dr. Patton is a leading pioneer in the field of making AI empathetic, culturally sensitive and less biased.
- **Bertha Purnell**, Founder of Mothers OnA Mission28, Chapter Coordinator for Crime Survivors for Safety & Justice, and retired nurse. Purnell became a community advocate against violence after her youngest son was killed by gun violence.
- **Dr. Wilneida Negrón**, PhD, MPA, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Political Science at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Dr. Negrón has been working on the frontlines of the AI ethics field for the past 10 years and has co-led early pioneering work on algorithmic fairness and AI's role in shaping civic discourse. She serves on the Global Future Council on Artificial Intelligence for Humanity at the World Economic Forum.
- **Devon Simmons**, Co-founder of the Paralegal Pathways Initiative at Columbia Law School, Atlantic Fellow for Racial Equity, Salzburg Global fellow, Soros Justice Fellow, David Rockefeller Fund Fellow. Simmons aims to amplify the talents of formerly incarcerated people by providing skills-based legal training, while simultaneously educating future legal practitioners. He is a Criminal Justice Expert, having experienced the prison system first-hand.

- **Dr. Tonya Strozier**, PhD, Founding President of Tucson Alliance of Black School Educators, and elementary School Principal. Dr. Strozier is an education consultant and school principal and dedicated to driving improvements in underserved schools.
- **Michelle Vilchez**, CEO of Innovate Public Schools, past Executive Director of the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center, California State Assembly 2016 Woman of the Year. Vilchez is a Latina born into an immigrant family and her work focuses on facilitating communication between diverse communities in order to solve complex issues like community policing and the far-reaching effects of the pandemic.
- **Dr. Broderick Turner**, PhD, Assistant Professor of Marketing at the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech, founder of The Technology, Race, and Prejudice Lab. Dr. Turner focuses on video surveillance technology and the impacts on people's judgments.
- **Jeff Taylor**, prison reform lobbyist. Taylor writes legislation around drug treatment, homelessness, and prison reform, drawing from his personal experience with addiction, homelessness, and incarceration.
- **Rev. Kelvin Sauls**, born and raised in Johannesburg, South Africa, a faith-rooted community organizer in the Pan African Methodist traditions, Senior Fellow with the Atlantic Institute with a focus on trans-national racial equity and the Co-Founder of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI). Rev. Sauls is the former Director for Interfaith Partnerships with Community Health Councils and the former Senior Pastor of Holman United Methodist in Los Angeles.
- **Louis Frye**, Co-founder of Movement Thru Hoops, Wealth Relationship Strategist for PNC Bank. Frye focuses on mentorship in underserved communities, having experienced poverty in the New York City Housing Projects.
- **Giles Herdale**, Former co-chair of the UK Independent Digital Ethics Panel for Policing, Associate Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute, former Program Director for Digital Intelligence and Investigation at the National Police Chiefs' Council. Herdale focuses on ensuring UK police forces factor ethics into digital policing programs from the outset.

The council will formally meet once a month to discuss the ethical and equitable implications and development of technologies and services being developed by Axon and publish an annual report. Axon will maintain a community perspective on the EEAC while bringing in outside law enforcement perspectives to weigh in on certain issues and products.

"By assembling this advisory council of AI ethics experts, community leaders and advocates Axon is demonstrating their commitment to addressing race in technology and working to embody the principles of justice and equity in their product development cycle - from ideation to implementation," says Dr. Desmond Patton, EEAC facilitator. "I am excited to be a part of this council as it is a step in the right direction to continue to strengthen relationships between public safety and our communities."

For more information about Axon's Ethics & Equity Advisory Council, please visit axon.com/eeac or email impact@axon.com.

About Axon

Axon is a network of devices, apps and people that helps public safety personnel become smarter and safer. With a mission of protecting life, our technologies give customers the confidence, focus and time they need to keep their communities safe. Our products impact every aspect of a public safety officer's day-to-day experience with the goal of helping everyone get home safe.

We work hard for those who put themselves in harm's way for all of us. To date, more than 270,000 lives and countless dollars have been saved with the Axon Network of devices, apps and people. Learn more at www.axon.com or by calling (800) 978-2737. Axon is a global company with headquarters in Scottsdale, Ariz. and global software engineering hub in Seattle, Wash., as well as additional offices in Australia, Canada, Finland, Vietnam, the UK and the Netherlands.

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