

Forum of Executive Women partners with Equilar to diversify board membership

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COURTESY THE FORUM OF EXECUTIVE WOMEN

Lisa Detwiler is the president of the Forum of Executive Women.

The Forum of Executive Women joined with corporate leadership data company Equilar to further its mission of diversifying boardrooms and c-suites.

The Equilar Diversity Network comprises more than 30 member organizations, including partners like NASDAQ, KPMG and the Athena Alliance. The Forum is the first Philadelphia organization to join the network.

Being a part of the Equilar Diversity Network offers exposure for the Forum's 500 members, who can later be considered for board membership and other executive roles, Forum President [Lisa Detwiler](#) said.

"The Forum is very privileged to have so many highly-qualified women from the region, and this really gives our members national exposure, and potentially international exposure," Detwiler said.

Equilar provides data to companies looking to recruit, fill board roles and study executive compensation or shareholder engagement. Users can search for qualified candidates through Equilar's membership database. Its Diversity Network has more than 5,000 member profiles and has aided in upwards of 2,000 board appointments, according to [the company's website](#).

The Forum of Executive Women saw [its membership climb](#) this year as increased calls for board and c-suite diversity swept the business community. The Forum is continuing its membership drive, Detwiler said, with a goal to have 100 new members by the end of its fiscal year in June. It's already more than halfway to its goal, as 58 new members have signed up since July, she said.

The organization will also take 2021 to focus on stemming the tide of women leaving the workforce during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Labor Department reported that women were leaving the workforce at four times the rate of men in September, painting a grim picture for the future of women executives.

Balancing work, child care and other duties became increasingly difficult in 2020, and the long-term implications of women leaving work behind can be massive, Detwiler said. If women leave the workforce, she said, there will be a much smaller pool of people to fill c-suite and board spots.

"While the progress may not be as fast or as extensive as we might hope for, we certainly want to do everything we can to not see that progress backslide," Detwiler said.



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