

Women's Equality Day gives honor to the date, August 26th, 1920 when the right to vote for women officially became part of the US constitution. This day marks a turning point in the history of the struggle for equal treatment of women and women's rights.

In all industries, women have struggled with equal or fair treatment, alongside their male counterparts.

Women of color, however, have not only suffered the same inequality and unfairness but have also been ostracized in society. In an effort toward better recognition and awareness, the month of August is also Black Business Month. Highlighting the importance of African American owned businesses to the Black community, as well as their impact on the national economy, this latest huge addition to causes associated with the month is both a conversation starter and necessary. According to the Census Bureau, the U.S. is home to roughly 2.5 Million Black-owned businesses.

As reported by the 2018 State of Women-Owned Business Reports, "the number of women-owned businesses grew an impressive 58% from 2007 to 2018, the number of firms owned by black women grew by a stunning 164%, nearly three times that rate."^[1] However, the average revenue for African American women-owned businesses is less than 20% the average revenue for all women-owned businesses.^[2]

Gail Warrior, who created one of the largest women- and minority-owned construction companies in the U.S, was denied for a loan despite having a history with the bank and a contract in hand. "I can't tell you how many times I've heard, 'Don't take it personally,'" said Warrior. "How am I not supposed to take it personally if I know that if a guy goes in with the same deck, he will have a greater chance at securing the deal?"

Black women entrepreneurs tend to start their businesses for several reasons. But the most common reason is their frustration in their current role and industry. There's a feeling of being passed over for promotions, a sense of workplace fatigue, and real truth behind the discrimination they face regarding 'professional appearance.'





Veronica Jenkins, Head of Global Talent and Co-Founder of HIVE Talent Acquisition Firm has experienced inequality at various stages of her professional career from being asked to complete tasks without being compensated for extra time, to being denied equal pay, and promotional opportunities prior to opening her HR firm with her business partner. “Honestly, you just take it for what it is, which is sad. No one should have to say that, knowing what they are capable of bringing to the table as a talented professional, but what else can you do when you’ve asked and asked but keep getting denied what you feel is your just due?” Instead of settling for unequal pay and unfair treatment, Veronica decided it was time to start her own company. Alongside her business partner, Dana Neiger, Veronica created HIVE Talent Acquisition Firm in November 2017 and has not looked back since. Jenkins says that HIVE “was created to put the focus back on the people...something that is missing from the high-volume HR world.” HIVE Talent Acquisition Firm is proud to be a women-owned, minority-owned firm and a future thought leader in the HR space.

As a woman of color, I have experienced these disadvantages compared to white people firsthand. Privilege is a word that doesn’t get thrown around a lot anymore. It’s a scary word that makes people uncomfortable. As a society, we are still continuing to fight for that equality, having been set in motion over a century ago. But as women, whether in business or life, we have a responsibility to uplift each other, especially black women and other disadvantaged female groups for the greater good of our, not just our gender, but how we as a powerful team force directly affect the world...

[1] <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2018/09/09/black-women-entrepreneurs-the-good-and-not-so-good-news/#136a42b46ffe>

[2] <https://www.become.co/blog/women-owned-businesses-statistics/>