



Northrop Grumman's "inclusive innovation" approach is key to its success.

## HELPING THE CAREERS OF WOMEN IN STEM TAKE FLIGHT

How **Northrop Grumman** built a culture that embraces diversity and fuels innovation.

**WHILE THE PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WORKING** in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) has nearly quadrupled over the past 50 years, they still comprise only 27% of employees in the field, according to the U.S. Census. In the aerospace and defense industry, there is a similar disparity.

With this in mind, leaders at technology company Northrop Grumman have prioritized creating a workplace that supports and retains women through employee training and development, mentorships, resource groups, and a commitment to pay equity. That support starts at the top with CEO Kathy Warden, one of the few female CEOs in the *Fortune* 500 and the first to hold the position at Northrop Grumman, which has 90,000 employees across 550 facilities that span all 50 U.S. states and 25 countries around the world.

"From our CEO on down, we are committed to developing leaders that both embrace and model inclusion," says Nikki Kodama, a program director who has worked at Northrop Grumman for nearly 20 years. "I see the investments in these programs as a focus not only on technology and leadership but also on the culture of the company."

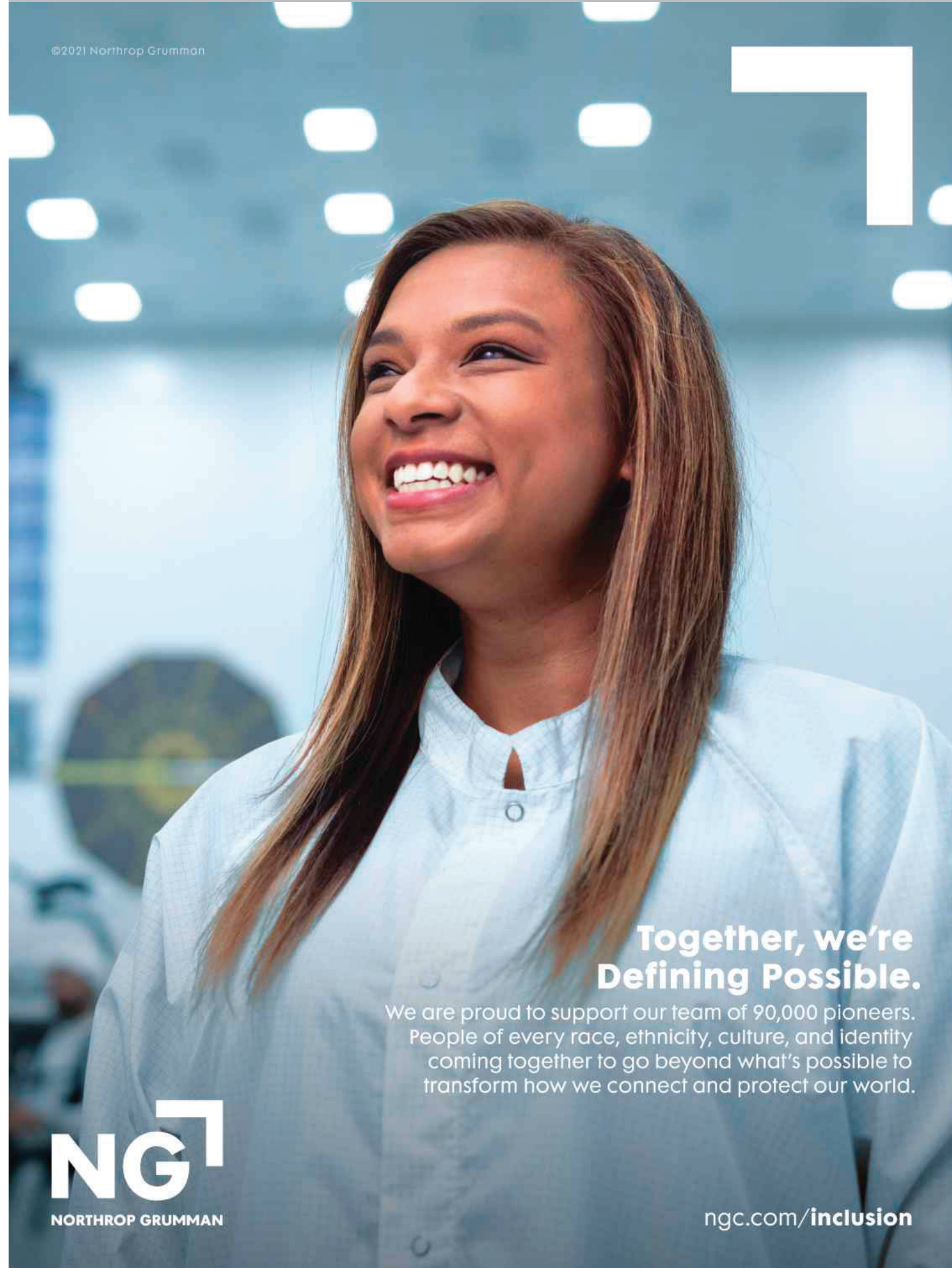
Among the female-focused initiatives at the company are its WiSE [Women in Science and Engineering] programs, aimed at helping women in technical roles develop into leaders. Program participants continue to expand on their technical knowledge base while also receiving access to networking and skill building. Additionally, the WEconnect program increases engagement and retention among early-career female engineers by establishing a sense of community and helping them navigate a career in STEM. The company also hosts an annual summit for its Women's International Network, an employee resource group with more than 6,700 members.

Northrop Grumman's pioneering technology is, in part, a result of the varied backgrounds and perspectives of its workforce, says Kodama. She credits diversity with fueling the company's spirit of "inclusive innovation" and helping it solve the toughest problems for its customers in national security and human discovery.

"Inclusive innovation is about harnessing the diversity within a team to see a problem in a different light and coming up with a new and novel way of solving it," she explains. "That's something Northrop Grumman is known for."

That innovation drives Northrop Grumman's achievements, from the construction of NASA's James Webb Space Telescope to developing and manufacturing numerous first-of-their-kind autonomous aircrafts.

"We want to create an environment where people aren't just finding a job with this company, but finding a career," Kodama says. "We want to help our employees grow and see that their contribution is making a real impact." ■



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