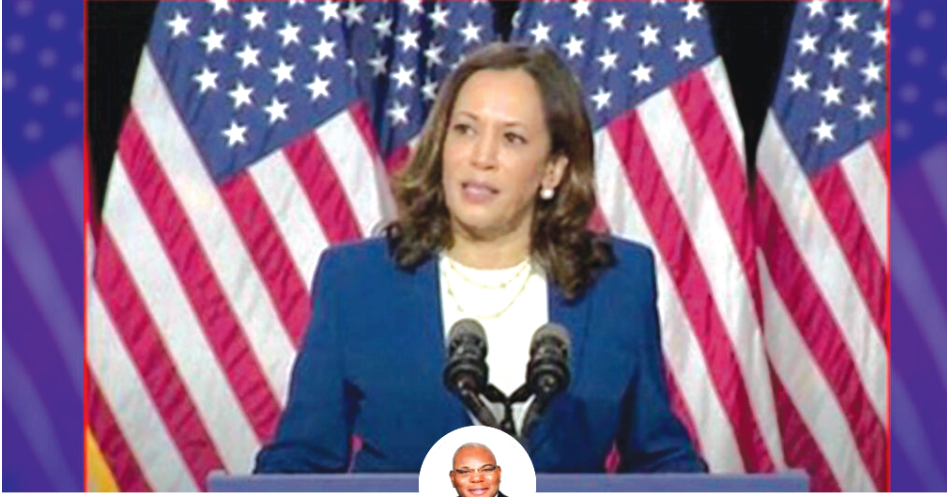


DETROIT

Op-Ed: If we fight, we win!

NATIVE SUN

Only half of employees feel appreciated at work, proving a major opportunity for culture



By Reverend Dr. RB Holmes
SPECIAL TO THE SUN

As I write this op-ed, there are 53 days before the November 5, 2024, presidential election. This presidential election between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump is truly, in many of our lifetimes, the most significant and sacred presidential election perhaps ever. Yes, this is not hyperbole, rhetoric, or sugar high. So much is on the ballot in this nation. Time will not permit me to recite many of the reasons why we need to vote in record numbers. Democracy is on this ballot; freedom is on this ballot; national security is on this ballot; racial equality is on this ballot; voting rights, women's rights, civil rights, environmental protection, and decency are on the ballot; the rule of law is on the ballot, and much more. This presidential election between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump will be decided by what the political experts call "battleground" states, such as Georgia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, Arizona, Nevada, and perhaps North Carolina.

However, my argument is that Vice President Kamala Harris can win Florida. Yes! I said it. I am of sound mind, and I do not need to be admitted to any mental treatment facility, at least not at this time. Vice President Kamala Harris can win Florida because of her vision, her experience, her leadership skills, her rich history, her heritage, and her sense of decency, dignity, and decorum. I believe that God has ordained Vice President Kamala Harris and called her for such a time as this. We must thank God for President Biden's courageous and selfless act of stepping aside and firmly endorsing his competent, capable, calm, and charismatic Vice President. It was his unwavering endorsement that put an end to the notion of considering other prospects to succeed President Biden. The Bible references "The ram in the bush" (Genesis 22:13) and that ram is Vice President Kamala Harris. Say her name! She can win Florida's 30 electoral votes! How? Inquiring minds may ask.

Florida is ripe for fresh new leadership. Florida has witnessed clear examples of the danger of Project 2025. We are living and experiencing the pain of Project 2025. This pain includes voter suppression and gerrymandering, the dismantling of teaching our history factually and truthfully, the disdain for collective bargaining, the disarming and dissolving of our higher education system, taking down duly elected representatives, reducing the power of local school boards, city and county governments, and refusing to accept federal funds to feed hungry children during the summer months, etc. Our constitutional right to free speech is in jeopardy, e.g. we cannot say "climate change" nor "gay." Additionally, the autonomy of corporations and businesses is being challenged; the importance of public schools is being jeopardized; lifesaving vaccinations, plus quality health care have been carelessly minimized.

Listen, the over 900 pages of the Project 2025 playbook for the extreme MAGA movement is fully operational in the most diverse state in this nation, Florida. If we reject Project 2025 and implement Project Rise-Up, Vice President Kamala Harris can win Florida and save our democracy, our constitution, and our freedoms. If we can convince most registered independent voters to vote for the Harris-Walz ticket, we win.

I am an Independent and I am voting for my children's and grandchildren's future. There are over 3.9 million, or approximately 34 percent of voters in Florida who are not affiliated with a political party. Furthermore, there are 5.3 million Republican voters (39 percent) and 4.3 million Democrats (29 percent). My prayerful points are that the overwhelming number of Democrats will vote for the Harris and Walz ticket. Deep down in my spiritual soul, I believe there are a significant number of Republican voters who will listen to their "better angels" and join most Independents and that is how, after much thought, prayer, common sense, and love of country, will turn Florida "Blue" and we can say with "Joy," Madam President.

This effort is not going to be easy. I will encourage the Harris-Walz campaign to fight for the great state of Florida. To "Rise-Up" I am humbly asking them to re-think their strategy by allocating the necessary resources and ground game by sending some of their key surrogates to visit major cities in the Sunshine State and even send the brilliant and beautiful Vice President herself, or her capable running mate, Governor (Coach) Tim Walz to visit Florida. Vice President Kamala Harris has provided energetic, engaging, and electrifying leadership to the campaign. Her energy, passion, hope, and joy are contagious. It shows up in her mass gatherings of enthusiastic supporters. This energy can be sustained from state to state; this energy is transferable; and I believe this energy can lead to an historic turnout of voters in Florida.

Yes, we can, and yes, we will win Florida. Florida is ready to embrace "The New Way Forward." Well, this is one of the preachers of Florida who strongly believes that "With God, nothing is impossible!" "Let us "Rise Up" and go to work to turn Florida blue this November.

Reverend Dr. RB Holmes is President and Publisher of the Capital Outlook Newspaper and the pastor of the historic Bethel Missionary Baptist Church in Tallahassee, Florida; Local President of the National Action Network, Tallahassee Florida; Former President of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., Congress of Christian Education; Chairman of the Social Justice Ministry of the Florida General Baptist Convention, Inc.; Chairman of the Board of Directors for the First Bethlehem Baptist Association; Member of the Board of Trustees, Edward Waters University; and former member of Board of Trustees of Florida Memorial University and Florida A and M Universities.



PRNewswire/ -- Reward Gateway | Edenred, a global leader in employee engagement and HR technology, released its report An EVP that drives engagement: The power of benefits, recognition and appreciation exploring how organizations can transform engagement through benefits, recognition, and appreciation.

The survey found that while it's no secret employee needs are complex and vary from person to person, it's critical for employers to nurture engagement and foster an environment of recognition and wellbeing. With only half (49%) of employees feeling regularly appreciated for being themselves at work, there's a major opportunity for organizations to create a true culture of appreciation, which ultimately leads to increased employee attraction, engagement, retention, and productivity.

"Cultivating employee engagement is a delicate dance, and with our people as our greatest asset, this requires a collaborative strategy across leadership teams," said Anthony Knierim, Managing Director, Americas of Reward Gateway | Edenred. "Our recent research shows us the importance of establishing a dynamic benefits program as one means of supporting employees, and how employees want to be recognized and appreciated as they grow in both their professional and personal lives."

For HR leaders looking to create a culture of appreciation, additional findings from the report found:

Recognition fosters appreciation - and also retention: With 84% of employees agreeing that they feel more appreciated as a person when they receive customized recognition for their performance at work (like a personalized gift certificate), 82% then agree that it makes them feel more connected to their workplace. Employees also agree that they are more likely to stay with their company longer (81%),

have improved wellbeing (78%) and feel less stressed (73%) when they receive personalized recognition in the workplace.

Levelling up benefits can impact employee's productivity and sense of being appreciated: Employees say that receiving the classic three benefits would make them more productive at work: time off (46%), financial (e.g. 401k, stock options) (43%), and insurance-related benefits (42%). While these benefits address traditional needs, 57% also said they would like their workplace to show appreciation for them as a person by offering benefits that are important to them. This highlights the demand for unique offerings, such as the importance of flexibility; a little more than one-third of employees (35%) mentioned flexible start and end times to their workday as desirable benefits from a potential employer.

Many benefits may top a 10% raise: More than half of employees share that insurance-related benefits (59%) and time off-related benefits (52%) are more important than a 10% pay raise. From training or mentorship programs (40%); health and wellness-related benefits (36%); to family-related benefits (35%), the more organizations customize their benefits for an employee's needs, likes, personality or role, the more that employee will feel seen, understood and cherished.

Gen Z and Millennials are progressing, and with that, what they're looking for is too: With each generation looking for specific benefits that support the different areas and concerns of their lives, research found that Gen Z is more interested in student loan assistance (14%) compared to the average of 7%. With that, Millennials are slightly interested in childcare reimbursement (10%) than the average of 6%. For more information about Reward Gateway | Edenred and to read the full report, please visit <http://rg.co/evp-report>.

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