

The Mom Project And BP Launch The BP Returnship Program
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Inclusion Initiative Aims to Attract Talent With Diverse Backgrounds, Experiences

CHICAGO, Jan. 11, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- The Mom Project, the leading platform for enterprises to connect with highly skilled female talent, has partnered with BP to launch The BP Returnship Program. This initiative supports professional development among mid- to upper level working professionals. The program targets women and men who have stepped out of the workforce for family or personal reasons and are now ready to return and reignite their career — an often-difficult transition for even the most qualified working professionals.

The program includes five women who were selected from The Mom Project's network as part of the inaugural group. A curated track spanning various functions, including sales and marketing, finance, human resources and strategy, was created for each returnee. Their work focuses on a series of project-based assignments lasting four to six months. In addition, throughout the course of the program, networking and mentorship opportunities are available to participants, creating a robust and comprehensive learning experience. At the conclusion of the program, each participant may have the opportunity to apply for a regular position within the company.

"The BP Returnship program gives us the opportunity to access a slate of candidates that we typically have not seen before and who are looking to get back into the workplace," said Doug Sparkman, chief operating officer, BP Fuels, North America. "We have been very impressed with the people that The Mom Project sourced, furthering our belief that with programs like this, BP will continue to attract great talent and be seen as a leader in diversity and inclusion."

The program was created by two BP employees, Brian Zellner, U.S. downstream resourcing manager, and Christine Taktajian, senior resourcing advisor. The concept of a returnship program presents solutions to two challenges: it opens the doors for BP to attract diverse and often hard to find, mid-level candidates for short-term, project-based work with the chance for permanent retainment; and provides candidates the opportunity to explore a new work environment and substantial time to consider whether returning to work full-time is a viable option. BP engaged The Mom Project, a digital marketplace and community that connects women with world-class companies for rewarding employment opportunities, to help them create the structure and find the candidates for this unique program.

"In today's competitive employment landscape, a growing number of working professionals no longer have the cookie-cutter, traditional vertical career path," said Zellner. "Men and women are taking mid-career breaks for a number of personal reasons and we wanted our hiring process to reflect these changes."

The BP Returnship Program is a part of BP's continuous commitment to attract a diverse and talented workforce, fostering an inclusive environment aligned with BP's core values and behaviors: safety, respect, excellence, courage and one team. The company is almost three years into its stated diversity goals of having 25 percent of group leaders and 30 percent of senior level leaders be women by 2020.

BP plans to continue The BP Returnship Program in 2018 with a second team that will encompass additional disciplines and office locations.

"We are thrilled to partner with BP, a forward-looking company that is creating dynamic work relationships between employees and the company," said Allison Robinson, Founder and CEO of The Mom Project. "So often, companies pass up highly qualified candidates simply because of a break in their resume. Mid-career breaks from the workforce should be celebrated, not discouraged. We are proud to work with a company like BP that is pushing the boundaries of equal employment opportunities for all candidates."

To learn more about BP's diversity and inclusion goals, please click [here](#).

About The Mom Project:

The Mom Project is a pioneering digital platform that is changing the way women work and redefining career structures by providing women with real work opportunities that are in balance with their personal goals. This evolution will keep more talented, professionally accomplished women and mothers in the workforce. For

more information, visit www.themomproject.com.

About BP:

BP is a global producer of oil and gas with operations in over 70 countries. Over the past 10 years, BP has invested \$90 billion in the U.S. — more than any other energy company. BP employs about 14,000 people across the U.S. and supports more than 106,000 additional jobs through all its business activities. For more information on BP in the U.S., visit www.bp.com/us.

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